

**Testimony to the Senate Special Committee on Aging Field Hearing**

**“Back to Work: Empowering Alabama’s Aging Workforce”**

**November 30, 2018**

**Ms. Montina Dorsey-Collins**

My name is Montina Dorsey-Collins. I have been through the Back to Work 50+ Program at Jefferson State Community College and I cannot say enough good things about it! My experience has been exceptional. From excellent life coaching, learning new skills and wonderful support, my Back to Work 50+ involvement has taught me that I am not alone in my search for a better job.

I accidentally found the program by going to the state employment office located in the One Stop Career Center on campus. They recommended the program to me and I went to the information session where I learned about the program and strategies for gaining employment for people over 50. Finding a job is so different than it was when I first started working.

My Back to Work 50+ coaching sessions were invaluable. We talked about the difficulties of finding new/better employment for people over 50. The coaching helped me see the value in myself and the many skills that I already possess.

The program has offered me fantastic technical skills and refresher skills. The program led me to Ready to Work and now I am in the Certified Production Technician program. These classes have taught me technology basics, workplace behaviors, resume building and has taught me how find and apply for jobs online. My Certified Production Technician classes are preparing me for a career in the automotive manufacturing industry and I am looking forward to a career change because of my new skills.

And lastly, I cannot say enough about the Back to Work 50+ staff. I currently work selling cemetery plots and headstones. My current job has no advancement opportunities and my income is solely based on sales. My coaches have taken the time to have one on one sessions with me to discuss my needs and where I want my career to go from here. They have helped me see the need for certification training and how it can help my career objectives.

I am grateful to have found such a great opportunity through the Back to Work 50+ program. I know it has helped me and many others as well.