

# Forever young

*Pace students join seniors at UHGC graduation ceremony in New Rochelle*

By Diana P. Olano

The intergenerational gap was narrowed a bit on April 25 at the United Hebrew Geriatric Center (UHGC) of New Rochelle. Students from Pace University and residents from the center came together that Tuesday afternoon for a “graduation” ceremony honoring the “senior students” who completed a new gerontechnology course created by Pace and the UHGC. The program tries to connect the ‘digital divide’ that occurs with seniors and their ability to use new technology.

“It’s been an honor and privilege for Pace to be in conjunction with the UHGC for this program,” said Dr. Jean Coppola, Assistant Professor of Technology Systems at Pace, of the program. The UHGC, partnered with Pace University’s Ivan F. Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems, formed the Consortium for Multi-Faceted Gerontechnology Research in October 2005. This past March, Pace students and seniors from the center began meeting on a weekly basis for classes on the UHGC campus. 23 college student instructors and 25 senior students enrolled in the program, thus allowing for individualized attention. The Pace students were able to teach the seniors how use a mouse, send e-mail to



Seniors and Pace college students joined forces last week.

family members, and chat via instant messenger, among other skills.

“We really believe that our residents want to be a part of the world around them and with the use of computers, they can be,” said Linda Forman, Director of Community Relations at UHGC. Forman and Coppola, along with Dr. Fran Gustavson, instructor of the course, and Prof. Barbara Thomas of Westchester Community College, another partner of the program, applied for grants to expand the project and to help purchase assistive software to help aid the seniors

in learning.

Along with receiving credit for being enrolled in the program, the Pace instructors feel they’ve gained even more by participating in the Gerontech program. “They enjoyed learning as much as we enjoyed teaching them. The program is a good way to keep the generation’s connected. No matter how old you get, everyone is always willing to learn new things,” said Charlise McDonald, a junior at Pace. “It changed my view of the elderly and what they’re capable of,” agreed Larissa Paulovic, sophomore

at Pace.

Rosa Giannetto spoke fondly of her instructors at the ceremony, saying, “I have never met a lovelier bunch of kids. It was obvious they came from homes where they learned to respect older people.” She ended her by thanking the founders of the project: “Young and old, if you don’t use your mind, it becomes stagnant. And the older you become, the worse it gets. This program has helped us use our minds and I want to say thank you for that.”

## IN THE NEWS

### Avon Foundation launches need for speed relay against domestic violence

*Team relay race will raise funds and awareness*

Domestic violence knows no boundaries - geographic, social or economic. It affects one in three women worldwide, and a woman is assaulted or beaten in the U.S. every nine seconds. Men can be victims, too, and 10 million American children witness domestic violence each year.

In response, the Avon Foundation announces a new event to raise funds and awareness to help end domestic violence: the Need for Speed Relay Against Domestic Violence, led by Honorary Team Captain Joe Torre,

Manager for the New York Yankees. Joe’s mother, Margaret, was a victim of domestic violence, and the Joe Torre Safe At Home Foundation will receive the Avon Foundation’s initial grant from funds raised in the race.

**Running From the Mountain to the Sound**

The inaugural Need for Speed Relay will take place in Westchester County, NY, on Sunday, June 11, 2006, and is expected to attract runners from across the northeast. The team relay covers a 60-mile, nine-leg course “from the Mountain to the Sound,” with legs of four to eleven miles from Bear Mountain Bridge to New Rochelle, NY on the Long Island Sound. The event is open to runners

of every level of expertise, with each team consisting of six to nine women and/or men. Teams can be independent or sponsored by clubs, schools, corporations or organizations.

The event will culminate in downtown New Rochelle, where Need for Speed Relay participants, family, friends and spectators will celebrate together at a finish-line festival complete with music, food, beverages and awards for the top teams.

The team registration fee ranges from \$400 for early registration to \$600 for late registration after May 15, with incentive prizes for fundraising. More information and registration is available at [www.needforspeedrelay.org](http://www.needforspeedrelay.org) or by calling 888-NFS-RELAY. Runners are encouraged to

sign up today and help end domestic violence.

**Speak Out Against Domestic Violence**

The Need for Speed Relay Against Domestic Violence is the newest initiative of the Avon Foundation Speak Out Against Domestic Violence program that launched in 2004. The initial grant to the Joe Torre Safe At Home Foundation will help children of domestic violence by creating a “Margaret’s Place” in Westchester County, a unique program that helps middle and high school students overcome domestic and teen dating violence through a designated safe place in their school, counseling and education.