

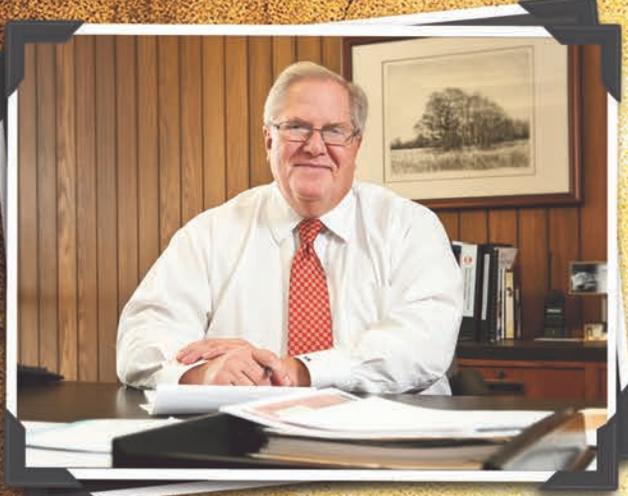
COMMEMORATIVE  
MAGAZINE

20  
65

**SAUK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**CHANGING LIVES FOR 50 YEARS**

# Letter from Dr. Mihel

PRESIDENT



Dear friends,

For the last 50 years Sauk Valley Community College has been changing lives by providing quality, yet affordable educational opportunities to the community. I am proud to say that Sauk has over 17,000 graduates of either degree or certificate programs. Some of these graduates transferred to 4-year universities to earn bachelor degrees. Others immediately entered the workforce as welders, mechanics, accountants and nurses. Many of them will confirm that Sauk helped change their lives and that Sauk provided them their only opportunity to attain a college degree.

As you read this magazine, explore our 50th Anniversary website and participate in our yearlong celebration, there will be many interesting facts and figures for you to digest, but pay particular attention to our success stories. You will read about how some of our students started from humble beginnings; about students who overcame major disabilities to earn their degrees despite the odds against it; or how some were so inspired by their own educational opportunities that they remained in education for their entire careers. Many went on to positively influence and change lives themselves as professionals.

Sauk's long standing motto has been "**Sauk makes it possible...you make it happen.**" I think about this motto often as Sauk will always stand by your side to provide you with quality educational opportunities and student support. But, in the end, it is the effort, fortitude, and sometimes courage of the student that is necessary to make it happen.

Sauk is celebrating its students, alumni and the community all year long. You can find a description of activities at the end of this magazine or on our website [svcc.edu/50](http://svcc.edu/50). I hope you find time to visit Sauk, take a class or two, enter a degree or certificate program or just enjoy our beautiful campus and participate in our festivities.

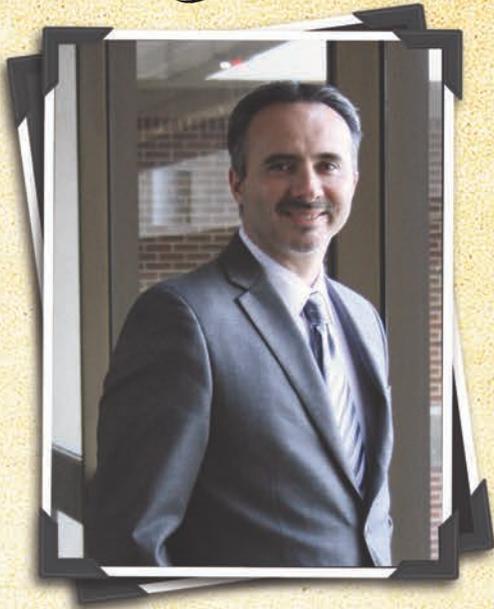
**I'll see you at Sauk!**

Dr. George Mihel  
President, Sauk Valley Community College

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Andrew Bollman, Chair • Scott Stoller, Vice Chair • Ed Andersen

