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## ***Grand Opening Celebration on Long Island***

Submitted by Dr. Veronica Henry, Dean/Director of the Long Island EOC

On March 4, 2004, the Farmingdale State University, Long Island Educational Opportunity Center (LIEOC), Brentwood site celebrated the Grand Opening of the Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN) Lab. The guests in attendance included Assemblyman Phillip Ramos, members of the University Center for Academic and Workforce Development (UCAWD), ISI, Farmingdale Campus, local Chambers of Commerce, community organizations, residents of the surrounding community, students, staff and faculty of the LIEOC. Also in attendance at the celebration were several reporters from the local media.



Assemblyman Ramos of the 6th Assembly District helped secure \$1 million dollars in funding for The State University of New York and the LIEOC to make this high tech lab a reality for students, the local workforce, and community residents. "Our community's families will now have access to technology they otherwise would not have," stated Assemblyman Ramos.

Farmingdale State University Vice President of External Affairs, Ms. Patricia Hill Williams, Brentwood-Bay Shore Breast Cancer Coalition President, Elsa Ford, Assemblyman Phillip Ramos, Assistant Provost & Director of Educational Opportunity Centers, Bill Chalmers and Dean/Director of the Long Island Educational Opportunity Center, Dr. Veronica Henry addressed the eager audience. They all emphasized the need to have access to technology for underserved populations and the value that the resources of the ATTAIN lab will bring to students and the community. Dr. Henry told the media, "it will enable students and residents of the community to increase the likelihood of becoming economically self-sufficient, promote economic development in the community by linking residents with businesses, institutions and services, and foster academic skills development that students need to succeed later in life."

Mr. Vijay Macwan, Executive Director of UCAWD, in a press release, emphasized the importance of "creating technical parity for those who don't have access to computers." Approximately 80 percent of all newly created jobs are expected to require some knowledge of technology.

The media coverage sparked interest in the surrounding areas and a mailing was sent out in response to the many calls and other inquiries following this exciting event. A lab administrator will coordinate educational programs and schedules to meet the assessed needs. The ATTAIN Lab will be available to LIEOC students and outside organizations to enhance their academic, occupational and employability skills.

The staff of the LIEOC expresses its sincere gratitude to UCAWD and Assemblyman Ramos for giving us the opportunity to share this great technological resource with the people of Long Island.

# Commonly Used Terms & Definitions

## WHAT IS A VIRUS?

A virus is a program that is loaded on your computer without your knowledge and runs contrary to your wishes. A virus copies itself over and over again and can be dangerous because it can potentially use all available memory and bring the system to a halt. A more dangerous virus is one that can transmit itself across computer networks and bypass security systems. All computer viruses are manmade. We recommend that all floppy disks used in the ATTAIN Labs are checked for viruses prior to use. Many viruses are also transmitted via email, which is why it is important not to open e-mail messages and attached files unless you know and trust the sender.

## WHAT IS A WORM?

A worm is a special type of virus that can replicate itself and use memory, but cannot attach itself to other programs. When used in all capital letters, WORM is an acronym for Write Once Read Many. It is a technology that allows writing data onto a disk just once, making it permanent and readable for any number of times.

## WHAT IS A TROJAN HORSE?

Trojan horse is a malicious computer program which pretends to have some innocent purpose but, when run, has an entirely different effect - one which the programmer (or the packager, distributor, or advertiser) intended and the user didn't expect. The term is derived from the classical myth of the Trojan Horse.

A Trojan horse differs from a virus in that it is a stand-alone program; the Trojan does not attach to another program. It differs from a worm in that it does not move from one computer to another on its own. A person must transfer it intentionally, such as by email or by posting it to a download area.

## WHAT IS A VIRUS HOAX?

The main purpose of a virus hoax is to create 'panic' among users resulting in a ripple of mass email warnings to family and friends.

Both Symantec (Norton Anti-Virus) and McAfee have extensive lists of virus hoaxes.

