

# Computer Learning Center

*A training center where individuals who are mentally ill or learning disabled can learn about computers and practice their computer skills*

## Background and Summary

In 1998, Bay Cove celebrated the grand opening of its Computer Learning Center (CLC), made possible by funding from a grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The program was designed for clients who have mental illness or mental retardation and receive housing subsidies from HUD. With this in mind, staff members wrote curricula for Microsoft Windows, Word and Excel specifically designed for people with learning disabilities.

## Clients

Since its inception, the CLC has experienced enormous growth. In addition to its HUD clientele, clients from Bay Cove's vocational rehabilitation and substance abuse services have also taken advantage of the CLC's resources. The number of students attending the Center in the first four-year period nearly doubled from 57 to 113 annually. Those attending "open hours" jumped from 256 the first year to 527 in the year 2002. It has been proven that learning



*The Computer Learning Center is equipped with seven separate computer learning stations.*



*The Computer Learning Center is headquartered at 66 Canal Street in downtown Boston. Additionally, some classes take place at locations outside of this building.*

increases independence and self esteem, two fundamental components of success, and a vital part of the mission of Bay Cove Human Services.

Thanks to the excellence of training provided in the CLC, a large number of its "graduates" are now successfully employed at computer jobs in the community.

## Schedule

In addition to weekly classes at the center, computer training is also available on site for small groups, through one-on-one tutorial sessions, or on self-directed learning CD's. Each month, the Computer Learning Center provides twenty-four hours of open time, fifty-six hours of formal classes for its clients, and approximately twenty hours of staff training.

## Self-Directed Learning

In 2001, the CLC contracted to act as a demonstration site for the training modules of Aztec Software. Aztec provides adult basic skills vocational training, starting on a second

## *Computer Learning Center*

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*Sometimes smaller groups of students participate in special learning sessions.*

grade level and extending through senior high school (as a preparation for the GED exam).

In addition, staff members of the Bay Cove Training Department have developed self-directed training modules for Preventing Transmission of Infectious Diseases (including Universal Precautions), Medication Administration Certification Review, and the Microsoft Office suite training. These modules are being distributed to other non-profit agencies throughout New England.

### **Staff and Services**

The CLC has a full-time Director and a trainer, each of whom teach computer skills classes and



*The Computer Learning Center provides many hours of open time during which people can use its facilities to explore on their own.*

offer support during “open hours” when people practice their skills and explore applications independently. The CLC provides a friendly and safe environment for people to socialize, further their education and get vocational training.

### **Building and Location**

The CLC is located at 66 Canal Street in the heart of downtown Boston, in a building that is accessible to the disabled. The Center, which occupies three rooms on the sixth floor, includes a six-station computer laboratory, a resource room with one additional computer, and the Director’s office.

The building is close to both the Haymarket and North Station T stops, with direct access to the Orange and Green lines and local busses, and is three blocks from the Commuter Rail at North Station. It is also conveniently located just off Route 93 and the Central Artery for people who wish to drive.



*Computer Learning Center graduates proudly display their diplomas.*

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*For more information about the Computer Learning Center, please contact Pat Carroll, Computer Learning Center Director at 617-371-3059*



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Computer Learning Center**  
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