

Steve Baade, Pocahontas Market President, Set to Retire

After 39 years in banking, Baade is retiring, names successor.

Pocahontas, Iowa (July 17, 2024) – Availa Bank is proud to congratulate Steve Baade on his retirement after 39 years in the banking industry. He is succeeded as Pocahontas Market President by Sheila Akridge, current VP Loan Officer at the Pocahontas branch.

Baade started his career as an intern with Farm Credit Services in 1979, transitioning to Loan Officer and then Branch Manager in 1983. In 1985, he took the role of Senior Loan Officer for Commercial State Bank until it became Citizens State Bank in 1986. In 1989, Baade graduated from the American Bankers Association Graduate School of Agri-Finance and Banking. He became the CEO/President of Citizens State Bank in 1994. Since the merger with Carroll County State Bank in 2014 to present day, he has served as the Pocahontas Market President for Availa Bank.

Outside of his main roles, Baade has served on the Board of Directors for Citizens State Bank, Carroll County State Bank, Carroll County Bancshares Holding Company, and First Choice Financial Services. He also served as president of First Choice Financial Services.

After graduating from Westmar College in 1980 with degrees in business administration, economics, and business education, Baade came to Pocahontas and has spent his entire career there. Over the years, he has become deeply ingrained in the community as a farmer, school board member for the Pocahontas Area Community School District, treasurer/member of the Pocahontas Service Club, board member of the Pocahontas County Cattleman's Association, president and board member for the Pocahontas Community Foundation Board, member of the Rialto Theatre board, board member for the Pocahontas Chamber of Commerce, and committee member for the Pocahontas City Revolving Loan Fund.

Baade is married with three kids and four grandchildren. In his retirement, he plans to continue farming and attending Iowa State University football and men's basketball games with his family.

Reflecting on his time at the bank, Baade says, "I feel very fortunate to have spent my entire work career in the Pocahontas community. During my tenure at the bank, I have often worked with second and third generations of many families while providing their banking needs. My wife taught school in Pocahontas for many years and our three children attended and graduated from the Pocahontas Area Community School. I was able to provide banking services to many great people over the years and I now consider many to be very good friends. I was also blessed with so many dedicated employees that I have had the pleasure to work with. I am confident that Sheila Akridge will continue to serve our customers as the Pocahontas Market President and provide the level of customer service that people have come to expect from Availa Bank."

Jeff Scharfenkamp, CEO and President of Availa Bank, is thankful for Baade's years of service and commitment to the Pocahontas community. "A well-deserved congratulations but an even bigger thank you to Steve Baade. Steve has served his customers, his community, and the bank in a first-class way throughout his career. I want to offer a special thanks to Steve for his outstanding service that has brought so much success to so many people," he says.

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About Availa Bank: Availa Bank's roots date back to 1870 when it was originally chartered. Availa is the first three syllables of the word available, a word that defines the bank's mission – to empower our team to inspire and enable our clients and the communities we serve to achieve financial success. Availa Bank locations are in the following communities: Ames, Ankeny, Carroll, Coon Rapids, Council Bluffs, Fort Dodge, Holstein, Jewell, Nevada, Omaha (LPO Only), Pocahontas, Sioux City, and Webster City. For more information about Availa Bank, visit www.Availa.Bank. Member FDIC.