Symantec: <http://www.symantec.com/avcenter/hoax.html> -----

McAfee: <http://vil.mcafee.com/hoax.asp>

## WHAT IS SPAM?

Spam is electronic junk mail or junk newsgroup postings. Spam is generally e-mail advertising for a product sent to a mailing list or newsgroup. Because the internet is public, it is difficult to avoid spam. We recommend using caution when entering

subscribers unwanted mail. However, this is not the case with all sites.

\* Suggestion: When writing email, filling in the "Subject" line with recognizable headings will decrease the chances of your recipient confusing your message with spam.

## WHAT IS A BUG?

A bug is not a virus. The term "bug" refers to an error or defect in software or hardware that causes a program to malfunction. Often a bug is caused by conflicts in software when applications try to run in tandem.

For more computer technology terms and definitions, see the online dictionary and search engine at <http://www.webopedia.com/>.

## A Career Success Story

Submitted by Genita Pinckney

*My name is Genita Pinckney. I was born in Manhattan, moved to Queens at age seven and am still residing in Queens. At the beginning of my high school career, I wanted to major in the health career field. Throughout this journey, I explored the opportunity of working in the health profession as a Nurse's Aide, Emergency Room Clerk, and as a Pharmacy Assistant, all while attending Benjamin Cardozo High School. I was very motivated and entered college after high school with hopes of becoming a Physician Assistant.*

*However, life took a drastic turn before I could reach my goal. I was struck by Cupid's bow and arrow, got married, and started a family. Two beautiful children later, yet determined to pursue a college degree, I had another opportunity to start again. But, before I could complete my program, my husband passed away. I was in the fourth semester of my studies and my educational journey had to stop again. However, with the love and support of my family and friends, I found the courage to start yet again. However, this time would be particularly difficult--a single parent raising two children, more determined than ever to have a successful future, but this time for the benefit of my children. And I decided to change my goal from a four-year program to a two-year course. By this time, my life was on a course of its own. In the end, I was able to earn an Associate of Arts Degree from St. John's University in June of 1999.*

*Being a full-time single parent and going to school was very challenging. Something had to give and my employment record became the sacrifice. Being absent from the job market for five years gave me other barriers to face; however, having kept ties to educational and spiritual communities let me know that I could overcome those barriers.*

*Fate guided me towards the Queens EOC. There I was able to bridge the gap between employment and education. I started in the Bridge Project seeking services for employment, career counseling, and networking preparation.*

## It Pays to Know Your Math...

Baden Street Settlement of Rochester uses the ATTAIN lab and ISI's math series to prepare program participants for union apprenticeship positions. Paul Manning, the coordinator of the Baden Street Skill Trades and Employment Preparation (STEP) Program, is seeing a greater level of confidence in his program members. Recently, he received a phone call from the union saying that one of the STEP program participants had the highest score on the union math test and was being considered as a top candidate for the Construction Inspection Engineer Trainee position. This position, paying \$11.00 per hour, involves monitoring highway construction and following blueprint plans. Over a 2 year period, trainees gain experience towards certification as an Engineering Technician II (NICET II) with a pay rate of up to \$22.00 per hour.



From left to right: Troy Salley, Paul Manning, Demetrius McCloud, Corri Smith and Alicia Ward.

The STEP program's attention to the development of math skills is bringing tremendous progress and success to the participants. Mr. Manning cited an example of one student who initially scored 72% on ISI's Basic Assessment Math test and after working with the ISI math courseware in the ATTAIN Lab with the help of a tutor, his score increased to 96%.

Mr. Manning is seeing similar progress among the other participants. Of the twenty people who have recently gone through the program, Corri Smith, Demetrius McCloud and Wendel Williams, have secured positions as Construction Inspection Engineer Trainees. Other members of this Baden Street program who have also applied for these apprenticeships are now awaiting a response.

Construction Engineering Technician Trainees are hired by various area construction contractors and monitored by NYS Department of Transportation. Troy Salley of NYS Department of Transportation explains that the positions are "designed for applicants who are proficient in math and college level reading. These qualifications would help ensure one's success in the program."

Mr. Manning also acknowledged Baden Street's ATTAIN Lab manager, Alicia Ward, for effectively guiding participants through developing high-quality resumes and cover letters, helping them to put their best foot forward in the screening and interview process.

