



2006
Outstanding Program Awards
Application

Program Title: Games for Health

Check one: Individual State Award Partnership or State/Private Entity

NASCA Member State: West Virginia

Submitted by: Robert W. Ferguson, Jr.

Title: Cabinet Secretary

Department or Corporation: WV Department of Administration

Address: Bldg. 1, Room E-119, 1900 Kanawha Blvd., East

City: Charleston State: WV Zip 25305

Phone: (304) 558-4331 Fax: (304) 558-2999

Email: rferguson@wvadmin.gov

(Please cc: Diane Holley, Communication Director, on all email correspondence - dholley@wvadmin.gov)

▶ **Deadline: March 1, 2006**

The application package must be received no later than March 1, 2006 for consideration.

Submit nominations electronically to NASCA Staff at nasca@csg.org. Or mail a CD or disk to: NASCA, c/o Council of State Governments, 2760 Research Park Dr., PO Box 11910, Lexington, KY 40578-1910. All submissions must be submitted electronically including copies of the justification and executive summary.

NASCA AWARD APPLICATION

“GAMES FOR HEALTH PROJECT”

Department of Administration West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency

Submitted by:

Robert W. Ferguson, Jr., Cabinet Secretary
Department of Administration

A.) Award Category

The Games for Health Project created by the West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) is applying for the partnership award between state and private entities, as well as with other state agencies. PEIA is organizationally structured under the Department of Administration.

B.) Executive Summary

In December of 2004, the West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency, West Virginia University's Motor Development Center and the West Virginia School of Medicine teamed up to establish the West Virginia Games for Health project. The concept was developed in response to the epidemic of obesity among West Virginia's children and, specifically, the children of PEIA beneficiaries.

More than fifty children have been involved in this Institutional Review Board-approved study which is designed to address the effectiveness of Dance Dance Revolution (DDR) as a physical activity intervention for children between the ages of 7-12. DDR is a physically challenging video game that uses a foot pad rather than a hand controller with options that provide feedback on calories burned and physical activity equivalents, such as jogging or jumping rope.

Children are tested by the School of Medicine for cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, endothelial functioning and attitudes towards exercise at the beginning of the project and at two twelve week intervals. The children are provided the DDR game and dance pad with the option to borrow a game console, if needed, along with instructions on keeping daily usage logs. Supplemental telephone coaching is also provided. Results of the study will be published in the spring of 2006 in medical journals with releases provided to the major media outlets.

In the spring of 2005, the West Virginia Department of Education (DOE) approached PEIA about the possibility of a collaboration between the two agencies to place DDR in twenty public schools across the state. PEIA provided the equipment with the understanding that the DOE would be responsible for teacher selection and training for the project. In addition, DOE agreed to track children's attitudes towards exercise, blood pressures and Body Mass Index.

PEIA and its partners have received and continue to receive on-going press coverage from major media outlets, including ABC's Good Morning America, NBC's The Today Show, the Associated Press, Canadian television, MSNBC, and many others. This press coverage has enabled us to establish contact with the manufacturer of DDR, Konami Digital Entertainment, which is a strong supporter of the project. Attached to this application is a copy of an article regarding this program that was published in the USA Today. For a direct link on the Internet, visit http://www.usatoday.com/tech/gaming/2006-01-24-ddr-gym-class_x.htm.

PEIA has now entered into a formal collaboration with the WV Department of Education, West Virginia University, Mountain State Blue Cross Blue Shield, Konami and Acordia National to place DDR in all West Virginia public schools. This will be done incrementally, starting first with the junior high/middle schools and progressing, in the 2006-07 school year, to the elementary and high schools. There is a very high interest level among our state schools with teachers calling in daily inquiring as to when they will be scheduled to receive the equipment and training. Limited funding is causing us to roll this valuable program out in stages. We continue to seek partners from both the public and private sectors to allow for full implementation.

