

University Center Greenville partners with CVWC

At its fall board meeting, the Carolinas Virtual World Consortium (CVWC) Board of Directors voted to extend membership to the University Center of Greenville (UCG). The CVWC is a group of universities, school districts, and corporate partners dedicated to investigating how 3-dimensional virtual worlds can enhance teaching, training, and learning at all educational levels. UCG President & CEO, Dr. Fred Baus, said that joining the consortium will "allow the University Center to remain at the cutting edge of technologies for teaching and learning, and advance new models for immersive learning in virtual environments." Bruce Rafert, Chairman of the CVWC's Board of Directors, expressed his enthusiasm for the Board's decision, saying that, "The seven universities and 130 faculty housed at the University Center bring a lot of capability, strength, and growth potential for weaving immersive technologies into the fabric of the Upstate." Rafert adds, "This partnership positions this region to become a core hub of activity related to research and development in immersive technologies as we bring the combined resources of the CVWC and the University Center to bear on the possibilities of virtual worlds."

Steve Bronack, a professor in Clemson's Human Resource Development graduate program located at the University Center, conducts research on the role of 3-dimensional virtual worlds in teaching and training and also expressed his excitement about the prospects of the new partnership. According to Professor Bronack, the University Center's membership in the Carolinas Virtual World Consortium will allow him to expand his professional reach beyond just the classroom. "The CVWC relationship will enable us to leverage the multiple online, 3-dimensional environments managed by the consortium, and the expertise present across the partner institutions, will enable us to develop and then answer important questions regarding the potential of 3-D worlds that facilitate more effective models for supporting learners in formal and informal educational spaces," notes Bronack. The University Center of Greenville is a consortium of higher education institutions dedicated to increasing access to educational opportunities for the citizens of the Upstate of South Carolina. UCG offers more than 75 undergraduate and graduate degrees through Clemson, Furman, Lander, Medical University of South Carolina, South Carolina State, University of South Carolina and the University of South Carolina Upstate. For more information, please call 864.250.1111 or visit www.ucgreenville.org. The Carolina Virtual Worlds Consortium was founded in 2007 to explore the role of 3-dimensional virtual worlds and immersive technologies for teaching, training and learning. The founding institutions, Clemson University in South Carolina and Appalachian State University in North Carolina, have been joined by the North Carolina Virtual Public School District and now the University Center. In 2008, the consortium also received \$1.5 million in federal funding from the National Science Foundation's "Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers" (ITEST) to help fund its research and outreach activities. For more information on the Carolina Virtual Worlds Consortium, visit the website, <http://www.cvwconline.org/>, and for more information on the ITEST program, visit the project's website at: <http://www.stem-ict-3d.org/>