



**BLOOMSBURG
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FREE DIGITAL LITERACY CLASSES OFFERED BY AREA LIBRARIES

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BLOOMSBURG – A grant from the Degenstein Foundation is supporting digital literacy education for seniors and others at libraries across the region through the new Atlas Digital Navigator Program. The funds will help members of the public utilize technology for job searches, healthcare, and education through free computer classes at area libraries.

The grant provides for a Digital Literacy Educator that is hosted by the Bloomsburg Public Library and will provide free computer classes at that library as well as the Thomas Beaver Free Library in Danville, the Milton Public Library, the Degenstein Community Library in Sunbury, and the Rudy Gelnett Memorial Library in Selinsgrove. Delia Rincon was hired in June and has been developing the program using the digitallearn.org curriculum from the Public Library Association. She will offer the first set of scheduled classes starting on Monday, September 16.

Ammon Young, Bloomsburg Public Library Director, said, “We were very fortunate to find Delia, with her background in technology and teaching and her wonderful, person-centered approach. She is from Venezuela and has lived in the United States for 25 years. The seniors, teens, and other folks she has offered classes to during our startup period have appreciated her kind and patient approach to teaching. She can help people who speak English, Spanish, or Portuguese.”

DRIVE, an economic development council of governments, received \$125,000 from the 1994 Charles B. Degenstein Foundation after speaking with library directors about the demand for digital literacy education.

“Ensuring people have the skills needed to fully participate in the digital economy is an integral component in bridging the digital divide. Libraries have been at the center of digital literacy efforts for years, so they are the perfect partners in this effort. We’re grateful for Degenstein Foundation’s support in building capacity for digital literacy education in our region,” said Jennifer Wakeman, executive director of DRIVE.

Delia Rincon invites interested individuals to contact her to register for the classes, “I love what I am doing because I can see the smiles on the faces of the seniors after they take the classes. It makes a big difference for them. They were anxious about technology at first, and now they feel confident. One learner said that in every class there is a revelation! I encourage people to email me at drincon@bloomsburgpl.org or call me at 570-452-2541 to register for these classes.”

The value of this program is that seniors and others who have not been able to use the Internet can safely navigate the digital landscape for the first time, whether it is online shopping, messaging your doctor, claiming benefits, or any of the other daily activities that now require digital skills. -30-