

**PRESS RELEASE  
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**New Computer Learning Lab Opened Oct. 26; More Classes Begin on Nov. 30**

On Tuesday, October 26, the Oswego Public Library officially opened its new, grant-funded Public Computing Center (PCC). The opening began with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by local and state officials. PCC Director Maureen Southorn kicked off the ceremony with a short presentation about the center's goals and purposes. "Our programs will target the needs of the Oswego County community," said Southorn. "Our main goal is to connect adults to technology skills that will empower them to improve their lives and contribute to the workplace. We are offering free and expanded access to computers, but more importantly, we are also giving the people of Oswego the tools they need to learn, build up, refine, and practice their computer skills in a supportive environment through computer classes, one-on-one tutoring, and open lab time."

A basic skills class is already underway at the PCC, developed and taught through a partnership with the Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County. A second basic skills class will begin on November 30 and run from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays through December 16. The basic skills class, designed for students of all ages, begins by introducing students to the parts of the computer. Lessons include instruction and hands-on practice on many topics, including turning the computer on, moving the mouse, creating an email account, conducting simple internet searches, and using Microsoft Word to type, save, print, and share information. Classes under development include sessions on specific computer programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint; internet research; and other topics requested by library patrons. In 2011, the PCC expects to install video conferencing equipment for free use by local organization and small businesses. Anyone can sign up for the free classes or suggest a future topic by phone or in person at the Oswego Public Library main desk.

The PCC, funded through a grant filed by the New York State Library Development, a unit of the NYS Education Department, is part of the Federal American

Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Broadband Technology Opportunity Program. This grant, a total of \$244,517 received over 2 year period, will allow the Oswego Public Library to establish one of 30 state-of-the-art computer centers in New York State designed to increase public access to high speed broadband services.

The Public Computing Centers, funded and supported under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), are designed to bring the fruits of high-speed connectivity to everyone. Many parts of New York State will for the first time be able to experience the bounty of communications and content available online. The Public Computing Centers are a primary outpost for free public access to a wide array of broadband services. As part of a highly effective network, the PCCs and the libraries of which they are a part will continue their critical role as a hub for community life and service. – Bernard A. Margolis, State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries.

Caption 1: Oswego Public Library Board of Trustee member Charlie Young looks on as (from left) Scriba Town Supervisor Kenneth Burdick, Oswego County Legislator Amy Tressider, and Minetto Town Supervisor Joseph Hawksby cut the ribbon to officially open the Oswego Public Library's new Public Computing Center. The new PCC will offer free computer skills classes and tutoring to the people of Oswego County.

Caption 2: After touring the Oswego Public Library's addition and new Public Computing Center, New York State Senator Darrel Aubertine (center) poses with (from left) Oswego Public Library Board of Trustees members Mercedes Niess and Donna Kuhn, Library Director Carol Ferlito, and Librarian Edward Elsner.