

THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Office of Public Relations
Pomona, NJ 08240

***Bookends* – A Staged Reading of the Play by Michael J. Feely to be Presented at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey**

Event Set for Tuesday, December 4 at 6:30 pm in the Alton Auditorium

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, November 20, 2007

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Galloway Twp., NJ –The House Un-American Activities Committee was an investigative committee formed in 1938 that subpoenaed actors, artists, and writers as part of an inquiry into political allegiance. *Bookends* is a play about a playwright and a director who were close childhood friends who were both subpoenaed to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee. The playwright, Michael Feely, will attend the performance, discuss the play, and take questions after the staged reading.

When Honors Program Director Michael Hozik and Freshman Seminars Director G.T. Lenard were seeking additional ways to explore the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey's First Year Experience theme "Liberty," Hozik recalled a production he'd seen last winter at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia. He proposed a version of it for Stockton. Lamott Moore, Director of Student Development, was so impressed by the project that he offered financial assistance to support it. Three senior administrators at Stockton—showing a different side of themselves to the Stockton community—are thus presenting a staged reading of the timely play on December 4, and playwright Michael J. Feely will be in attendance to see the work performed and afterwards to discuss its implications with the audience.

Bookends, by California writer Michael J. Feely, explores the aftermath of the hearings of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee and their effect on the relationship between former friends—a director, and a playwright. Loosely based on the severed friendship between Elia Kazan who cooperated with the Committee, and Arthur Miller who did not, *Bookends* imagines the first meeting of the two men more than 13 years after Kazan's testimony, when the two "old friends" (The reference comes from Paul Simon's song, which also gives the play its name.) meet to discuss Kazan's directing of Miller's *After the Fall*.

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Peter Hagen, head of the College's Advising Center, is reading the role of Jackson Kale, the director. David Pinto, head of Stockton's library, is reading as the playwright Matthew Burke. They are joined by Bonnie Buzza, Associate Provost, who is reading Burke's wife, Nora, and who is also directing the production. The three have read together on campus in other, smaller, productions. Buzza had taught speech communication and directed readers theatre productions for a number of years before moving into administration. Presented via videotaped "imaginings" of the Hearings, a unique feature of this production, is the voice of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee, read by philosophy professor Rodger Jackson.

Author Feely will be arriving a couple of days early for the production and will visit Honors classes and Freshman seminars to discuss his work and possible parallels in contemporary America, and be available to theatre and to writing students to talk about his profession. Hozik and Lenard will be hosting him on campus.

The reading airs once, at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, December 4, 2007, at the Alton Auditorium on the Galloway Township campus. General admission tickets, which are available to students and the general public at no charge, may be picked up at the door of the auditorium beginning at 6 PM the night of the performance. Feely's discussion with the audience should begin about 8:30, at the conclusion of the production. For more information contact the Office of the Honors Program at Stockton at (609) 626-6094.

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