A phenomenological study was conducted of adult women ages 50 – 64+ who were pursuing an undergraduate degree to gain an understanding of why they chose to begin or return to college, and how they described their experiences and the challenges and barriers they faced.

With educational institutions facing unprecedented challenges to their financial operations, senior learners can provide new means of support. It is critical then for higher education leaders to understand why older students enroll in college and the barriers and challenges they face to successfully recruit, retain, and meet the educational needs of this student population.