

Sauk Valley Community College
July 27, 2026

Agenda Item 3.1.2

Topic: **Acknowledgement – Linda Giesen**

Mission: **Sauk Valley Community College is dedicated to teaching and scholarship while engaging the community in lifelong learning, public service, and economic development.**

Presented by: Dr. Jon Mandrell

Presentation:

It is with deep sadness that we share that local community leader, SVCC supporter, and former instructor Linda Giesen passed away on June 19th, 2026.

Linda was a remarkable leader whose career left a lasting impact on the Sauk Valley region and beyond. Her extraordinary story of service to the community and dedication to SVCC inspired countless individuals. In 2024, Sauk Valley Community College honored Linda with an Honorary Associate in Arts Degree in Criminal Justice in recognition of her exceptional contributions.

Linda began her professional journey with the Illinois Department of Corrections in 1975 after earning a degree in criminology. Throughout her distinguished career, she rose through the ranks and made history as Illinois' first female warden of an all-male correctional facility while leading Dixon Correctional Center. She also served as warden of Dwight Correctional Center and became widely respected for her leadership and commitment to public service. In addition to her work in corrections, Linda dedicated part of her career to higher education, serving as the first Criminal Justice instructor at Sauk Valley Community College. After leaving the classroom, she continued to mentor faculty, students, and professionals throughout the region.

Embodying the SVCC spirit of lifelong learning, Linda earned her law degree from the University of Iowa and went on to build a successful legal career in Dixon. She later served as Lee County State's Attorney and became a respected attorney in private practice.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Linda was deeply involved in numerous service organizations. Her leadership with Rotary, United Way, and numerous community initiatives helped strengthen the Sauk Valley region and improve the lives of many. She was also a strong supporter of the SVCC Impact Program.