

# Coral Gables news

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## Students offer tech advice, tutoring to The Palace Coral Gables residents

BY JANIS R. EHLERS

Although Max Rosenblum is a teen, he spends a lot of time with people who are upwards of 80 years old.

He makes time for the elderly in order to help them with their IT devices such as iPads, smart phones and social media.

It was his grandmother, Nancy Okun, who initially inspired him to help seniors. She had bought a smartphone and like most seniors was overwhelmed with its features.

She had heard and watched her friends using smartphones to “Skype” and to show off family photos, but she had no clue how to use one herself.

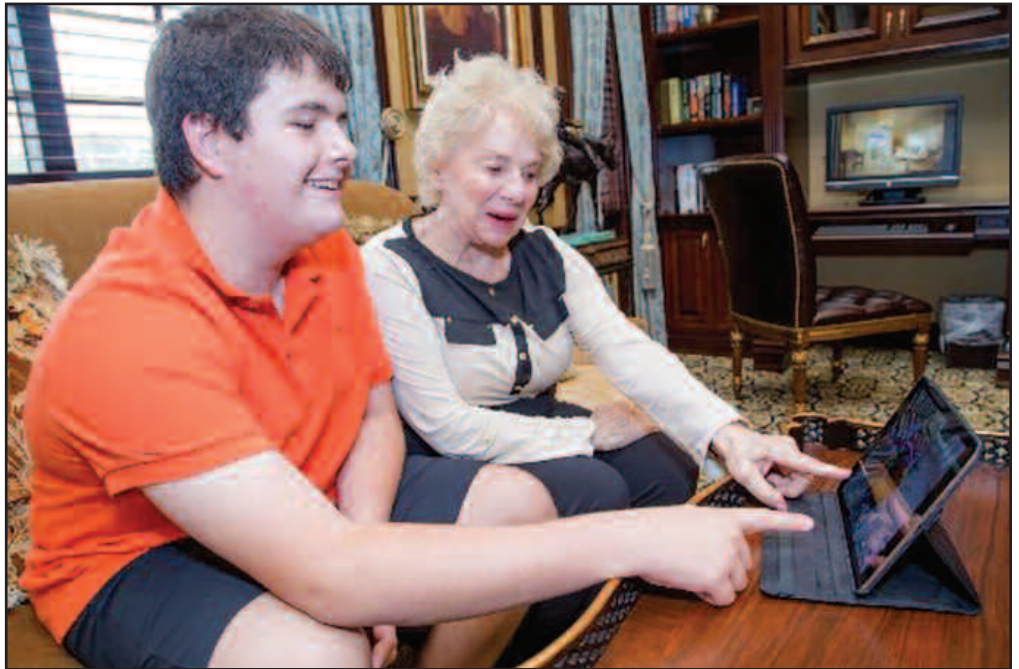
So she reached out to her grandson Max, a high school sophomore at The University School in Davie, who became her tutor. He taught her how to video chat, email pictures and text. He became her “go-to” person for tech support.

He then realized there may be other seniors he could help as well — other grandparents like his own.

He contacted The Palace Coral Gables, a luxury senior rental community, to see if he could volunteer to teach residents more about technology. Social activity director Pam Parker was thrilled that he wanted to volunteer, and thus TechMaxed was born.

TechMaxed is a volunteer teen program that helps tutor senior citizens on how to use IT devices. It has been up and running for 18 months, and Max’s popularity as the tech support “go-to” person and surrogate grandson has quickly spread among The Palace residents.

On Sundays, he typically sees five people in a day, and spends up to an hour with each person.



Max Rosenblum is pictured with The Palace Coral Gables resident Sarah Wishnia.

(Photo credit: Shay Cohen)

“I have found that one-on-one tutoring is better than a class, since everyone is at a different level and has specific and varying needs,” Max said.

He has recruited several friends and they have spread the program to The Palace Suites in Miami, an independent living community, and The Palms at Weston, since many of the students Max knows live in Weston.

Max’s website, <<http://techmaxed.com/>>, is utilized to recruit other students, who also volunteer to visit people at senior living communities or senior centers in the Florida area. The services are offered at no charge.

“I feel good about helping others and it gives me a sense of accomplishment. Tu-

toring is helping me to develop more patience while bridging the generational gap,” Max said.

With the help of the TechMaxed program, seniors’ eyes are being opened to the wealth of information available through their smart phones and computers. In addition to connecting with their loved ones through smart devices, Max is quite amazed at their eagerness to learn and their accomplishments. The seniors are tracking down long lost friends, getting medical questions answered, and even learning if their stockbroker is honest.

Max plans to continue TechMaxed for three more years and hopes his sister will then take over the program.