"Let's Be Technical" Computer Literacy Program

The "Let's Be Technical" program helps seniors become more independent and more confident in using new technology. The program keeps them active— mentally, socially and physically.

LINCOLN University
Cooperative Extension and Research

Electronic devices are everywhere. However, senior citizens may not have the know-how to use various types of technology. At Lincoln University Cooperative Extension's (LUCE) St. Louis Urban Impact Center (SLUIC), the "Let's Be Technical" program was designed with our seniors in mind.

Lincoln University Cooperative Extension's (LUCE) St. Louis Urban Impact Center (SLUIC) worked with the American Association for Retired People (AARP) to design a computer literacy course for people aged 55 and up. The program's primary mission is to strengthen seniors' technological skills. The program helps seniors build new skills as well as improve their confidence. By achieving these two things, the program also assists

seniors when they are ready to re-enter the workforce.

The "Let's Be Technical" computer literacy program gives seniors a hands-on learning experience in the form of a course of study. First, each senior in the program takes a pre-test to assess the skills they may already have. Then, LUCE staff determine other technical skills they may need. The program coursework is then implemented. The course is held for four hours per day, over an eight-week period.

After successfully completing the eight-week course, seniors take a post-test. This test easily shows the seniors how much they have progressed since the beginning of the course. Some participants see that their typing speed has improved along with accuracy. They learn to use web browsers (such as Internet Explorer) and other software programs such as Microsoft Word and Excel. Learning these programs allows seniors to write resumes and cover letters and most are able to complete online job applications. Many of the seniors become more comfortable using a variety of technology. Some of them begin to use an ATM (automated teller machines), cell phones, perform online banking, and even use the self-checkout lanes in the grocery store! The technology that is a part of everyday life now becomes technology that seniors understand.