# Letter from Andrew Bollman

## CHAIR OF SVCC BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dear community members,

It is with much enthusiasm, joy, and pride that Sauk Valley Community College invites you to celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Changing economic environments, technologies, and an unscrupulous dedication to excellence in education are all priorities the Board of Trustees has committed itself to over the years to help strengthen this community. Since its inception, Sauk has provided comprehensive and quality educational opportunities, while at the same time doing its best to contain costs and meet the budgets of its students so that they can have a running start when entering the workforce with little to no debt. By striving to meet the needs of the community, this institution continues to provide courses for students wishing to transfer to universities, individuals hoping to better themselves

through continuing education and provide occupational and technical training for those looking to enter a specific workplace field.

Within this publication, there are many examples of students who have successfully completed their associate degrees and have gone on to distinguished careers. It is with pride that we refer to them as our Sauk Successes! These individuals truly emphasize our motto, "**Sauk makes it possible...you make it happen.**"

Having graduated as a student from Sauk in 1996, I have personally benefited from the unparalleled commitment by the faculty to their students. Their dedication and example are what make this institution successful. Having served as a member of the Board of Trustees since 2007, I have witnessed this duty exemplified from the administration and staff with their efforts to ensure a prime environment for learning. Over the past two years, I have been honored to serve as the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Sauk, a place that I consider to be the lifeblood of our community.

It is my hope that you, too, have the opportunity to experience all that Sauk has to offer. We are here to serve you in making this community a better place. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank you for your continued support over the past 50 years, and we look forward to celebrating this milestone with you.

Visit Sauk soon and partake in some of the 50th Anniversary events planned for 2014-2015. With your investment, we will continue to act as a major resource for this area, creating more Sauk Successes and making the community a better place for all of us to live.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Bollman  
Chair, Sauk Valley Community College, Board of Trustees

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Voters approved the establishment of a community college in the Dixon-Sterling-Rock Falls area.

Sauk's first Board of Trustees was elected.

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The Sauk Valley College Foundation was established.

The Board purchased Schuler Farm between Dixon and Sterling as the permanent site of the College.

Third grader Michael Flanagan's suggestion to name the College "Sauk Valley" was chosen out of 1,842 suggestions.

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# 1960's

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Ground was broken on the first two "temporary" buildings erected on campus. They are both still used today.



Dr. Edward Sabol was named the College's first president in 1965 and remained president until 1972.



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Ground was broken on the permanent three-story building.

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The first commencement ceremony was held with 115 graduating students.

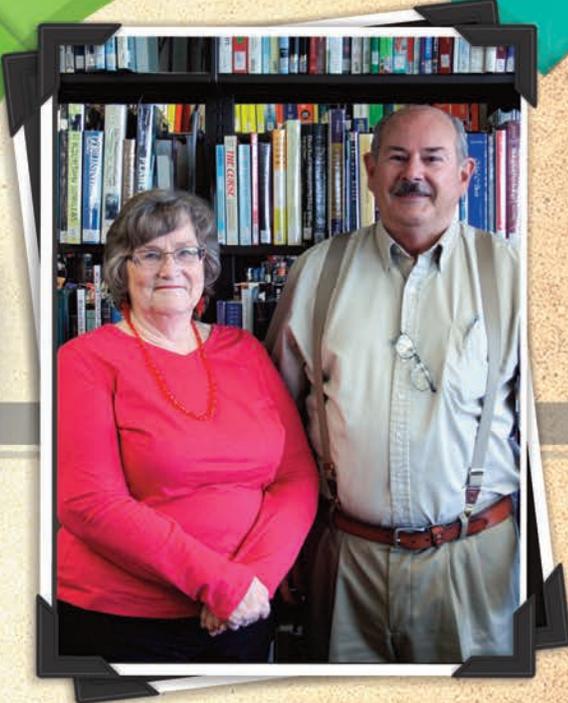
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Tuition at Sauk was \$8.50 per credit hour.