Partners in this project have not only experienced overwhelming media coverage, but inquiries from school systems, health advocates, parents, and policy makers from across the United States and foreign nations including Canada, Germany and India. Georgia and Tennessee have requested an opportunity to partner with us.

C.) Program Description

The impact the program will have on state government lies in the long-term, lifestyle changes the children will make regarding physical activity. We feel that by starting at a time of life when children are beginning to make more choices for themselves, we can help them to choose to be physically active and, therefore, less likely to suffer from a variety of health problems which stem from sedentary lifestyles. The expected results for state government include healthier employees, less absenteeism, and a containment of health care costs from preventable, lifestyle related illnesses.

D.) Calculated Savings

Due to the nature of this innovative program, it is difficult to calculate the savings of the project due to the fact the project is aimed at affecting lifestyle changes. The costs that may be saved could be quite dramatic if one considers the costs of coronary bypass surgery, bariatric surgery or a lifetime of diabetic supplies and care. All of these health issues are primarily preventable conditions and can certainly be mitigated by a healthier, more physically active lifestyle.

E.) Quantitative Benefits

Please refer to the description in Section D which focuses on the benefits of lifestyle changes which could dramatically lessen the costs of many preventable health issues.

F.) Applicability of Other Entities

Because of this program, there is now a general consensus that “exergaming” is an emerging, yet growing trend with West Virginia in the lead role. We are well-positioned to maintain that leadership role by creating an institute housed at West Virginia University that will act as a repository of information on exergaming, addressing its use, benefits, products and outcomes.



Classifieds: [CRF.com](#) | [careerbuilder.com](#) | [eHarmony.com](#) | [Marketplace](#) | [Real estate](#)

- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Money](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Life](#)
- [Tech](#)
- [Weather](#)

[Search](#)



Tech Products

- [Products home](#)
- [Edward C. Baig](#)
- [Kim Komando](#)
- [Ask Kim](#)

Gaming

- [Gaming home](#)
- [Arcade](#)

- [Jinny Gudmundsen](#)
- [Marc Saltzman](#)

Science & Space

- [Science & Space](#)
- [April Holladay](#)
- [Dan Vergano](#)

This week in space

Wireless Center

- [Hotspot finder](#)
- [Wi-Fi primer](#)

Columnists

- [Columnists index](#)
- [Andrew Kantor](#)
- [Kevin Maney](#)

More Tech

- [Hot Sites](#)
- [Tech briefs](#)
- [RSS feeds](#)
- [Classifieds](#)

Marketplace

- [Arcade](#)
- [Music](#)
- [Shopping](#)
- [Special Offer](#)

- [Newspaper](#)
- [Classifieds](#)

[Advertisement](#)

Gaming

▪ [E-MAIL THIS](#) ▪ [PRINT THIS](#) ▪ [SAVE THIS](#) ▪ [MOST POPULAR](#) ▪ [SUBSCRIBE](#) ▪ [REPRINTS & PERMISSIONS](#)

Posted 1/24/2006 7:44 PM Updated 1/24/2006 7:52 PM

Students going to gym to video dance

By Greg Toppo, USA TODAY

Students in West Virginia gym classes soon could be sweating to the sounds of Japanese techno pop, Latin tunes and '80s dance music.



West Virginia public school students will move to *Dance Dance Revolution*.

Konami Digital Entertainment

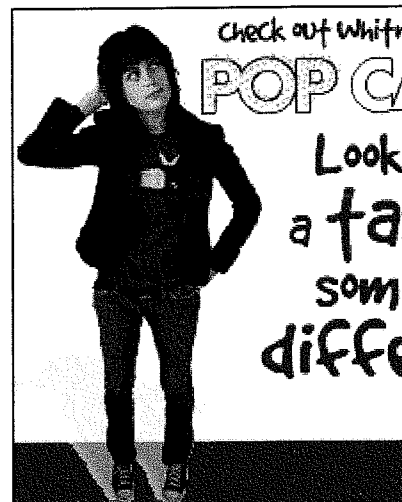
The state will announce on Wednesday that it has inked a three-year deal with Konami Digital Entertainment to put the popular *Dance Dance Revolution* (DDR) video game, along with Xbox video consoles, into all 765 public schools, according to David Bailey, spokesman for the West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA). Teachers will use the game in physical education and health classes, and the state will develop a *DDR* curriculum.

