Employees can earn an undergraduate degree through BILD’s academic partnerships

BJC employees have a variety of options, online or in the classroom

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BJC | Going back to school or starting college classes for the first time can be a difficult balance for a working adult. Thanks to a variety of academic partnerships with recognized universities, the BJC Institute for Learning and Development (BILD) provides employees with several different options that can meet their lifestyle.

Employees can select from academic partnerships offered through BILD at area schools and online.

“Our academic partnerships provide a convenient option for employees to earn their degree while still balancing their commitments to work and family,” says Beth Camp, BILD senior learning and development consultant for academic partnerships. “These offerings are designed to meet the varying needs of BJC’s workforce.”

Here are a few academic partnerships currently available to employees:

Saint Louis University
BJC employees can now choose from all degrees offered through SLU’s School for Professional Studies.

Students have the choice of taking classes 100 percent online, or those looking for a classroom experience can take their core classes at the BJC Learning Institute.

Programs include a bachelor’s degree in organizational studies, computer information systems with a concentration in health care information systems, a project management degree and the BJC Core Series.

“A bachelor’s degree in organizational studies was one of the first bachelor’s programs the School for Professional Studies offered to BJC employees,” says Justin Smith, MSHE, SLU community outreach coordinator, who works directly with BJC students to guide them through the program. “It’s still popular for students because all of the courses provide practical applications to the workplace.”

The BJC Core Series is available for students who haven’t decided on a major or have little to no experience in the college setting.

“It gives students a chance to take 42 transferable credit hours from SLU,” Smith says. “Once done with the core series, students can pick any bachelor’s program offered in the
School for Professional Studies or transfer to a university that offers a specific program that meets their needs.”

An additional feature of the SLU academic partnership is the ability for students to include a minor with their degree.

“The minors actually branch into many different fields outside of organizational studies,” Smith says. “The School for Professional Studies offers 12 different minors, with the more popular being project management, computer information systems and industrial psychology.”

Fontbonne University
Employees interested in learning more about the business of health care have the option of earning a bachelor of science degree in business administration or health care management or a bachelor of arts in general studies with an emphasis in business through the BILD and Fontbonne University partnership.

These undergraduate programs are designed specifically for BJC employees and offered in a cohort format.

Two classes are offered each session (fall, spring and summer) and students can enroll in any session throughout the year. Classes are currently offered at the BJC Learning Institute two nights a week, Tuesday and Thursday, but that can increase to meet demand, Camp says.

“These programs are designed for evening students, who may have different academic needs depending on whether they have prior academic experience or no prior academic experience,” says Katie Piacentini, PhD, Fontbonne University director of accreditation and graduate programs. “Students may take more than one class at a time if they wish to complete sooner rather than later, but we recognize that many will take one class at a time.”

The program was designed for students to take business courses on one night, health care management courses on another night and general education/core courses on yet another night, Piacentini explains.

“Offering the necessary general education courses as part of our rotation is an important part of providing a liberal arts education,” she says. “With this design, students can navigate a completion plan with their advisor that meets their goals and needs.

“With this rotation, we also offer a bachelor of arts degree in general studies with a business emphasis for students who have several hours but no degree and want to complete their studies by earning a credible degree without having to start over,” Piacentini adds.
Each degree can provide unique opportunities for BJC students. The health care management degree gives students a business degree that focuses on the health care environment and can be applied to hospitals, clinics, physician offices and other health care organizations. The business administration degree focuses on business concepts that are used across multiple disciplines and organizations.

Tuition is $350 per credit hour. Eligible employees can use tuition benefits to help pay for tuition.

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
BJC medical laboratory technicians (MLT) can now earn a bachelor’s degree through Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) and prepare for licensure, thanks to its partnership with BILD.

The SIUE College of Arts and Sciences and office of educational outreach partnered this year with BILD to offer a special online bachelor of liberal studies degree to meet a growing demand for medical laboratory scientists (MLS).

“When BJC identified almost 100 internal job openings for medical laboratory scientists and highlighted the critical need to create a pathway for existing credentialed technicians in the field, SIUE created this degree completion program for those individuals,” says Mary Ettling, SIUE office of educational outreach interim director. “This customized option allows MLT-credentialed individuals to take the appropriate coursework, earn the undergraduate degree and sit for the MLS certification exam.”

The time to complete the degree depends upon the number of accumulated transfer credits and the pace that works best for each student. SIUE works with individual students to help them maximize their employee tuition benefits and their intended graduation timeline.

Admission for the program is open and students can start about every eight weeks.

“This new partnership will provide BJC medical laboratory technicians with an opportunity to advance academically and in their professional careers,” Camp says. “As a fully online program, it allows employees to balance their work, family and education at their own pace.”

For more information about the program, visit https://www.siue.edu/corporate/bjc/.

Southern New Hampshire University — College for America
Many working adults who are pursuing their college degree have found that an online option best meets their needs.
BILD’s partnership with the College for America, an accredited, nonprofit college that’s part of Southern New Hampshire University, has become that online solution for many students.

BILD offers two pathways to earn a degree at SNHU through programs designed to meet employees’ needs, now and in the future. Through the partnership, BJC covers tuition costs up to $4,500 per year for eligible full-time employees.

SNHU offers two unique options to meet the busy life of a working adult:

- Instructor-led online programs, which include:
  - 200-plus transfer-friendly degrees in health care and business programs
  - just like traditional college classes, but with convenient 24/7 access to the classroom
  - 20 percent discount for BJC employees, with discounts also available for spouses and children
- Online self-directed programs (SNHU’s College for America) include features such as:
  - 10 career-relevant degrees
  - ability to work independently to earn the degree you want with the flexibility you need
  - costs just $3,000 a year for BJC employees

“This program appeals to many BJC employees because the work for this degree is completed entirely online and can be done on a part-time basis,” Camp says. “The students direct how quickly they move through the program.”

BJC employees can start the College for America degree programs at any time of the year, with terms starting every few weeks.

Camp says College for America is interested in reaching students who don’t think starting or even returning to college is an option for them.

“The competency-based model allows students to 'show what they know' and transfer that into achieving milestones toward their degree progress and allows them to acquire new skills as they progress,” she says. “The complete online option, as well as the highly affordable tuition, is a significant benefit to employees.”

Tuition is $999 for each 16-week term with six different start dates a year. Tuition benefit-eligible employees pay no tuition up front, but use their benefit as they complete each term. In addition, other financial aid options are available from the school.

For more information about these BILD academic partnerships and a list of others that offer tuition discounts to BJC employees, visit www.BJCLearn.org.