19  
66

The men's basketball team, the first inter-collegiate sport at Sauk, played their first game.

With 600 students enrolled, the College opened its doors to students for the first time.



# SAUK SUCCESS

## JERRY & SUE FARRINGER GRADUATING CLASS OF 1968 (1st ever)

*Jerry and Sue were starting their lives together in 1965. They both valued education and decided to enroll at Sauk. The newlyweds were the 2nd and 3rd students in Sauk history to register for classes. With Sue's support, Jerry went on to earn his bachelor's and master's degrees, spending most of his career as a fisheries biologist.*

*50 years later, Jerry credits Sauk for his great start. "Thank God for Sauk Valley College. It was the perfect place to enter the educational system and gave us the foundation we needed," shared Jerry. He added, "With the small class sizes, there was a lot of one on one, and the faculty was always available."*

*Jerry and Sue recently returned to Sauk to see how the campus has transformed over the years. They continue to believe in the power of education to change lives and the value of a Sauk education.*

*Jerry and Sue are retired and reside in Williamsburg, CO.*



19  
70

The permanent three-story College building opened its doors. It contains 450,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of usable area.

North Central Association accredited the College for the first time.

*Summer and Smoke* was the first public performance staged in Sauk's "Little Theatre" with 14 member cast.

College courses were first offered in area high schools and industrial plants as a way to serve the community and increase enrollment.

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# 1970's

Federal funding helped the College establish The Office of Veterans Affairs.



◀ *Dr. George E. Cole was president at Sauk from 1972 to 1980.*



The Adult Learning Center opened in Rock Falls to offer courses in GED, English as a Second Language, basic math and reading.

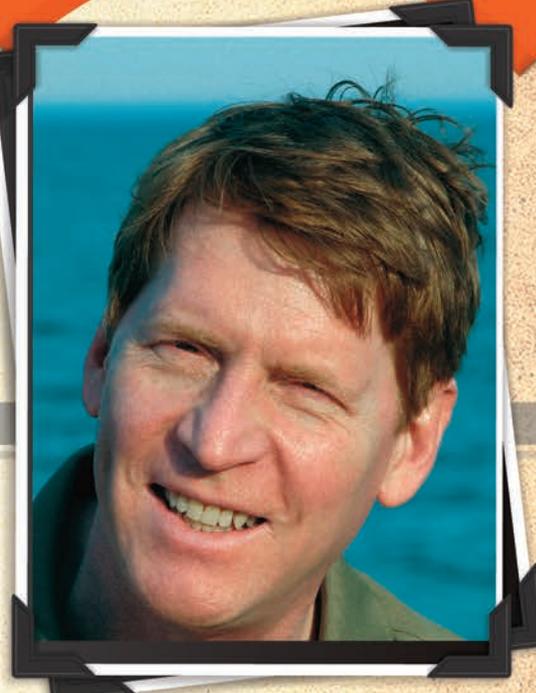
Seventeen students were admitted into the newly established Honors Program. The program continues to serve Sauk students today.

1978

1974

The women's tennis, volleyball, and badminton intercollegiate teams played their first games, circa 1974.

The first telecourse was offered over cable television in Dixon & Sterling.



1973

Mrs. Donna Newman was elected as the first student representative of the College Board of Trustees.

## SAUK SUCCESS

**DAVID NEMEČ**  
**GRADUATING CLASS OF 1977**

*I'm sure David didn't know that he would spend 34 years working in education. A 1977 Sauk graduate, he transferred to Northern Illinois University where he earned his bachelor's degree. Taking a job as a reading specialist, David continued to seek additional education which opened up new opportunities. He eventually earned three additional graduate degrees and was promoted to principal and then district superintendent at Franklin Park School District 84 in Franklin Park, IL where he finished his career.*

*David gives Sauk a lot of credit for a strong educational foundation. "I credit my great start at Sauk Valley College for my future educational and professional success. In my opinion, Sauk Valley College offered a quality and affordable associate degree program."*

*David thanks Sauk for providing him with a quality education.*



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The College logo was chosen. The Sauk "bullet" still remains in use today.

