

## It's Never too Late Sixty-Five Year Old LaGuardia Student Receives Associate Degree



# APPLAUSE!



ANNIE LEE AT THE AGE OF 65 RECEIVED  
HER ASSOCIATE DEGREE.

When Annie Lee dropped out of high school she always knew she would return and eventually get a college degree. It took 47 years, but the 65-year-old LaGuardia Community College human services major never gave up on her dream, graduating at LaGuardia's 36th Commencement on September 18, 2008. The path that led to a high school equivalency diploma and finally an associate degree was filled with many detours for the North Carolina native. The first came at the age of 16 when her mother died and she suddenly found herself on her own.

For the next 37 years she worked as a seamstress for different clothing companies, as a slipcover maker and as a matron on a school bus shepherding children with disabilities. In 1998, at the age of 55, she enrolled in LaGuardia's GED program, and passed the test on the first try. "In 1998 I decided to get my GED because I needed a high school diploma to get a decent job," said Ms. Lee. "But in 2005 a GED was not enough. I had to have a college degree." She returned to LaGuardia, this time as a human services/mental health major. "When I first decided to earn my degree, I said to myself, 'What are you doing?' but I really surprised myself every step of the way."