

# Senior Community Service Employment Program

## After All These Years,

Dorothy Culbertson, 75, hadn't taught school for more than 50 years but when she applied for her job through SCSEP she was still "more than qualified" according to James Noether, director of the Leicester BOCES center where Dorothy is now employed.

"I wasn't apprehensive at all about hiring Dorothy," said Noether. "She had all the experience in the world that we required. After all, she had raised eight children of her own."

The BOCES school instructs those children that may benefit more from individual attention rather than what the crowded classroom setting could give them. Since she started work at BOCES last November, it has been a vast learning experience for Dorothy as well.

"This is very different from when I taught, but I love children



and I enjoy working with them. I don't know of anything more satisfying than to help a child. The key thing is that you have to learn children; you have to learn whom you are working with."

Dorothy has been so impressed by the atmosphere and the children around her, that she has really formed a special dedication to her job.

"I hadn't been here very long," said Dorothy, "when one little boy came in, probably 10 or 12 years old. He couldn't use his arms. He had a book that was assigned to him. He put the book on the table with his mouth and then opened the book to the page, also with his mouth. I couldn't believe it. Then he had a paper and, well, I just didn't know what was going to come after that, but he wrote with his pencil in his mouth. I never saw such beautiful writing in my life."



Mariam Watkins had been out of work for a year and a half in August, 1977, when she read in a newspaper that SCSEP offered her a chance to get back into the working world.

Mariam had spent her last four working years in the kitchens at the State University of New York at Geneseo until she was released or reached the age of "mandatory retirement." So Mariam answered the ad; and a little more than a week later began work at the Mt. Morris Senior Nutrition Center.

Mariam works five hours a day, five days a week cleaning and cooking at the center and is "much happier" because the atmosphere is much more relaxed and personal than it ever was at her previous job.

"There is no comparison with work at Geneseo," said Mariam. "I'm very glad that I'm here."

The center puts out one meal a day at noon and the number of dinners served per day averages about 50.

During this interview, Rose Robbins, the Livingston County project director of the Senior Nutrition Program, approached Molly Cole, project director of SCSEP, to see if she could place another worker in the Mt. Morris center because "things had worked out so well with Mariam."



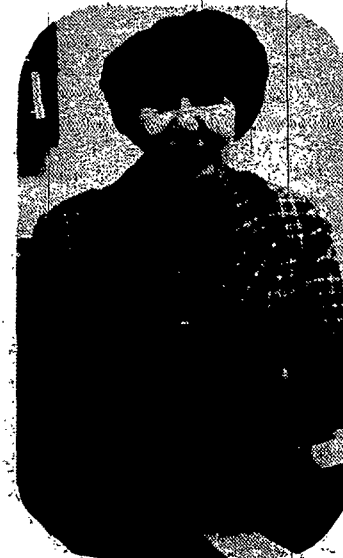
### Program Explained

Molly Cole describes her job as challenging and gratifying yet very disappointing.

Molly is the project director of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in Livingston County. From her office in Mt. Morris, Molly orchestrates her attempts to bring the area's senior citizens "back into the work cycle".

SCSEP is sponsored by the National Retired Teachers Association and the American Association of Retired Persons (NRTARP) and is funded through the U.S. Department of Labor. SCSEP first began operation in September, 1969, and has since expanded to 96 cities across the country designated as project sites.

The Livingston County Project began in August, 1977, and is funded through June, 1978. At that time, the program will be evaluated to see if continuation of the program is advisable. To qualify for SCSEP, all applicants must be 55 years of age or older and have an income which does not exceed current Department of Labor guidelines for disadvantaged persons.



MOLLY COLE

"It's very upsetting to see people who want to work and could use the extra income, turned down because they are above the government's standards," said Molly. "For example, if people own a car and trailer and have some money in the bank and are living on \$200 a month, if they go to Social Services they will be told, 'You can't collect Welfare because you own property. You're rich.'"

Medical examinations to determine physical limitations, if any, are also required of all applicants.