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The College offered its first summer enrichment program for accelerated 6th-8th grade students. Students could take poetry, French, photography, microcomputers, astronomy and mathematics.

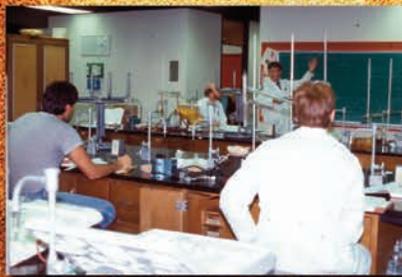
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The College began offering classes at the Illinois Department of Corrections in Dixon.

# 1980's



Dr. W. Harold Garner was president from 1980-1986.



Dr. Herbert Phillips  
was named interim  
President from  
May-October 1986.

"Sauk Valley Community  
College" became the  
College's official name when  
the word community  
was added.

Project VITAL  
(Volunteers in  
Teaching Adult Literacy)  
received a grant to  
help combat adult  
illiteracy in the  
Sauk Valley. VITAL  
is still active on  
campus today.

After six referendum  
defeats, the College  
education fund  
referendum passed.



## SAUK SUCCESS

### **JAMES "JIM" PRESTON** **GRADUATING CLASS OF 1989**

*Unsure of the direction to take after high school, Jim Preston jumped at the chance to play basketball for Sauk when Coach Russ Damhoff offered him a spot. Jim became a "scoring machine" and earned a personal player ranking of 3rd all-time in scoring. He fondly remembers his time at Sauk and points to the comradery and life-long bond players formed with each other.*

*Jim earned his associate's degree at Sauk, a bachelor's degree at Illinois State University, and a master's degree at University of Illinois-Springfield. Currently, Jim is the head coach of the boys' basketball team at Sterling High School. Looking back, Jim made the right decision to come to Sauk, as it clarified his goals. "When I got to Sauk and took a few classes... I knew that I [had found my passion]."*

*Jim ranks 3rd all-time in scoring at Sauk.*



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SVCC raised \$548,273 for its endowment fund that was used to fund instructional equipment, scholarships and other special needs of the College.

Sauk won a \$1.5 million Higher Act Education grant that was used to create state-of-the-art nursing labs, develop a computer assisted English composition curriculum and expand student services.

SVCC and Whiteside Area Vocational Center (now called WACC) came together to implement Tech Prep, a program with planned courses beginning in high school, and followed with post-secondary experience leading to an associate's degree.

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# 1990's



Dr. Richard L. Behrendt was approved as the fourth president of SVCC in 1986. He retired from Sauk in 2005.

The first winner of the Anne Horton Writing Award was James March of Ohio with his essay *Whistle While You Work*.



SVCC launched its website and introduced faculty and student email addresses.

The dual credit program was launched. Eligible high school students could now enroll in college-level classes.

Area middle school students were asked to submit ideas for a new mascot. Out of over 100 suggestions, the name "Redmen" was replaced with "Skyhawks."

The Fitness Center opened with more than 30 exercise machines. It was later expanded to include a free weight area.

Fifty-five students started a chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society at SVCC. The chapter was named Beta Alpha Gamma.



## SAUK SUCCESS

**JEFF SHOEMAKER**  
**GRADUATING CLASS OF 1992**

*While working at Allied Locke, Jeff pursued his degree at Sauk. "It was really beneficial to be able to take night classes so that I could continue to work." He added, "My classes rounded things out for me and helped me decide what I wanted to do." Jeff graduated from Sauk in 1992 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology.*

*After returning to Allied Locke and years of "hard work," Jeff was eventually promoted to Vice President.*

*As Vice President, Jeff has a lot of influence and has encouraged employees to go back to Sauk. "In manufacturing, technology is constantly changing. Area businesses need to be aware of its importance, be involved with SVCC, and give input and direction on industry needs to get the best return from training and manufacturing programs at [Sauk]."*

*Jeff said that Sauk helped him decide on what he wanted to do for a career.*



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The Sauk Scholar Award program was established to award high achieving high school students with free tuition. Over \$1.4 million has been awarded since.

