



MICHIGAN ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

"Preserving Michigan Voices."

Critical Lifelines: Portraits and Stories of Home Care Workers

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When families need help providing in-home care for older relatives, they turn to paid help, most of which is provided by Personal Care Aides (PCAs). In 2017, I {Dr. Clare Luz} of Michigan State University received an Archie Green Fellowship from the Library of Congress American Folklife Center to capture the stories of 30 PCAs across Michigan through in-depth interviews and photographs. This oral history project is proving to be an important vehicle for raising public and legislator awareness of a major public health issue and strategies for addressing the issue. As such, it has the

Continued on P. 3

*Personal Care Aide Henrietta Ivey's story on P. 4.
Khalid Ibrahim Photographer*



The Schizophrenia Oral History Project

The Schizophrenia Oral History Project is an archive of life stories of persons with schizophrenia. Narrators are women and men with schizophrenia who are sharing their lives in an effort to increase understanding and reduce stigma related to mental illness. Their stories reveal not only their struggles, but their remarkable courage and resilience, their hopes, dreams and talents, and their concern for others. In addition to documenting their histories, those of the Project are sharing their stories in presentations for professionals and the general public.

Historically, there is no group more stigmatized and unheard than persons living with schizophrenia. In the hope of providing an audience for their voices and facilitating greater public understanding of severe mental illness, we are documenting life stories from currently stable persons diagnosed with either schizophrenia or schizo-affective disorder. We know of no other oral history project that focuses on individuals with schizophrenia, and most of the literature concerning schizophrenia is written about – and not by – those with this condition.

Our courageous narrators have taken a great personal risk in sharing their stories, and they have done so in the belief that their experience in facing their challenges will be of use to someone else. It is their hope that because they have spoken out, life may be easier for others who have schizophrenia, that new opportunities may open for them, and that they may find greater acceptance. But for their

Continued on P. 6