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Stockton Alum nus , Jackson Resident Wins Therapy Times ' Most Influential Award

Erik X. Raj is an Award-Winning Children's Author and a Speech-Language Pathologist at the Hamilton Township School District

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Galloway Township , NJ- Lifelong learning is more than just a vision at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey– it's a reality. Erik X. Raj, who graduated from Stockton in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science degree in speech pathology and audiology, exemplifies the essence of a lifelong learner.

At the end of the summer, Raj sent an e-mail to Associate Professor of Speech Pathology and Audiology, Richard C. Berry, one of his former professors, to share his most recent accomplishment– the 2010 Therapy Times' Most Influential Award. The Therapy Times' Most Influential Award is a national recognition that highlights one practitioner each from the following therapy professions: nutrition, occupational, physical, respiratory, pediatric, nursing, music, auditory, and speech therapy. Therapy Times is a multidisciplinary online resource for healthcare professionals.

Stockton's Dean of the School of Health Sciences, Dr. Brenda Stevenson-Marshall, said, "Erik's success has illustrated that he doesn't stop until he's at the top of his pursuits. We expect nothing less of our graduates." Raj is now a speech-language pathologist at the Hamilton Township School District in Mercer County. Raj administers diagnostics and provides therapy to school-aged students with speech, language, voice and fluency disorders.

Raj's approach to working with children who have speech-language disorders utilizes an unlikely resource. Raj is the author of the award-winning children's book *One Seashell, Two Seashell, Flap, Flap, Flap*, which he reads to children during therapy.

"I chose to create my own story that integrates speech therapy and character building," said Raj. "I have always been a huge believer that reading and telling stories is one of the best ways that you can strengthen a child's language skills. Every day, I utilize children's books as a therapy

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Raj's most recent book, *One Seashell, Two Seashell, Flap, Flap, Flap*, was recognized by *Creative Child* magazine in July and awarded the 2010 *Creative Child Magazine Preferred Choice Award*. *Creative Child* is a national bi-monthly publication that provides parents with the latest information on how to nurture childhood creativity. In June of 2010, JM Northern Media recognized Raj's book with an honorable mention at the 2010 New York Book Festival.

To learn more about Erik X. Raj and his book *One Seashell, Two Seashell, Flap, Flap, Flap*, visit his website <http://www.erikxraj.com>.

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