The first hybrid course was offered at Sauk. Hybrid classes combine traditional classroom instruction with online instruction elements.

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The new Skyhawk mascot was named "Slammin' Sammy." The name was chosen from over 3,000 entries.

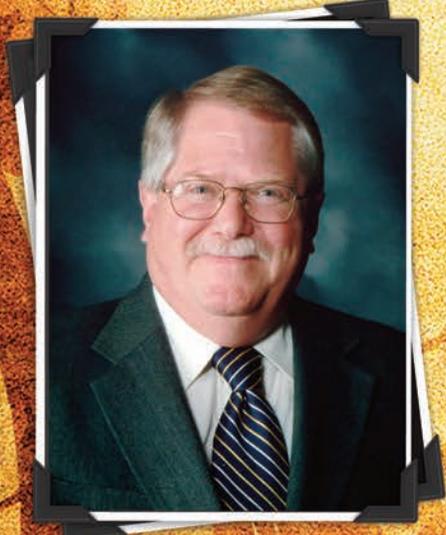
Testing Center opened to provide testing services for students including make-up exams, GED testing, placement and certification exams.

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SVCC completed a 15,770 ft<sup>2</sup> technology wing renovation for lab-based programs including welding, electricity, HVAC, electronics and hydraulics.

# 2000's



*In 2005, Dr. George Mihel was welcomed as SVCC's fifth president. He will retire in 2015.*



A new Math Lab was created. The lab area contains 33 computers that students use to progress through their math assignments at their own pace.

Tuition was set at \$103 per credit hour.

The 45-year-old biology labs underwent renovation to new, spacious labs with updated equipment and modernized learning areas.

The 3,350 ft<sup>2</sup> radiology wing was redesigned to include new classrooms and two fully-equipped X-ray labs.



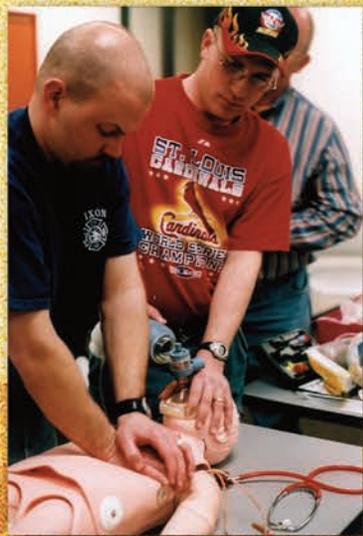
## SAUK SUCCESS

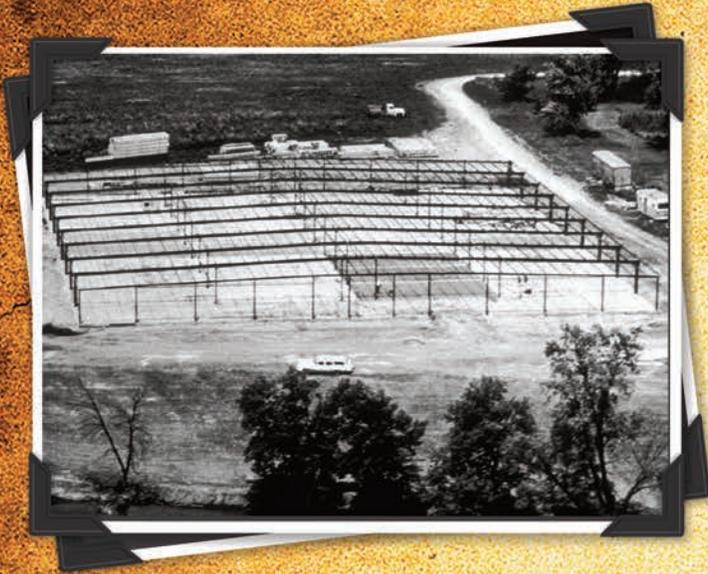
**KATHLEEN DUSING**  
**GRADUATING CLASS OF 2006**

