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IRM College Spearheads Virtual Worlds Consortium

The National Defense University's Information Resources Management College (NDU's IRM College) announces that it is spearheading the newly-formed Federal Consortium for Virtual Worlds.

The Consortium consists of representatives from over 200 government, industry, academia, and non-profit organizations who have come together to explore the use of online 3D virtual worlds and avatar communities. As virtual areas for socialization and business applications have significantly multiplied over the past few years, the mechanisms for networking opportunities and the free flow of information have changed and expanded.

When considering virtual world platforms, the IRM College and other Consortium members discuss use of virtual worlds to support organizational mission, security and privacy of data, ease of generating virtual objects, ability to upload applications to an organization's current systems, and cost to build the simulated environment. The IRM College has partnered with the National Guard and Forterra Systems to create simulations for classes at the university. The College has also purchased an island on Second Life and a world from Active Worlds. The IRM College Second Life island is designed to be a Government Center and will be open to federal government agencies to offer events.

The Federal Consortium for Virtual Worlds is organized by the IRM College's Assistant Dean for Teaching, Learning & Technology, Dr. Paulette Robinson. In November 2007, Dr. Robinson organized the "Exploring Virtual Worlds" Conference, the first official event hosted by the Consortium. The Conference received high marks from over 500 domestic and international attendees, who were present either physically or virtually via the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Second Life island. Some participants also viewed the conference via streaming video from the Consortium's website. Anyone interested in joining or learning more about the Consortium should visit www.ndu.edu/irmc/fedconsortium.html or email FederalConsortiumVR@ndu.edu.

The next major event hosted by the Consortium will be on April 24-25, 2008 entitled the "Federal Virtual Worlds Expo: Implementing the Future" at the National Defense University (Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC). This event is open to the public, but registration is required (http://www.ndu.edu/irmc/fedconsortium_reg.html).

For more information on the Information Resources Management (IRM) College, please visit: www.ndu.edu/irmc. The IRM College is a committed leader in the development and implementation of collaboration technologies.

The National Defense University educates military and civilian leaders through teaching, research and outreach in national security strategy, military strategy, and national resource strategy. The National Defense University Public Affairs Point of Contact is: Dave Thomas – 202-685-3140 or Thomasd2@ndu.edu.

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