

BHC graduate Tamica Reynolds has a simple message for people considering going back to school: do it.



"The hassle is definitely worth the tassel," she said.

Reynolds, of East Moline, accomplished a long-time goal of hers when she graduated from Black Hawk College with her Associate in Arts degree in 2018.

She graduated from United Township High School in 2000, and always knew she wanted to earn a degree.

Reynolds made the decision to go back to school because she values education, it was a goal she was determined to meet, and she likes challenging herself.

Making it happen

While attending Black Hawk College, Reynolds balanced studying with working full-time

and parenting.

Her advice for juggling multiple responsibilities is to keep focused, stay on top of things and plan ahead. She also encourages people to not overload themselves when it comes to how many classes they take.

Reynolds took many of her classes online, which worked well with her busy schedule. [Black Hawk College offers a variety of online courses and you can even earn an Associate in Arts completely online.](#)

Black Hawk College appealed to Reynolds because of location and affordability. She knew earning her degree was possible.

Journey to BHC

Reynolds started working at IH Mississippi Valley Credit Union eight years ago and stepped into her current role of Business Loan Administrator II in 2014.



She said her job is perfect for her because she likes working with numbers, and what she enjoys most is her co-workers.

“They make it easy for me to come into work every day with a smile on my face,” Reynolds said.

She started at the credit union as a member service representative, became a file clerk, and

then was a loan administration clerk before she was promoted to the business department. Previously, she worked as a receptionist in a medical setting.

A few years before pursuing her Associate in Arts degree, she took some nursing classes at Black Hawk College. The timing wasn't right for her to continue, so her higher education goal was paused.

She came back with a new focus of pursuing her Associate in Arts and this time everything fell into place. She was quickly on track to earning that degree and accomplishing her goal of becoming a college graduate.

Enjoying the moment

Graduating from Black Hawk College allowed Reynolds to teach her children about the importance of education and lead by example.

"My kids saw the struggle and determination along with the dedication and time I put into receiving my degree," she said.

Reynolds remembers the excitement of graduation well - how happy she was, and how happy her family was. Her kids, parents and other family members attended to cheer her on.



She said the positive atmosphere during the graduation ceremony was phenomenal and she couldn't believe the day was real and happening.

"Although I wish I would have finished right after high school, I wouldn't trade that day or that moment for anything in the world," she said.

A photo of Reynolds' face lighting up during the ceremony captured the happy moment, and

it is featured on banners at the Quad-Cities Campus.

Reynolds is considering going back to school again, this time to earn a bachelor's degree in business, likely from Western Illinois University.

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