When asked how they feel about their jobs, Demetrius McCloud replied, "I like the pay. I like that it's an active job." Corri Smith said, "There is nothing I don't like about the job. I like the people, the environment, and the work. Most of all, I like the fact that I'm learning something new every day and that I have the opportunity to use what I learn every day."

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## First ATTAIN Lab in Brooklyn Housing

On October 28, 2003, over two hundred people gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN) Lab located in the Farragut community center in Fort Green, Brooklyn. Farragut is a 10-building complex built in 1951 and home to more than 1,300 families.



Though Internet access has risen steadily throughout the nation, urban households are the least likely to afford the service resulting in the “digital divide.” In a continuing initiative to bridge the city’s digital divide and increase access to academic and job training programs, the ATTAIN Project, through a partnership between SUNY’s University Center for Academic and Workforce Development, the New York City Housing Authority and Instructional Systems Inc., worked to establish this 24-station computer lab.

The ATTAIN lab is the first of its kind in Brooklyn housing and will serve to combat Farragut’s 68% unemployment rate. Assemblyman Roger Green was instrumental in identifying Farragut as a community setting that would benefit greatly from the wealth of information and resources available in the ATTAIN Lab and helped shape its programs.

Residents of the Farragut housing complex have already begun using the ATTAIN Lab for gaining basic computer skills, academic enrichment and information about specific occupations. Soon a full-time facilitator will be hired to develop educational programs and to assist in the day-to-day operations of the lab.

## An interview with Amit Cohen

**Interviewer:** Amit, what brought you to the Bronx EOC?

**Amit:** After September 11th, I was temping and looking for work. When I was in between temp jobs, I heard about the Medical Assistant program at the Bronx EOC.

**Interviewer:** How far along are you in the program?

**Amit:** Well, I needed to get my GED, so I enrolled in the GED class first.

**Interviewer:** Will you be taking your GED exam soon?

**Amit:** I’ve already taken it and passed!

**Interviewer:** Congratulations!

**Amit:** Thank you. Being at the EOC made me wake up to school work. My educational thirst returned. While enrolled in the GED class I also spent a lot of time in the ATTAIN Lab studying the ISI High School Proficiency Series and taking the assessment tests with the guidance of the lab manager, Alex. I have to say that the math course really helped me to learn algebra.

**Interviewer:** That’s great. So what do you plan to do next?

**Amit:** I’m currently enrolled in the Medical Assistant class at the EOC. When I finish that, I’ll start a 6-week internship.

**Interviewer:** And after that...?

**Amit:** I hope to work as a medical assistant in pediatrics.

**Interviewer:** Well, we wish you all the best. Congratulations on your success and we thank you for sharing your success story with us.

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*At the end of that program, I began working as an intern, providing support services to other students, helping them use the same tools and courseware I had become familiar with during my journey at QEOC. More specifically, I assisted students in the ATTAIN Lab with the development of career choices, with searching for employment via the Internet, and with resume preparation and interviewing techniques. On occasion, I would also work with the Welfare to Work program, doing data entry and assisting students in completing applications for registration. In fact, all of the skills and tools I had developed and used as a Bridge student were now being used to help others.*

*At present, I am a Technical Support Assistant at the Long Island EOC/ Bridge Project in Brentwood. I provide technical computer lab assistance and monitor students’ homework completion and attendance, perform W-T-W data entry, and keep track of students’ post employment, job placement and retention status. This job has been very rewarding. I get so much satisfaction when I see students overcome barriers, achieve their goals and move on to successful career opportunities. It’s a joy to be able to help motivate them and provide them hope for tomorrow by sharing with them my experiences. To be a part of an organization that helps people bridge the gap from lack of education to full-time employment is extremely rewarding. I thank God for institutions that provide opportunities of employment and vocational training that help people like me overcome the challenges that life sometimes deals us. As I continue to grow personally and professionally, I will always remember that the EOC is an important part of my family. It is my hope that I will continue to assist others to achieve and fulfill their aspirations and dreams.*

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