



## Older Adults Meet Monthly at Stockton College to Write Collective Memoir

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**Galloway Township, NJ-** A group of nearly 20 older adults from southern New Jersey has written a collection of stories that will be used as an intergenerational teaching tool in gerontology classes at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

The “Time to Tell” program was adapted by Gina Maguire and Anita Beckwith, both Stockton Center on Successful Aging (SCOSA) program assistants, from Dr. Lisa Cox’s guided autobiography segment of her Aging and Spirituality course. Cox, who is the project leader for “Time to Tell” and the SCOSA research chair, has students write about nine life themes during guided autobiography exercises. Maguire and Beckwith have had older adults in the “Time to Tell” program write on 14 themes.

Dick Pelrine, a Stockton alumnus from Barnegat, writes with his wife, Ethel, who has Alzheimer’s because he hopes the mental exercise will help to trigger memories in her mind.

Roberta Plasket, a resident of Hammonton, writes because she has stories—some that have been secrets—that she wants to share with her family.

Plasket is writing a series of books that are broken up into the periods of her life. One of her books in the series, *Awakened Fire: First Lessons in the Dance of Life*, has been published through Kindle on Amazon.

The monthly writing group of older adults from Atlantic and Ocean counties focuses their writing on 14 broad themes. The group, which has been meeting at Stockton since January 2012 under the leadership of Gina Maguire, also an adjunct professor at Stockton, will receive copies of their collected memoirs from the College when the group wraps up in April. Cox says the publication will serve as “a gift back to the participants for their time.”

Cox and Maguire both plan to use the collective memoir in their gerontology classes. “Time to Tell” participants also have spoken to gerontology students about their writings, giving students the opportunity to learn more about the aging process. At SCOSA’s May 23 festival at Stockton’s Campus Center, “Time to Tell” participants will read excerpts from their stories in a break-out session. # # #