

Black Hawk College plays an important part in shaping so many lives in the Quad-Cities community. From Rock Island to Silvis, southeast to Kewanee, and southwest to Aledo, so many people started their academic careers at Black Hawk College. Here's one BHC alum's story.



Meet Nick Armstrong

If you look at Nick Armstrong's LinkedIn page, you will see that he graduated from Black Hawk College with an Associate in Arts in Teaching - Math. You also will see that he went on to get a bachelor's degree and master's degree from Western Illinois University.

What you don't see is just how much his time at Black Hawk College shaped him into the student that he became and pushed him to keep continuing his education.

"Education can and will change your future, engage yourself and take a leap if you are not currently fulfilled. You will NEVER regret a new learned skill, trade, or even set of friends!" Armstrong wrote when he shared a Black Hawk College LinkedIn post.

This message perfectly encapsulates Black Hawk College - our goal is to nurture lifelong

learners like Armstrong.

What made BHC stand out?

What was it about walking the halls of Black Hawk College that encouraged Armstrong to keep pushing his academic boundaries?



“Black Hawk gave me a lot of great experiences that I didn’t think I would have ... just out of high school,” Armstrong says.

“One of the biggest things was it was a lot more diverse. Coming from a small town, I didn’t really get to experience the cultural diversity that I got to experience at Black Hawk,” he says.

He believes that really pushed him to listen more and try to experience things through the eyes of others. That is something that he says has helped him at all levels of education and has been critical in his success as a professional.

Armstrong had a lot of career interests while attending Black Hawk College. He knew that he liked math and possibly wanted to be a teacher. The psychology classes he took also stood out to him. “It made me think in a different way than you normally think as an 18-year-old,” he says.

Life after BHC

After graduating from Black Hawk College in December 2011, Armstrong moved on to his next challenge – a bachelor’s degree in mathematics. He transferred to Western Illinois University and worked as a teaching assistant and student clerical worker while pursuing his bachelor’s and master’s degrees. He also put his math and customer service skills to use in managerial positions at two pizza restaurants during and after college.



In 2015, Armstrong joined Dohrn Transfer Company in Rock Island and has held several positions within the company, with his current position being senior linehaul manager. He oversees 22 terminals throughout the Midwest, ensuring that operations are running smoothly with more than 180 drivers.

“It is a lot of math coming in and then we are spitting out plans to the field so that they know how to load the freight efficiently, what times to cut the freight so we hit our transits and make service for our customers,” Armstrong says.

Armstrong is a firm believer in the idea of always looking for the next challenge and being prepared to learn something new. He says Black Hawk College really prepared him for that

by providing him with that initial experience outside of the small community he was used to.

His biggest message to young people is to try something new. You can't find your passion if you aren't looking for it.

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