

Computers for homebound seniors

By Lisa Irizarry

A free “Virtual Senior Center” is now available for homebound Nassau County seniors who want to participate in educational and other programs hosted via computer by the Selfhelp Community Services/Kimmel nonprofit partnership.

The program, which involves live chats, demonstrations and instruction, was officially launched Tuesday with a special preview for community groups and local legislators at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset.

An initial curriculum of local live

classes will be hosted by the Glen Cove Senior Center, the Sid Jacobson Jewish Community Center in East Hills and the Magnolia Senior Center of Long Beach.

Seniors will have access to a variety of offerings, including classes on wellness, self-esteem, special events from the Guggenheim Museum and Museum of Modern Art, musical performances, history, computer skills and more.

The pilot program was made possible by a variety of funding sources including a \$100,000 Large Grant from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock and supporting grants from the Manhasset

Community Fund and Hofstra University’s National Center for Suburban Studies.

Participating seniors’ residences will be outfitted with a touch-screen, VSC-enabled computer and assistive technology. Hardware will be installed, training provided and technical support made available so that the seniors can take part in live classes and connect with the Internet for a range of options.

“This is a very creative way to respond to the needs of or elders—so many who are homebound and alone,” said Nancy Chen Baldwin, president of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation.