



Contact: Linda Saris  
Salem CyberSpace  
Phone: 978 740-6667  
Email: [lsaris@salemcyberspace.org](mailto:lsaris@salemcyberspace.org)

**For Immediate Release**

**VERIZON FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES SALEM CYBERSPACE WITH  
LITERACY CHAMPION AWARD AND \$10,000 CASH GRANT**

*Salem CyberSpace Plans Expansion of English And Computer Literacy Curricula*

**SALEM, Mass., (February 11, 2009)** - In two separate competitive grant awards, The Verizon Foundation has donated a total of \$13,500 to help Salem CyberSpace (a program of North Shore Community Action Programs) expand its adult computer literacy and workforce development courses and its teen English and Computer Literacy programs.

A \$10,000 grant was given by the Verizon Foundation to help Salem CyberSpace develop and add new QuickBooks<sup>®1</sup> curricula for its adult programs. In addition, the funds will be used for the development of new curricula and outcome assessments for the four teen programs: Academic Center for homework help, College Prep, college coaching for high school juniors and seniors, ELL St, an English Language Literacy program and CyberCorps, a digital design work internship program.

In a separate award, the Massachusetts Literacy Foundation, in partnership with Verizon's Check Into Literacy Program, announced that Linda Saris has been selected as one of ten recipients of the 2009 Massachusetts Literacy Champion Awards program. Ms. Saris and the other 9 award recipients were chosen from a competitive nomination pool to represent the diverse fields of literacy education in Massachusetts. Each Champion receives two grants from Verizon: a \$2,500 grant directed to the organization where the champion works, along with a \$1,000 grant to support the individual winner's development in the field of literacy education. Linda Saris was nominated by the North

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<sup>1</sup> Registered trademark of Intuit

Shore Workforce Investment Board for the work Ms. Saris has done on the North Shore in the area of both English and Computer Literacy.

Literacy Champions collaborate throughout the year, serve as ambassadors for The Massachusetts Literacy Foundation and share their work in literacy with peers across the commonwealth.

“Verizon’s goal is to help people in the communities we serve develop the necessary literacy skills needed to succeed in the 21st century,” said Verizon regional director of public affairs, Stan Usovicz. “We are proud to be partnering with Salem CyberSpace to provide individuals from diverse backgrounds the English Literacy and computer training necessary to build their futures.”

“We were very excited to get these grants. There is so much need for free academic supports for teenagers in this city and we are the only academic program located right in the Point neighborhood, the lowest-income area of the city. Also, given the growing unemployment rate, we welcome these funds to also help us grow our workforce development program to meet the growing needs of the area’s unemployed adults. I am also quite humbled to be selected as a Literacy Champion, particularly after I met the other nine recipients of the award. I believe that we can all learn from each other and continue to make a positive impact on literacy in Massachusetts” said, Linda Saris, Director of Salem CyberSpace.

Approximately 70 youth in Salem and 250 adults from all over the North Shore are improving their literacy skills through innovative, technology-based curricula developed at Salem CyberSpace, a program of North Shore Community Action Programs.

Salem CyberSpace’s youth programs are in part funded by Community Development Block grant money from the City of Salem and funding from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and are offered in partnership with the Salem public schools. The adult computer skills training operate in partnership with

the North Shore Workforce Investment Board and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.

### **About Salem CyberSpace and North Shore Community Action Programs**

Salem CyberSpace ([www.salemcyberspace.org](http://www.salemcyberspace.org)), located at 98 Lafayette Street in downtown Salem, is a program of North Shore Community Action Programs ([www.nscap.org](http://www.nscap.org)), a 501 c (3) nonprofit organization. NSCAP is the designated anti-poverty agency serving Salem, Peabody, Danvers, Beverly and 25 cities and towns north of Boston. Its mission is to help low-income people become economically self-sufficient while encouraging the larger community to recognize and eradicate the social and economic barriers that stand between poor families and their economic independence. The goal of Salem CyberSpace (SC) is to help low-income and unemployed people, as well as the organizations that serve them, to learn new computer skills to effect positive change for themselves, their families and their communities.

### **About the Verizon Foundation**

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, is committed to improving literacy and K-12 education through its signature program Thinkfinity.org; fostering awareness and prevention of domestic violence; and promoting the use of technology in healthcare delivery. In 2006, the foundation awarded more than \$69 million in grants to nonprofit agencies in the United States and abroad. The foundation also matched charitable donations from Verizon employees and retirees, resulting in \$29 million in combined contributions. Under the foundation's Verizon Volunteer initiative, one of the nation's largest employee-volunteer programs, company employees and retirees have also contributed nearly 3 million hours of community service since Verizon's inception in 2000. For more information on the foundation, visit [www.verizon.com/foundation](http://www.verizon.com/foundation).

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE:VZ), headquartered in New York, is a leader in delivering broadband and other wireline and wireless communication innovations to mass

market, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, serving 63.7 million customers nationwide. Verizon's Wireline operations include Verizon Business, which delivers innovative and seamless business solutions to customers around the world, and Verizon Telecom, which brings customers the benefits of converged communications, information and entertainment services over the nation's most advanced fiber-optic network. A Dow 30 company, Verizon has a diverse workforce of nearly 238,000 and last year generated consolidated operating revenues of more than \$88 billion.

For more information, visit [www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com).

### **About the Massachusetts Literacy Foundation (MLF)**

MLF was founded by Herald Media, supports the development of a fully literate population and is committed to taking innovative action to help the commonwealth achieve that goal. Herald Media brings to the Foundation the power of the press – communication & delivery – the unique ability to connect schools, family and the workforce by using the newspaper as the common denominator. For more information visit [www.massliteracy.org](http://www.massliteracy.org).

### **About Verizon Check Into Literacy Program**

Verizon gives customers the opportunity to donate \$1 a month to literacy programs when they pay their Verizon bill. In Massachusetts, proceeds raised through the program are donated to the Massachusetts Literacy Foundation to support the Literacy Champions' efforts statewide. Check Into Literacy is one of many efforts Verizon sponsors as part of its commitment to literacy.

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