Date: June 2010
From: Merle Bush
To: Connie Kendig
Re: Harlem Internet Computer Access Program

After the invitational flyers were disseminated for opening of the lab, the HICAP blog was developed to chronicle its activities. We went to work with approximately 30 individuals signed up for computer classes. Students brought their queries and I imparted information key to computing; prefixing kilo, mega or giga to calculate byte and hertz value. We discussed all things computer—how frequency relates to wireless connectivity, etc. Working search engines, we explored the interest of class members. We were visited by a representative from the Social Security Administration who showed us how to navigate the www.ssa.gov site. I envision classes and discussions posted on the HICAP site as they occur for students unable to attend to view. I suggest the comment section on the HICAP website as an excellent way to respond to posts. We are currently reviewing all the terms that we’ve discussed and preparing for our June 24 graduation. The fall opening will be September 21, 2010; posting flyers and web posts will keep the interested informed.

The goal of this project is to provide Internet access and computer education to the underserved, disabled and senior citizens of Harlem. ISOC-NY HICAP meets that goal. Student interest and grasp have driven classes to extend one and two hours over time.

We’ve attained a sustainable lab, boasting state-of-the-art hardware with ergonomic seating in a comfortable environment that promotes communication and knowledge of health and benefits via the web.

Students always remain busy. On days when we were disappointed by the low Internet signal, we compose, record voice, explore changing preferences on the computer, create slideshow presentations of class and family pictures, etc.

If we set up another lab on the future, I would have the lab fully functioning before I started classes—that is the only change that I would make to the program. I plan to stay on course with the ISOC-NY HICAP ideal—Internet access for all. In the future, I would like more scheduled lab time for student access.