

Journalist Found His Voice at SUNY SCCC

Greg Hitchcock's work focuses on telling the stories of others. But it's through telling his own story that he wants to make the most impact.

"I want to continue to be a positive influence on people who have mental illness," the journalist and documentarian said. "There have been deep ends for me and I've been able to rise above it. One of my major focuses is to raise awareness and make sure that people know that there is life after an addiction or an illness – there is life after the diagnosis."

Greg found his voice and a passion for writing as a student at SUNY SCCC in the late 80s.

He had been serving in the U.S. Army and working as a TV Radio Systems Specialist at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center when he was diagnosed at the age of 19 with schizophrenia. He soon found himself as a patient in the behavioral health ward at the same hospital where he had been working just a few months prior. When he was honorably discharged and returned home to Latham, his mother Rosemary Lanahan, a longtime business professor at the College, suggested he take some classes.



Greg began covering New York State government as a writer for the Empire State Report. Work as an education reporter for The Eagle in Cambridge, N.Y., and a general beat reporter for the Leader Herald in Gloversville soon followed. He struck out on his own as a freelance writer on assignments for the Sierra Club and American Red Cross and is now telling stories as a documentary filmmaker. *Heroin in Amsterdam*, his latest documentary, examines the opioid and heroin epidemic.

Greg speaks to groups about the importance of destigmatizing mental illness, describing what he went through as a young man and the challenges he still faces. He's on the Board of the Directors of the Mental Health Association in Fulton and Montgomery Counties and describes his role this way, "It's my responsibility to make sure the non-profit is managed to the best of its ability for consumers to make sure that everybody is taken care of."

He still remembers the assignment that sparked his penchant for writing and gave him the confidence he needed. He was taking a history class with Professor David Hughes and wrote an essay about the Mexican War. "Professors Hughes was very enthusiastic about the essay and it gave me a boost and let me know that I might be good at writing."

After graduating from SUNY SCCC in 1990 with his degree in Liberal Arts and then the University at Albany with his bachelor's degree in English in 1992,