



Notre Dame Education Center

The Spirit of Broadway

"A Place of Hope"

50 W. Broadway
South Boston, Ma 02127

December 2006

www.ndecboston.org
617.268.1912

Win \$10,000!

And help make NDEC's raffle a success.

Priced at \$100, only 300 raffle tickets will be sold. For more information on how to purchase a ticket, log onto www.ndecboston.org or call 617.268.1912.

Win a Desk & Chair!

Chances on the decoratively painted desk and chair set are \$2 each, three for \$5. To purchase chances and find out more about the artist, Elizabeth Hunter, who donated her work, go to NDEC's website.



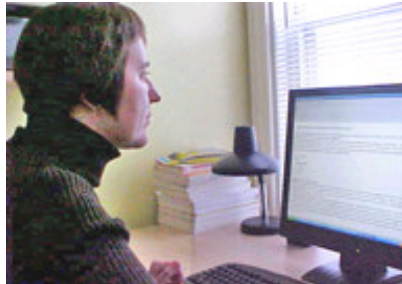
Cushing Estate Sale!

If you missed the Cushing Estate Sale held at Notre Dame Education Center on September 21, there is still time to buy. You may find your old desk and chair among the 50 available.

For photos and information on what is offered, log onto

www.ndecboston.org.

At NDEC Some Students Learn Online



Ramune Garniene completes and sends her English assignment to her teacher, Roger Hooper, who corrects and returns her work.

When an opportunity arose to apply for state funding for a newly designed initiative for Distance Learning, NDEC was uniquely suited to apply.

Kristen Hokanson SND had looked ahead and recognized that "learning by computer was the wave of the future." With this vision, Sr. Hokanson founded the Notre Dame Virtual School, thus harnessing the power of technology "to expand teaching and learning by connecting students and teachers from Notre Dame schools throughout the world."

And in the Notre Dame Virtual School, NDEC had a ready-made portal from which to launch the Online Learning Program when the Massachusetts Department of Education selected its proposal and awarded a contract.

One of only six state-funded programs in the Commonwealth, NDEC's Online Learning was initiated in 2004 and currently enrolls 24 adult learners. It allows students with basic computer skills and Internet access a whole new approach to learning.

Margaret Lanen SND and Roger

Hooper, who staff the Online Learning Program, keep contact with students by telephone, email or meetings at the Center. Recruitment and retention are the two "R" buzz words in this program, according to Sr. Margaret, who teaches the *Every Day Math* curriculum.

Participants must work well on their own and agree to study for at least four hours per week.

Ramune Garniene is a native of Lithuania and physician who practiced pediatrics for ten years in her native country before coming to the U. S. For Ramune, who is studying for her Medical Boards, Online Learning has been a lifeline. Having laid out a rigorous study schedule of eight hours daily that leaves little time for anything else, Ramune needs to polish her English grammar and writing skills to prepare for the exams.

Ramune points to the need to have a teacher review her work and make corrections and suggestions: "I like (online learning) a lot. I used to study independently at home but need feedback," said Ramune, explaining that otherwise she would not know when she is

making mistakes. "It's like having a private teacher."

On one distance writing assignment she indicated, her teacher, Roger Hooper pointed to an error that arose from the differences in word placement between English and Lithuanian, an example of a nuance that could trip her up when taking the Medical Boards: "You have the right words, but the wrong order," Roger commented.

English for All, the web based program Ramune is studying from, uses a lively and fast paced approach to convey lessons that deal chiefly with grammar and vocabulary. And, its content is highly informative and relevant to the students, as it focuses on situations that arise in the U. S. but may be unfamiliar to foreign born students.

NDEC is fortunate to have recruited Roger, a former coordinator of the Department of Education's Adult Basic Education Learning Project, who has returned to the (virtual) classroom, a move he describes as "the reason he chose education as a career in the first place." Roger has

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NDEC Offers Opportunities for Volunteering

The educational experience for NDEC's adult learners is greatly enhanced through one on one interaction with tutors, who volunteer their time and expertise.

Tutors are asked to make a commitment for a couple of hours a week, morning or evening, for the academic year. They are given an orientation and training. A background in education helps, but is not necessary. Patience and an enjoyment with learning are the prerequisites. Tutoring takes place in NDEC's on-site tutoring center.

