

**Sauk Valley Community College
March 17, 2025**

Action Item 4.4

Topic: **Honorary Degree**

Shared Ethical Values: **Sauk Valley Community College respects the worth and dignity of all people; stands for integrity and fairness; and encourages responsibility, accountability, and persistence in a caring, supportive environment.**

Presented By: **Dr. David Hellmich**

Presentation:

Per Board Policy *109.02*, an Honorary Degree is a high form of recognition offered by Sauk Valley Community College to persons of exceptional distinction. To be awarded the honorary degree, the nominee must have made exceptional and lasting contributions as a notable life achievement to the College, to the Sauk Valley community, or to the state community. John Berge is such a person.

John is an alumnus of SVCC and has a distinguished professional career in accounting. He established his own accounting firm – McFalls, Berge & Associates – in 1996, and 90% of his employees are SVCC alumni. John is dedicated to growing the accounting workforce and collaborates with Sauk to match aspiring accountants with employers. In this capacity, he coordinates the annual *SVCC Business Symposium* for students.

John is a founding director of Sauk Valley Bank, a long-time Trustee for the Herbert Hoover Foundation, a Sterling Rotarian, and a swimming and diving coach for Sterling clubs and teams. He was recognized as the *2022 Sauk Valley Area Chamber's Chamber Champion* in recognition of his commitment through leadership and mentoring to the region's business community over three decades.

Recommendation:

The administration recommends the Board, per Board Policy *109.02*, award an Honorary Associate in Arts Degree – Accounting to John Berge for exceptional and lasting contributions to his profession and community.