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## **Salem CyberSpace Opens in Salem MA To Provide Access to Computers, the Internet and Training**

*A non-profit computer learning center brings state-of-the-art computers, a broadband Internet connection, drop-in access time and skills training to the North Shore residents for learning, job skills development and community development*

**Salem, Mass., August 12, 2002** - The Salem CyberSpace, a nonprofit computer training center, opened their doors today at a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by U.S. Representative John Tierney, Mayor Stanley J. Usovicz, Jr., State Representative Michael Ruane, Ward 1 councilor, Claudia Chuber. The mission of Salem CyberSpace is to bring technology to the teens and adults of the North Shore who do not have access to computers or the Internet, or who want to advance their knowledge and use of computers as a tool for learning, job skill development and economic growth. Membership will be free through December 31, 2002 and courses will be offered at a nominal charge.

Salem CyberSpace is operated through a collaboration of local agencies that includes, North Shore Community Action Programs (NSCAP), Salem Harbor Community Development Corp., Salem Access Television, North Shore Career Center and Salem Public Schools. Start-up funds were obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development as well as Federal Community Technology Center grant monies through NSCAP and their state CAP association (MASSCAP). The center has also received funding from the Essex County Community Foundation as well as generous in-kind donations of furniture and computer supplies from Essex Office, Salem, MA and RSA Security, Inc. of Burlington, MA.

“Our aim is not just to teach people how to use computers, but to provide them with opportunities to use these new skills and the knowledge gained from them in a

meaningful way,” said Linda Saris, Director, Salem CyberSpace. “ It is not about the technology, but instead, about how people use the power and potential of technology to improve their lives and the community in which they live.”

Located at 98 Lafayette Street, Salem CyberSpace is ideally situated to serve downtown Salem and the Salem Point neighborhood. Salem CyberSpace plans to offer many of its services with Spanish-speaking support. “This will be a valuable resource to the Salem Point community, where our residents have limited computer ownership and limited access to the Internet and computer training,” said Lucy Corchado, President of the Salem Point Neighborhood Association. “We are excited that Salem CyberSpace will be providing a culturally sensitive learning environment for a community of users who have limited or no English speaking ability. This will help our residents use technology to learn English, study for citizenship exams, and develop job skills.”

The Center will offer 20 hours of open access time on its 15 computers, most of which will have the Microsoft XP Office Suite and Publisher 2000. Salem CyberSpace plans on offering an evening “Intro to PC” Class for beginners, a Digital Music Camp for teens, and a workshop on using the Internet to find jobs. Over time, graduated instruction in areas such as Web design, graphic design and multimedia will be offered.

“Working closely with the schools, city organizations and our strong business community, Salem CyberSpace has the potential to have a major long-term impact on community development and economic growth in Salem, and we are very excited to have them here,” said Mayor Usovicz.

Membership is open to all North Shore residents. “We are proud and fortunate to have this unique community-based technology center right here on the North Shore,” said Representative Tierney. “Technology skills are a pre-requisite for participating in today’s digital economy.”

Salem CyberSpace plans on working very closely with the business community, and, to that end, today also introduced its Business Partnership program. Under this program, businesses contribute financial and in-kind support in return for use of the

facilities, and discounts on courses and other future services. “We had Salem CyberSpace present to our Rotary membership meeting in May and the response was very positive. We are supportive of the efforts of the CyberSpace, and will help it grow and succeed in any way that we can,” said Dave Gendall, former President of the Salem Rotary.

Salem CyberSpace will initially be open Monday and Wednesday 9 am to noon, Tuesday and Thursday 3 pm to 8 pm, and Friday 1 pm to 5 pm. Membership is free to any adult and any youth age 12 or older. Membership registration can be done over the Web at [www.salemcyberspace.org/membership](http://www.salemcyberspace.org/membership) or by walking into the center during regularly scheduled hours.

### **About Salem CyberSpace**

Salem CyberSpace ([www.salemcyberspace.org](http://www.salemcyberspace.org)), located at 98 Lafayette St. in downtown Salem, is an affiliate of North Shore Community Action Programs ([www.northshorecap.org](http://www.northshorecap.org)), a 501 c (3) nonprofit organization which will act as the fiscal agent. In collaboration with six other community agencies including Salem Harbor Community Development Corporation ([www.shdc.org](http://www.shdc.org)), North Shore Career Center ([www.detma.org](http://www.detma.org)), Salem Access Television ([www.satvonline.org](http://www.satvonline.org)), Point Neighborhood Association, Salem Public Schools Title 1 Program, and Grace Church ([www.gcis.org](http://www.gcis.org)) Salem CyberSpace will focus on technology skills development and provide the computer access necessary to ensure that our clients can take part in the new digital economy. The organization’s mission is to empower people through the use of technology and enrich their lives and the communities in which they live.

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