State health and education officials hope the quick-stepping video game helps kids get in shape and changes attitudes about exercise. PEIA, the state education department, West Virginia University and Mountain State Blue Cross Blue Shield will share the estimated \$740-per-school cost.

The U.S. version of a Japanese game, *DDR* has sold more than 3 million copies since 2001. Players step on a pressure-sensitive mat in time with on-screen dance moves. "We began to notice that children avidly play this game," says Nidia Henderson, PEIA's wellness director. The university started a pilot project last year after a professor noticed children lining up at a mall to play an arcade version.

Federal figures show that West Virginia in 2004 was one

Advertisement



Gym class is all thumbs

Do you think it's a good idea for Virginia to use a video game to teach physical education?

- Yes. It's best to know your audience.
- No. Video games are too passive.
- Maybe. Let's see if it works.

Related Advertiser Links

- [Hot Stock Picks from The Stockster](#)
www.thestockster.com

USATODAY Tech
SPECIAL OFFERS
 Check out great offers on items like these...
 **Wireless**

of nine states with obesity rates at or above 25%.

Officials are awaiting the results of a study that tracks kids' cardiovascular health and other measures after playing *DDR*, but Bailey says researchers already have seen improvements.

"The reality is the kids spend a tremendous amount of screen time. ... We wanted to make that screen time active time, and this is the best way to do it."

- **\$145,000 Mortgage for Under**
www.lowermybills.com
- **Mortgage Rates as Low as 2.4**
www.homeloantrust.com
- **Problem Credit Mortgage Exp**
www.homeloanhelpline.com

E-Mail Newsletters

Sign up to receive our free **Tech e-** get the latest tech news, Hot Sites & inbox.

E-mail: _____ (

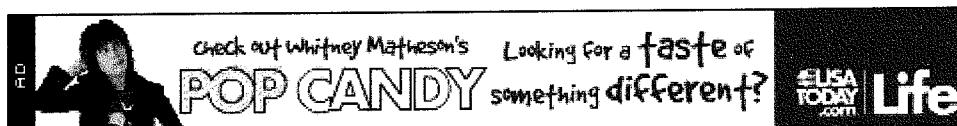
Select one: HTML


Related advertising links [What's this?](#)

<p>Custom Built Computers with Windows XP Get a custom PC loaded with Windows XP... www.localpcbuilder.com</p>	<p>Find a Computer Training School Near You Find the perfect computer training schoo... www.collegesurfing.com</p>	<p>Great Deals from Dell Home \$499 Dimension™ B110... www.dell4me.com</p>
---	---	--

Place your ad here

Subscribe Today: Home Delivery of USA TODAY - Save 35%



check out Whitney Matheson's **POP CANDY** Looking for a taste of something different? 

USATODAY.com partners: [USA Weekend](#) • [Sports Weekly](#) • [Education](#) • [Space.com](#)

[Home](#) • [Travel](#) • [News](#) • [Money](#) • [Sports](#) • [Life](#) • [Tech](#) • [Weather](#)

Resources: [Mobile news](#) • [Site map](#) • [FAQ](#) • [Contact us](#) • [E-mail news](#)
[Jobs with us](#) • [Internships](#) • [Terms of service](#) • [Privacy policy](#) • [Media kit](#) • [Press room](#)
[Electronic print edition](#) • [Reprints and Permissions](#)

Add USATODAY.com RSS feeds 

© Copyright 2006 USA TODAY, a division of Gannett Co. Inc.