*"I came to Sauk extremely nervous because I never got the proper accommodation at [the first college I tried]." Kathleen is legally blind, and new environments can be daunting. To acclimate herself, she walked through Sauk with her seeing eye dog, Pasha. "It felt very homey," Kathleen shared. The first weeks were tough, but she persevered with help from Sauk staff like Keith Bos and Jane Hamilton. Added Kathleen, "It was very family oriented."*

*Kathleen graduated from Sauk in 2006 with honors and an associate's degree in special education. Kathleen also won a spot on the prestigious All-USA Community College First Team, one of only 20 community college students in the country that year to achieve this. Kathleen later graduated from Northern Illinois University in special education with an emphasis in visual impairment.*

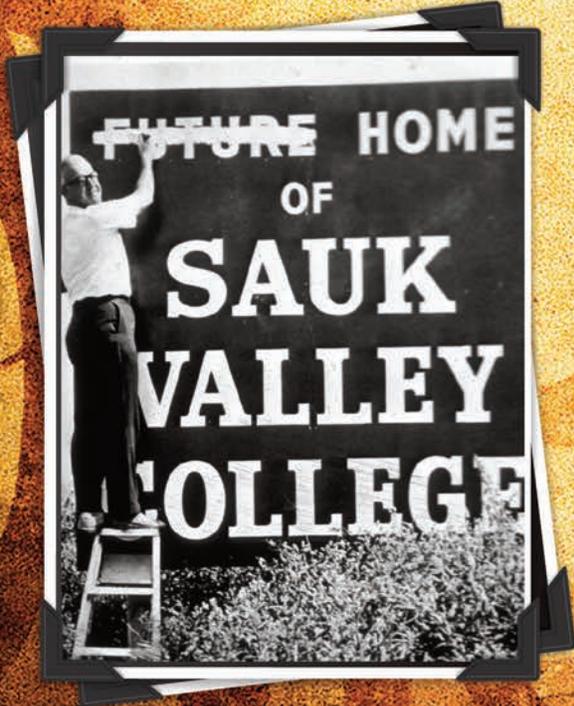
*Kathleen and her guide dog, Pasha, were a fixture at Sauk for two years as she earned her associate's degree.*





◀ The College's "temporary" building under construction in 1965.

Sauk students enjoying a little downtime between classes circa 1985. ▶



◀ After the "temporary" building was built in 1966, the college was open for business.

*The first Board of Trustees (1965) consisted of seven members including (from left to right) Warren Walder of Dixon, Kenneth Reuter of Amboy, Catherine Perkins of Prophetstown, Peter Dillon of Sterling, Forrest Tabor of Rock Falls, Clayton Schuneman of Sterling and Gerald Stuff of rural Dixon.*



◀ *Students relaxing before traveling to a 1985 athletic event.*



*Circa 1975, President George E. Cole (front) helps his team win the College's tug-of-war contest during Sauk's Pow Wow Day.*



