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Subject: Local Students Collaborate With Rescue 1
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Included below is a press release regarding Rescue 1 and the Ferris State University-Grand Rapids Digital Animation and Game Design program. They have teamed up to promote fire prevention and safety. Members of Rescue 1, and Ferris-Grand Rapids faculty and students will be available at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, May 4, to discuss the collaboration. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon.

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Video games help kids learn fire safety

GRAND RAPIDS – Rescue 1 and students in the Digital Animation and Game Design program at Ferris State University-Grand Rapids have teamed up to promote fire prevention and safety.

The partnership resulted in the development of an interactive DVD showcasing Rescue 1's characters who help children understand fire dangers and how to prevent fire hazards, said Rescue 1 President Jeff Steere. The DVD provides children an alternate outlet outside of the more traditional literature and school visit by local firefighters.

"This has been a win-win for everyone involved," Steere said. "Rescue 1 has been able to expand its product offerings to a wider audience and students were able to gain real-world work experience dealing with a client and following deadlines."

Rescue 1 enlisted the DAGD students to bring the characters from the organization's Web site to life through the DVD and video-game type activities that are aimed at helping kids practice fire prevention skills, he said. The DVD brings real-life experiences together in a comprehensive teaching program that benefits children of all skill levels.

"My students have greatly benefited from this experience," Ferris instructor Marty Lier said. "This was a semester-long, large group project that had many facets covering storyboarding, art work, 3D design, character rigging, team work, audio, rendering and video editing. They learned many things and grew as animators, designers."

Steere, who has been actively involved for 24 years in the motor sports field and 23 years with the Grand Rapids Fire Department, added the real benefit of the teaching program is its accessibility. A downloadable syllabus is available online with a printable curriculum that enables teachers to utilize these programs in the classroom.

"Most fire prevention programs are using materials that look out-dated," he said. "We have cool fire prevention material that matches the excitement the kids have when they see a firefighter with a fire truck."

For more information on Rescue 1, visit www.firesafetyforkids.org.

Sincerely,

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