



**Gerontechnology Consortium of Westchester Wins 2009 MetLife Foundation MindAlert Award at American Society on Aging Conference**  
*United Hebrew Geriatric Center and Partners Recognized for Innovations in Mental Fitness Programming for Older Adults*

**New Rochelle, NY – (April 16, 2009)** – The American Society on Aging, in collaboration with the MetLife Foundation, has announced that the *Gerontechnology Consortium of Westchester* won the MindAlert Award in the category for programs designed to enhance mental fitness for the general population of older adults. United Hebrew Geriatric Center (UHGC) is a founding member of the Consortium.

Consortium representatives accepted the award at the Aging in America Conference of the American Society on Aging last month.

An innovative multifaceted research collaboration formed by several area organizations, the *Gerontechnology Consortium of Westchester* includes UHGC, Pace University, Westchester Community College, Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services through the Westchester Alliance Program and Fordham University.

The program creatively connects older adults living in all of UHGC's residences - including the nursing and rehabilitation center, Willow Towers Assisted Living and Soundview Apartments for Independent Living - to technology through civic engagement in an intergenerational environment. Specially-trained undergraduates assist the UHGC elders to overcome their fears of technology through a series of one-on-one paired personal contacts, assistive software and various technologies.

In addition to computer skills, the seniors benefit from bonding relationships with students, enhanced mental fitness and increased cognitive functioning. The program has benefited the older adults and students alike. The unique gerontechnology course teaches undergraduates the aging process, skills in instructing the elderly and computing technology.

The MindAlert Awards is a national project designed to recognize outstanding programs developed to improve mental stimulation and creative outlets in later life. Research has shown that cognitive decline is not an inevitable part of the aging process. New findings in brain health research offer a striking model of aging as a time of brain health and growth resulting in an opportunity to lead qualitatively better lives filled with more knowledge and wisdom—and an increased capacity to contribute to society.

The 2009 awards are given to organizations that have demonstrated high-quality, innovative programs, based on scientific evidence and that the programs offered by these organizations enhance functioning and quality of life or prevent functional decline in older adults.

"We are so pleased that the Gerontechnology program continues to win industry accolades," said Rita Mabli, UHGC president/CEO.

"The Review Committee found the *Gerontechnology Consortium of Westchester* collaboration to be very innovative, reaching a diverse number of older adults," said Chair of ASA-MetLife MindAlert Advisory Committee Dean Blevins. Review Committee members noted that this program truly engages older adults cognitively, physically and socially.

United Hebrew Geriatric Center is located at 391 Pelham Road, New Rochelle, New York 10801. For further information, contact Linda Forman at 914.632.2804 x224 or [lforman@uhgc.org](mailto:lforman@uhgc.org), or visit [www.uhgc.org](http://www.uhgc.org).

**About United Hebrew Geriatric Center:** United Hebrew Geriatric Center (UHGC) is a vibrant not-for-profit, non-sectarian, multi-service senior living campus serving the Westchester metropolitan area since 1919. UHGC offers a rich array of skilled and community-based programs and services that encourages and supports a life of dignity and spirituality and promotes the highest possible quality of life. UHGC serves over 600 clients daily in its campus facilities -- Willow Towers, a 126-unit assisted living residence; a 296-bed Nursing Home; the 135-unit Low-Savin Apartments for seniors; a Long Term Home Health Care Program; and the Azor Home Health Agency. Its newest project, the renovation and expansion of its nursing and rehabilitation center scheduled to open spring of 2009, combines world-class care with state-of-the-art features.

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Linda Forman, Vice President of Community Relations, United Hebrew Geriatric Center, with the MindAlert Award given to the Gerontechnology Consortium of Westchester



*From left to right:* Colette Phipps, Research Analyst, Westchester County Department of Senior Program and Services (WCDSPS); Dr. Jean Coppola, Assistant Professor, Technology Systems, Pace University; Barbara Thomas, Assistant Professor, Nursing, Westchester Community College; Linda Forman, Vice President of Community Relations, United Hebrew Geriatric Center; Dr. Janna C. Heyman, Associate Professor, Fordham Univ. Ravazzin Center on Aging; and Dozene Guishard, Program Coordinator, WCDSPS, at the Aging in America Conference of the American Society on Aging and National Council on Aging