

## **Web Adventures Continues to Serve Thousands of Teachers and Students**

Web Adventures is a digital media program that uses educational games to teach middle and high school students about health and science and to inspire them to pursue careers in science.

Originally developed by Rice University's Center for Technology in Teaching and Learning (CTTL), Web Adventures offers 53 free educational games, with additional language versions in Spanish and German for the most popular titles. The games instruct students about forensics, science careers, microbiology, neuroscience, and drug and alcohol abuse. Numerous studies specifically conducted on WA indicated positive impact of these games on students' science motivation and knowledge.

Over the years, WA games served millions of students and teachers across the globe. For example, one of the most popular games created in 2007, "CSI: The Experience" attracted more than six million users who completed more than 10 million game sessions with an average time of about eight minutes per session.

After CTTL closed in 2016, Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP) hosted the website. Recent extinction of the Flash technology from WEB would have interrupted middle and high school teachers and students access to these games. Thus, RUSMP felt obligated to respond quickly to the outcry from the global community during the pandemic when online tools became vital to education.

An archival website was developed through funds from the NSF ITEST (NSF DRL 2041426), an EAGER grant, so that WA could be used offline by downloading a version of

each game with a stand-alone Flash projector. Other supplemental resources, such as cool links and teacher guides are still available online. The archival game site extends the window of access to the old games until the games are redeveloped in new technologies.

The limited archival version still attracts substantial traffic. In less than a year when the website was launched, more than 22,000 individual games have been downloaded and more than 120,000 pages have been viewed. This clearly indicates the continued demand for WA for both formal and informal education settings.

Currently going into the second year of the grant, we are developing the blueprints for the new game ecosystem so that in the next phases we can develop all of the games with additional new and innovative game features in new technologies that will last for the foreseeable future.