



United Hebrew Geriatric Center Gerontechnology Program Graduates Fall Semester Students

UHGC/Pace University Partnership Flourishes

New Rochelle, NY -- (December 19, 2006) – United Hebrew Geriatric Center (UHGC) recently held a graduation ceremony for its residents who participated in the fall semester Gerontechnology class. Residents celebrated their success in a special graduation ceremony attended by UHGC staff and administrators, representatives from Pace University and Westchester County's Department of Senior Program and Services.

Most people rely on computers to fulfill such needs as making travel arrangements, checking the weather and staying in touch with loved ones through e-mail. It's no surprise that people are using their computers more today than ever before. However, seniors, the fastest growing population, are often not comfortable with technology. The Gerontechnology program was developed to educate seniors on the use of computers and provide them a sense of comfort in utilizing them.

The program was made possible through the partnership of UHGC and Pace University's Ivan G. Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems among others in the Consortium for Multi-Faceted Gerontechnology Research. First semester students graduated in April 2006.

Rita Mabli, UHGC CEO, addressed the group and congratulated graduating seniors and Pace University student teachers. "It is wonderful to see our residents excited about learning how to use technology. We are thrilled that the Gerontechnology program has become so successful, and we are looking

Photos, from top to bottom:

1. Colin McKeon, a Pace University student, with UHGC Soundview Apartment resident Margaret Hunter at the graduation ceremony for the fall semester of UHGC's Gerontechnology program

2. Pace University students stand in front of the graduating class while they hand out graduation certificates at the ceremony for the fall semester of UHGC's Gerontechnology program

3. Joan Ryan, Director of Recreation for Willow Towers Assisted Living; Willow Towers residents Lois Lowey and Theresa Duerholz; and Pace University freshman Amanda Martucci at the graduation ceremony for the second semester of UHGC's Gerontechnology program

4. Student residents of Soundview Apartments and teachers celebrate graduation and their newfound relationships. *From left to right:* resident Marie Colicchio; Pace University students Ellen Hollister and Lauren McMann; residents Martha Revette and Shirley Hunter; and Pace University senior David Worthley at the graduation ceremony for the fall semester of UHGC's Gerontechnology program

5. Pace University senior David Worthley with UHGC Soundview Apartments resident Doris Doughlin at the graduation ceremony for the fall semester of UHGC's Gerontechnology program

6. *From left to right:* Joann Dewe-Mathews, Director of Regulatory Affairs, UHGC; Dozene Guishard, program coordinator, Westchester Department of Senior Programs and Services; Dr. Jean F. Coppola, Assistant Professor, Pace University Ivan G. Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems; Collette Phipps, Westchester Department of Senior Programs and Services; Dr. Fran Gustavson, Professor of Information Systems, School of Computer Science and Information

forward to starting up our next semester in February," she said.

Students from Pace University's Civic Engagement curriculum taught UHGC residents basic computer skills that allow them to communicate with their families and friends. In all, 39 UHGC residents were taught by 51 Pace students.

Dr. Jean Coppola, Assistant Professor at The Ivan G. Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems at Pace, said that she was impressed with the seniors' ability to pick up their new skills quickly.

Ellen Hollister, a Pace junior and student teacher, commended the graduates for their hard work and dedication. "My classmates and I are thrilled with the progress you've all made," she said during the ceremony.

Martha Revette, a program graduate and UHGC Soundview Apartment resident, addressed her classmates and told them that she entered the program with "fear and trepidation. But I knew I wasn't the only one. My family told me how proud they are of me. And I'm proud of myself," she said.

IBM recently awarded the Gerontechnology program a \$35,000 grant for assistive software, services and support materials for residents with limited physical abilities. The software magnifies letters on the computer screen, increases the font size of text, reads text aloud, and assists senior users in other ways. It also can make keyboards more sensitive to the typing for people with arthritis, tremors or partial paralysis.

FUJI Photo Film also donated digital cameras for seniors to email pictures to friends and family.

"The digital divide is decreasing here while students are opening new doors for themselves with careers in both computer science and aging," said Linda Forman, Vice President of Community Relations at UHGC. "Our

Systems, Pace University; and Linda Forman, Vice President of Community Relations at UHGC and at the graduation ceremony for the fall semester of UHGC's Gerontechnology program



residents are excited to be able to communicate with friends and family off-campus, and they especially enjoy interacting with young college students."

The next class for UHGC residents will begin in February, and residents from UHGC's nursing home, assisted living facility, and senior housing will all have the opportunity to take classes in computer labs in each building on the UHGC campus. A state-of-the-art UHGC residence, scheduled to be completed in 2008, will offer wireless Internet capacity in rooms and common spaces.

For further information, please contact Linda Forman, UHGC, at 914.632.2804 x 224 or lforman@uhgc.org, or Jean Coppola, Pace University, at 914.773.3755 or jcoppola@pace.edu.

About the United Hebrew Geriatric Center of New Rochelle: 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 270 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 home facility, combines world-class care with state-of-the-art features.

United Hebrew Geriatric Center
391 Pelham Road
New Rochelle, NY 10805
914-632-2804
www.uhgc.org

