

Biology professor Dr. Xixuan Collins is retiring from Black Hawk College but she and her family will be connected to the college and BHC students for years to come.

Dr. Collins and her husband have created an endowed scholarship fund through the Black Hawk College Foundation at the Quad-Cities Campus. Once fully endowed, the ABC All-Star Scholarship will be awarded to students with disabilities.



Dr. Xixuan Collins leading a science lab tour on Fall Visit Day in October 2017.

“Having a child with disabilities has taught me so much about the challenges students with disabilities face each and every day,” she said.

The Collins’ 12-year-old son, Ari, was diagnosed with autism and ADHD at age 7. The scholarship name is both a tribute to Ari and to Dr. Collins’ Chinese heritage.

“ABC is our son’s initial, and it also stands for American-Born Chinese, and all students can be stars and shine,” she said.

Dr. Collins knows that receiving a scholarship won’t solve every problem for a student, “but if it makes it possible for them to work one fewer shift, they may have more time to study for an exam.

“If it allows them to put gas in their cars or hire babysitters, they may be able to attend classes regularly. If it makes buying their textbooks not a worry, they may have less anxiety and more brain bandwidth to focus on school work,” she said.

The new scholarship will help empower more students to continue pursuing their educational goals, said Zenaida Landeros, executive director of the BHC Foundation.

“It invests not only in our diverse student population but helps to continue fostering an inclusive space within our Black Hawk College community,” she said.

Students who have applied for accommodations through the [Disability Services Office](#) and have a minimum 2.0 GPA will be eligible for the scholarship.

“All students deserve to receive a good education and achieve their full potentials,” Dr. Collins said.

“Through the scholarship, we also hope to help destigmatize disabilities, including the invisible kinds: autism, ADHD, anxiety, and other forms of mental illness-related disabilities and encourage students to seek help,” she added.

Landeros said receiving a gift from a college employee and her family and friends is especially rewarding.

“It shows how important Black Hawk College is to Dr. Collins and to those close to her,” Landeros said.

To donate to the ABC All-Star Scholarship, [visit the BHC Foundation website](#) or contact Zenaida Landeros at landerosz@bhc.edu or 309-796-5052.



Dr. Xixuan Collins holds her nameplate after cleaning out her office in May 2021.

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