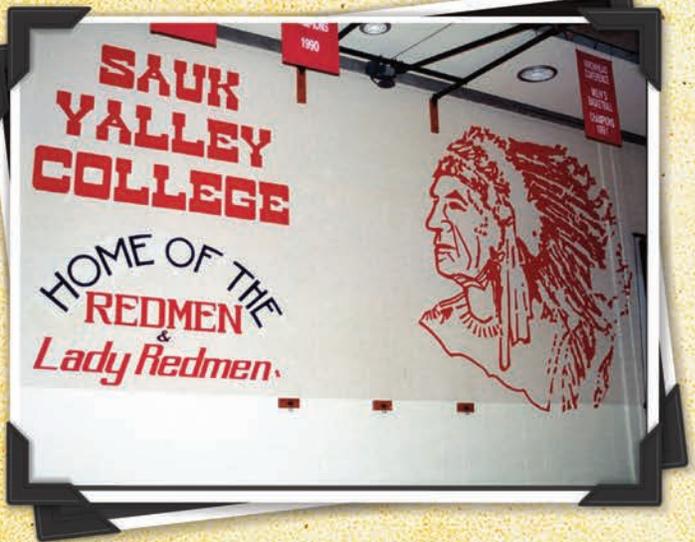
◀ *In 1965, third grader Michael Flanagan receives his certificate of free tuition for his winning suggestion to name the College "Sauk Valley."*





◀ *Carnival, Sauk's first musical and third overall theatre production in the "Little Theatre," opened November, 1970.*

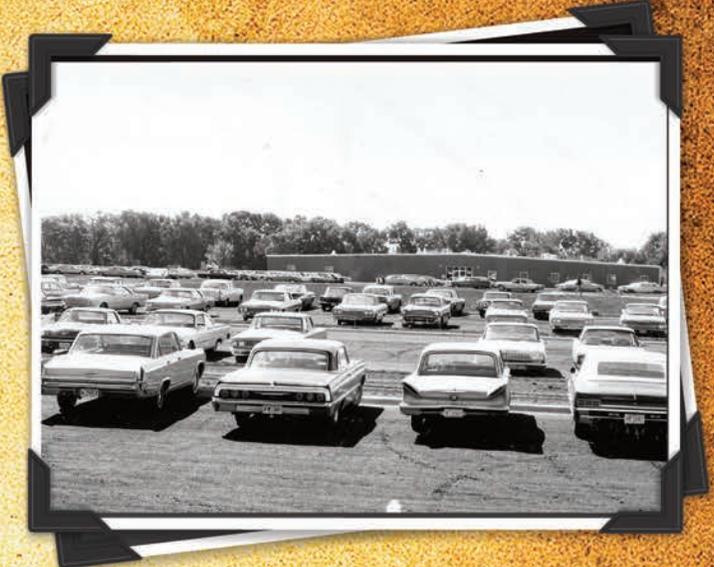
*In 1995, Sauk changed its mascot to the "Skyhawks."* ▶



◀ *Holly Smith, a third grader from Milledgeville named Sauk's mascot "Slammin' Sammy" in 2009. The name was chosen from over 3,000 entries.*



*View from the Sauk parking lot after the "temporary" building first opened for classes.* ▶



▶ *Pete Dillon celebrates during the College's ground breaking ceremony.*

*The first Sauk Valley Foundation Board and distinguished guests. Pictured, from left to right, is R. M. Robinson, Henry Lovett, Robert Warner, President Dr. Sabol, Louise Sullivan, Gerald Stuff, ▶  
Dean Kuhn, Noel Wallen, Catherine Perkins, Gus Hinueber, Helen Nicely, Ray French, Dr. Glenn Pohly, Warren Walder, and Philip Osborn. Members not pictured are Charles Farnham, Keith McGuire, Tom Broderick, Mrs. C.A. Conrad.*





## *Letter from Shari Miller*

COLLEGE FOUNDATION MANAGER

Dear friends:

An anniversary is a time to reflect and celebrate. As the Sauk Valley College Foundation reflects on the last 50 years of fond memories, challenging times, and significant accomplishments, we know that these moments have brought us to where we are today...still growing, changing and adapting to meet the needs of the communities we serve. We are excited to celebrate 50 years of rich history with a year full of events to showcase Sauk Valley Community College, and its continuous commitment to excellence, by being a leader in providing a first rate affordable education to all who attend.

The Foundation takes pride in its long standing support of Sauk Valley Community College, its facilities, programs and students.

