SeniorNet's mission is to teach people age 55 and older how to use computers and the Internet to pursue their interests and contribute to their communities. SeniorNet aims to bridge the digital divide by providing computer access and education to older adults who may not have had the opportunity to learn computer skills in the workplace or who may not have the means to purchase a computer of their own.

Senior volunteers manage and teach the classes at SeniorNet Learning Centers and help sustain the SeniorNet web site and its online community. Since 1986, over two million adults 55 years of age and older have benefited from SeniorNet's programs. It is almost certain that, in your community, there are people in that age group who would like to learn how to use a computer and the Internet.

LEARNING CENTER ENVIRONMENT When a SeniorNet Learning Center is established, it becomes part of the world's largest network of senior volunteers who teach older adults to use computers and the Internet. The peer instruction and small class size at SeniorNet Learning Centers provide a supportive learning environment. SeniorNet is a membership-supported organization that provides enjoyable learning experiences in stress-free environments of seniors teaching and learning along with other seniors.

START A LEARNING CENTER When you establish a SeniorNet Computer Learning Center in your community, you build an ongoing partnership with SeniorNet that supports your efforts.

There are several components to bringing a SeniorNet Learning Center to your community.

• *Identify a suitable location for conducting classes*: Examples include community and senior centers, public libraries, churches, schools, parks and recreation halls, clinics and hospitals. There should be ample parking and building accessibility. The SeniorNet Learning Center should be available for at least 20 daytime hours per week.

• *Build your volunteer base*: At the heart of each SeniorNet Learning Center are its volunteers. Seniors volunteering as instructors, coaches, administrators and board members run Learning Centers. To successfully start a Learning Center you should have about 15-20 volunteers.

• *Startup and Support Fees*: Contact SeniorNet about costs. In addition to the SeniorNet membership dues collected from your members, the support fees can be generated from individual donations, grants you might pursue, garage or bake sales, etc. The fees include access for Learning Centers to all SeniorNet developed curricula, software and software upgrades necessary to operate a successful SeniorNet program, a dedicated SeniorNet training specialist onsite for one week prior to the opening and professional communication support for the grand opening and continued support. *Note: If the site you select as a classroom doesn't have computers, SeniorNet can help you acquire your computer lab.

• *SeniorNet membership*: Individual membership is available in the national SeniorNet organization. Members will receive membership benefits and discounts and their membership

dollars directly help SeniorNet continue our mission of providing older adults access to and education on computer technologies and the Internet to enhance their lives and enable them to share their knowledge and wisdom with the world.   **WHAT SENIORNET PROVIDES FOR OUR LEARNING CENTERS**
 • Initial expert on-site technical and practical training
 • Continuing phone and e-mail support
 • Proven curriculum tailored for seniors
 • Course software appropriate for seniors
 • Leadership Exchange, an exclusive web site that offers Learning Center volunteers course materials, technical information and a place to share ideas and solicit advice
 • SeniorNet signage and branding
 • National press coverage
 • Promotion of Centers on our web site
 • Complimentary memberships for coordinators and volunteers
 • Free hosting of your Center's information on our SeniorNet site
 • Access to research about seniors and technology
 • An award-winning, engaging and informative web site For more information about starting a new learning center, please contact - Gretchen Baxter, Director Development,
 GretchenB@hq.seniornet.org