

# STOCKTON COLLEGE

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



## Become a Safer Driver in Just 20 Minutes

Stockton Center on Successful Aging to Host CarFit on April 24

### ***For Immediate Release***

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**Contact:**     **Tim Kelly**  
                  **Susan Allen**  
                  **Office of Public Relations**  
                  **Galloway Township, NJ 08240**  
                  **Tim.Kelly@stockton.edu**  
                  **(609) 652-4950**

**Galloway Township, NJ-** Driving is a freedom, but as we age, mobility presents new challenges. Older adults must maintain a balance between independence, safety and comfort. CarFit is an educational program designed specifically for older adults to help them find the best car adjustments for optimum safety and comfort. The Stockton Center on Successful Aging (SCOSA) will host a CarFit program on **Saturday, April 24, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** in Parking Lot 5 outside The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey's Sports Center.

Stockton College has joined the CarFit cause, a growing, nationwide movement created by the American Society on Aging and developed in collaboration with the American Automobile Association (AAA), AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association. Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy Kim Furphy said, "It's a great program that measures how well our community's older adults 'fit' their vehicles. Approximately 20 occupational therapy and gerontology students have been trained by Stockton's OT department to conduct audits and to then help the older adults adjust their autos." In addition, Professor Furphy is gathering trained occupational therapists from Bacharach Rehab Center.

David Burdick said, "CarFit epitomizes SCOSA's mission to intertwine education and research in a community setting. Proper mirror adjustments minimize blind spots and proper foot positioning on the gas and brake pedals can eliminate fatigue and improve reaction time. These minor adjustments can significantly improve the safety of drivers in our community."

Each CarFit audit and corresponding adjustment session will be completed in roughly 20 minutes. The result is a safer and more comfortable driver. CarFit was pilot tested in 2005 with more than 300 older driver participants, and based on the findings from CarFit checklists and follow-up surveys,

- Over one-third (37%) had at least one critical safety issue needing attention
- One in ten were seated too close to the steering wheel
- Approximately 20% did not have a line of sight at least 3" over the steering wheel

**-more-**

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According to the CarFit Web site, older drivers are often the safest drivers, but they are also more likely to be seriously injured if a crash does occur, due to the fragility of their aging bones. Furthermore, driver safety programs improve older adults' safety by addressing cognitive abilities and skills, however, older drivers can also improve their safety by ensuring that their cars are properly adjusted. A proper fit greatly increases a driver's safety and the safety of surrounding drivers.

Please contact Anita Beckwith at 609-626-3591 to reserve a spot for the CarFit program. For more information on SCOSA and their upcoming events, visit [www.stockton.edu/scosa](http://www.stockton.edu/scosa).

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