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Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands to Bring Senior Planet Training to the Outer Cape

South Dennis. (September 9, 2021) – The pandemic has shown us that digital access and digital literacy are necessities—not luxuries—for healthy, productive aging. Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands, Inc. (ESCCI) is committed to ensuring older adults living in our region are fully included in a rapidly expanding on-line universe of goods, services, events and economic opportunities.

ESCCI is teaming up with Senior Planet, a national nonprofit which harnesses technology to change the way older Americans age. Together they hope to broaden the availability of basic computer training on the Lower Cape. Starting this fall, there will be classes and workshops in a variety of community settings from Eastham to Provincetown on topics like On-Line Privacy, E-commerce, and Digital Culture as well Computer Essentials. These events will be free of charge and held during daylight hours.

Before the pandemic, nearly three-quarters of adults in the United States had high-speed internet access at home, according to recent Pew Research Center data. But that number misses differences among age groups. About 4 of 5 adults ages 50 to 64 had high-speed internet then, higher than the U.S. average, but only 3 of 5 people 65 and older had the same access. More than a quarter of people 65 and older told Pew researchers that they never went online. In many cases, older adults lack confidence in their ability to use new devices and software designed to make their lives easier, the Pew researchers found.

Several agencies in Barnstable County responded to the pandemic by making tablets, smartphones and Chromebooks available to low income or particularly vulnerable seniors. But what the community was not able to provide was any systematic instruction on using or troubleshooting these devices. Senior Planet has spent years developing a curriculum that works well for older adult learners, so ESCCI believes that those participating in our Senior Planet licensed programs will experience a boost in their applied skills and confidence. This year-long pilot will develop a delivery model that is consistent, replicable and portable, and which can be hosted Councils on Aging and public libraries throughout our three county service area in coming years.

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About the Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands, Inc.

Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands, Inc. (ESCCI) is a private, not-for-profit community-based organization dedicated to serving older adults in the twenty-two towns of Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket counties. We are the federally designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and the state designated Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) as well as the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium (ADRC) for our three county area. Since 1972, we have been a central source of information and services enabling elders to enhance their quality of life and maintain their independence.

About Senior Planet

Senior Planet from AARP is a community of people 60 and older who are learning to thrive in the digital world. Senior Planet programs are offered free of charge online and in-person at Senior Planet locations in six states to help older adults build technology skills to allow them to improve their health, make new friendships, save money, and advocate in their communities. Senior Planet curriculum includes nearly 100 multi-week courses, lectures, and workshops. To learn more, visit www.seniorplanet.org or follow @SeniorPlanet on social media.

