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**STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY, HERSTORY PARTNER TO OFFER
FIFTH ANNUAL WOMEN'S WRITING RETREAT**

'Generating Connections Through Writing' Theme of Free Daylong Program

Dialogues Across Differences at Stony Brook University, in collaboration with Herstory Writers Workshop, will host its fifth annual women's writing retreat on Sunday, March 22. The daylong workshop, which has traditionally brought together women from all walks of life seeking to find a voice with which to tell their stories, will take place 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the University's Charles B. Wang Center Chapel. An interpreter from Herstory's Latina workshops will be available throughout the event, for women wishing to participate in Spanish.

The program, a celebration of Women's History Month, is free and open to all interested women. No prior writing experience is required. First-time writers are welcome and encouraged to attend.

If you were to choose a particular moment with which to begin to tell your life's story, what would it be? That is the question that Herstory Writers Workshop founder and artistic director Erika Duncan poses at the beginning of this unique writing workshop that helps women develop the tools and techniques to reshape their very intimate experiences into a form that will be meaningful to what is referred to in the Herstory approach as the "Stranger/Reader."

Founded in 1996, Herstory is well known in Suffolk County, where weekly memoir-writing workshops are held in more than a dozen sites, attracting women with little formal education and university professors, women on welfare and heads of foundations, child care workers and political leaders. Linked by their shared desire to craft their life stories, women who might not otherwise have come to know each other have developed a community rich in healing and empowerment that transcends the differences that too often divide and prevent us from hearing one another.

The daylong format gives new writers a chance to work alongside women who have been writing with Herstory for years. Participants will develop their story ideas in the morning and begin writing during the lunch break. Feedback will be offered in the afternoon session, when the women will have the chance to read aloud their "Page One" scenes and learn how they might further shape their tales.

Participants are asked to bring laptops or writing tablets. Lunch may be brought or bought; coffee and tea will be on hand.

Throughout the day, Herstory's manual, *Paper Stranger: Shaping Stories in Community*, will be on display. Published in October 2008, *Paper Stranger* is being used extensively in Herstory's workshops and training program, and is now being circulated among writers, educators, healers and social activists who wish to draw out the stories of others.

The March 22nd retreat is made possible by a grant from Dialogues Across Differences, Stony Brook University, Office of the President, and is co-sponsored by the Charles B. Wang Center. For further information, or to pre-register for the retreat, contact Herstory Writers Workshop at 631-676-7395 or visit Herstory's web site at www.herstorywriters.org. Participants will also be welcomed at the door.