NDEC's adult learners are highly motivated. Many juggle full time jobs and family responsibilities with educational demands. Students may be either native or non native speakers and need help primarily with reading and basic math.

Kindly call the Volunteer Coordinator at 617.268.1912, extension 246, for more information.

Community Connects to Cyber Café

Each Monday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:30, the buzz in one of NDEC's computer rooms takes on a different tone. Men and women from the community ages 30 through 70 are involved in learning the intricacies of the computer.

NDEC's Cyber Café, started by Sr. Ellen Foley five years ago, provides an introduction to the marvels and mysteries of the cyber world for adults who are not enrolled in Notre Dame Education Center.

These adult learners want to become more computer literate for many reasons. Some feel that lack of knowledge in this area is hindering them from job improvement; others see their children working away on a family computer and want to join in the fun; some want to keep in touch with family members by email.

Their reasons for coming might vary, but computer proficiency is their common goal. Over the months they learn basic keyboarding, how to get information from web sites, how to use Microsoft Word.

Martin Connelly, a South Boston native, pictured here with Sister Margaret Lanen, started classes 12 weeks ago. Martin plans to buy a new computer and declares that he

wants to prepare by becoming computer literate. Martin envisions a host of practical uses, and is clear about the need for instruction: "Sr. Ellen and Sr. Margaret ask if we have any questions. I don't know what I need yet, I know so little."

A nursing assistant at Marion Manor, Eden Figiole found she needed some level of computer literacy when she was taking academic classes, something she's taking a break from while she polishes her computer skills. Eden explains her reason for taking the course: "To go into the Internet to do my homework, I need to use the computer. When I have to do my homework, I have to have my kids do my homework."

Margaret McDonough is learning to touch type with popular software that displays a keyboard with hands that move in synchronicity with hers, as she follows the lesson along. For Margaret, Cyber Café is, "My first time to do anything on the computer. I learned how to type, play games, how to highlight things. It's fun and I'm learning." Margaret added, "They gave us a letter to write last week. I did it at home. My daughter helped me."



"Before, I didn't even know how to operate the computer," said Shezeeda Corlette. "Right now I'm trying to copy and paste. We can go on the Internet and check the news all over the world- even in my country, Guyana." Almost 12 years in the United States, Shezeeda received her citizenship in 2000. "It's been very helpful, this place," she concluded.

At the Cyber Café, the sounds of clicking keys are occasionally punctuated by gasps of "I've got it", "Oh, wow!", "This is fun", "Wait until my kids see me doing this". The adage "Learning is a life-long adventure" could be this group's motto. P.S. It is a lot of fun too.

September Graduation Brings Joy, Pride to 33

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added writing lessons to *English for All* by using the Notre Dame Virtual School platform. Here students and teachers interact about the content of the lessons.

One of the NDEC faculty who formulated the program, Sr. Margaret in addition to teaching, spends time recruiting students by sharing NDEC's program with other people. She is enthusiastic about Distance Learning as another opportunity for people to learn.



GED Graduates: Seated L to R: Robert Bragdon, Erin Clancy, Elsa Lee, Sunkarie Konteh, Brittany Taylor. Standing L to R: Amie Cressman, Notre Dame AmeriCorps Volunteer and GED Teacher, Kelly Tang, David Manyok, Alassane Sow, Vanessa Balhizar, Evelyn Murphy and Mary Mulligan SND, GED Coordinator. Not pictured: Jesse Chief Antredu, Gino W. Brothers, Kristen Laura McCart, Michael John Griffin, Kenneth A. MacDonald, My Hoa Thi Nguyen, Lauren Joan Porter and Steven E. Ramirez.



Academic Diploma Program Graduates: Seated, L to R: Noelle Piquette, Sarah Marie Joyce and Kevin Regan. Standing, L to R: Phillip Hashey, ADP Teacher and Counselor, Thomas P. Downs Jr., Michael Mestari, Darrell Smith Jr. and Troy Anthony Hines and ADP Coordinator Frances Laroche. Not pictured: William J. Greene, Sean A. Joy, James Paul Sheehan and Jean Valentin.