Since our establishment on November 4, 1965, we have supported thousands of students, as they have pursued their educational goals, with well over \$3,000,000 in scholarships and other forms of assistance. We are proud to have provided funding to the recently updated science lab area, and academic programs such as biology and theatre arts. We continue to seek resources for projects in manufacturing technology and the health and fire science fields.

Sauk is a place to call home for past, present, and future students. The Alumni Association encourages our alumni to **stay connected** with us and their peers. Being connected as an alum means better networking and more memories. Consider donating your time as a way to give back to your alma mater! **We are looking for volunteers** to help at our events, mentor students and showcase talents and success. Watch for upcoming alumni networking events this year designed to connect alumni. We hope that you will make more memories and join us at one of those events or on campus again soon.

Your gift of education to Sauk Valley Community College students is so powerful. It helps students achieve their educational and career goals, improves the lives of their families, and contributes to their success, which in turn, benefits the community.

**For information on giving opportunities, please contact me at 815.835.6345 or [shari.k.miller@svcc.edu](mailto:shari.k.miller@svcc.edu).** If you prefer, visit our secure giving site at [svcc.edu/community/alumni-friends/donate-online.html](http://svcc.edu/community/alumni-friends/donate-online.html)

Sincerely,  
Shari Miller  
Manager Sauk Valley College Foundation



Sauk students look on as former instructor Bob VanderWege demonstrates an art technique.

James March was the first winner of the Anne Horton Writing Award. James, of Ohio, IL is pictured here with other award winners and Professor Horton in 1992.



**For new or prospective students:**  
call the SVCC Recruiting office at 815.835.6421.

**For returning students:**  
call the SVCC Counseling office at 815.835.6354.

**Like us on Facebook**



173 IL Route 2 • Dixon, IL 61021  
815.288.5511 • [svcc.edu/50](http://svcc.edu/50)

# 50TH Anniversary Events



## OPEN HOUSE

**Date:** July 24, 2014 from 5:00-6:30pm. *Chamber members only event.*

**Location:** Sauk's south lawn overlooking the Rock River

**Contact:** Sharri Miller at [sharri.k.miller@svcc.edu](mailto:sharri.k.miller@svcc.edu) or 815.835.6345 for additional details.



## ROCKIN' ON THE RIVER

**Date:** September 13, 2014 from 3:30-8:30pm

**Location:** Sauk's south lawn overlooking the Rock River

**Contact:** Steve Nunez at [steve.c.nunez@svcc.edu](mailto:steve.c.nunez@svcc.edu) or 815.835.6263 for additional details.



## YOUTH BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT & ALUMNI CLASSIC

**Date:** December 30 & 31, 2014

**Location:** Sauk's West Mall & Newman High School gymnasium.

**Contact:** Steve Nunez at [steve.c.nunez@svcc.edu](mailto:steve.c.nunez@svcc.edu) or 815.835.6263 for additional details.



## SPRINT & STROLL 5.0K

**Date:** April 11, 2015 • Check-in/registration begins at 8:00am with the run scheduled to begin at 9:00am.

**Location:** Check-in/registration will take place at the east end of the SVCC campus.

**Contact:** Dana Chacon at [dana.j.chacon@svcc.edu](mailto:dana.j.chacon@svcc.edu) or 815.835.6413 for additional information.



## SAUK FAMILY SAFARI

**Date:** April 11, 2015 from 10:00am-2:00pm

**Location:** Sauk's main building

**Contact:** Therese Wood at [therese.l.wood@svcc.edu](mailto:therese.l.wood@svcc.edu) or 815.835.6391 for additional details.



## COMMUNITY THANK YOU GALA

**Date:** July 18, 2015 at 6:00pm

**Location:** Sauk's East Mall

**Contact:** Deb Dillow at [debra.d.dillow@svcc.edu](mailto:debra.d.dillow@svcc.edu) or 815.835.6303 for additional information.

# 2015

SAUK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
CHANGING LIVES FOR 50 YEARS

*All materials printed in-house at Sauk Valley Community College*