

"Graduate From College" Tops Octogenarian's Bucket List

At 86, Beatrice Norma Scott became a college graduate, earning a Bachelor of General Studies degree with an emphasis in sociology and history. The degree was the number one goal on her bucket list, because as a teenager, she did not finish the 10th grade.

Ms. Scott has overcome several obstacles in life. Her father died when she was an infant, leaving her young and uneducated mother to raise her and her siblings alone, during the Great Depression. Ms. Scott also learned she had dyscalculia, a condition which causes difficulty comprehending the manipulation of numbers.

Despite those challenges, Ms. Scott went on to raise her own family and has seven children, 15 grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren. Along the way, she obtained her GED and attended college. Ms. Scott is currently working on a master's in administration and education. In addition, Ms. Scott is an antique appraiser and the director of development for KOZJ, Joplin's local PBS channel. Ms. Scott also chairs the Joplin-area delegation of the Silver Haired Legislature and lobbies for a bill to prevent the homelessness of veterans.

Ms. Scott credits the support of her family and friends to help her achieve her goals. "Never give up," she says. "Do not take no for an answer. Never accept I can't."

She finds strength in *The Serenity Prayer*, by Reinhold Niebuhr: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference."