



New program aims to bring fitness, fun into the classroom

Posted: Jun 28, 2014 10:39 PM EDT
Updated: Jun 29, 2014 9:42 AM EDT

By Patrick Phillips **CONNECT**

Combining technology, physical fitness, and fun: that's the goal of TECHFIT, a new academic program intended to increase interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Students will engage in a 10-week after school program, where they'll be encouraged to create an exergame, an active-play video game similar to Dance Revolution and Wii Fit.

The games will each be built from scratch, complete with buzzers, wiring, and sensors.

The idea has been in the works for over six years, and is now headed to four Charleston County middle schools thanks to College of Charleston professors Susan and Michael Flynn.

Teachers from Haut Gap Middle, Morningside, Mt. Zion, and Charleston Developmental Academy were all accepted into the weeklong training.

"It's pretty intense," said Susan Flynn.

"What they're going to be doing in ten weeks with their children, they went through in one week."

"My husband used the analogy of a fire hose," added Professor Alka Harriger of Purdue University.

Harriger, and husband Brad collaborated with the CofC professors to realize the concept.

"We blasted them with all this knowledge."

TECHFIT is being funded through a \$1.2 million grant from the National Science Foundation.

The program will start in select Charleston County middle schools, along with schools in Indiana during the 2014-2015 academic school year.

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