

**The Don Weidman Computer Learning Center,  
"Homebound Remote Learning Project" and E. Yaphank Center**  
2007 Recipient of SeniorNet Inaugural Chairman Award for Excellence  
# 1 Learning Center in the Country/World

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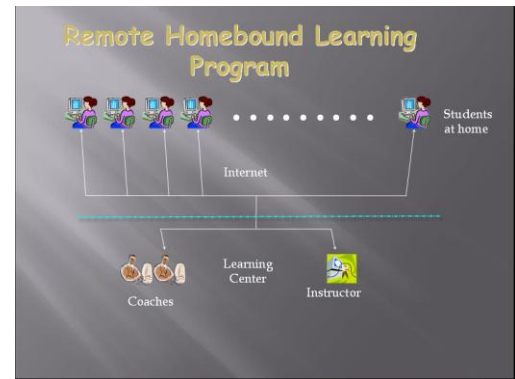
website: [www.seniornethuntington.org](http://www.seniornethuntington.org)

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## Computer Training for the Homebound

People seeking computer training have choices. While a classroom under the watchful eye of an instructor is usually the preferred choice, for the homebound that option was out of the question – until now.

The SeniorNet Computer Learning Center in Huntington is proud to announce the inauguration of its “virtual classroom” remote learning program whereby homebound students take live interactive classes on their home computers. The way it works is that instructor and coaches (in their respective homes or at the learning center) use special software to interact with homebound students through their computers via broadband internet connection. First, the instructor discusses and demonstrates a new task as students listen via headset containing a microphone, watch the lesson on their computer screens and ask questions. Next, students duplicate the task while coaches view the progress on their computers. Each coach can monitor up to three students on a split screen format. A coach noting a problem can talk to the troubled student and even take control of that student’s computer to demonstrate how it’s done again. Students are provided a written manual in preparation for the lesson and for use as review afterward.



As with anything there are pluses and minuses. Advantages of remote training are that homebound students use their own computers, face fewer distractions and can pay closer attention to details. An obvious shortcoming is the lack of a social dimension with other students. Other program features of note are:

- No geographic limit on students’ residences
- Class size limited only by the number of volunteer coaches
- Initial setup and troubleshooting done remotely
- Minimal cost

Based on the success of a pilot program recently conducted with four homebound students that covered Intro to Computers I, a more ambitious remote learning course - Intro to Computers 2 - is planned for the fall semester. To participate, students must be prequalified under the following criteria:

- Be incapable of travel
- Be either handicapped or at least 50 years old
- Have a computer with appropriate operating system [Windows, Linux, Unix or OS/X (Mac)]
- Have broadband internet connection
- Have minimal computer ability

Space will be limited but those interested in this program should contact SeniorNet at FSL, L.I. which is an all volunteer, not-for-profit organization that provides computer training to people 50 years and older. Call (631) 427-3700 x268, visit our Huntington website [www.seniornethuntington.org](http://www.seniornethuntington.org) or SeniorNet’s national website at [www.seniornet.org](http://www.seniornet.org)