

Middle School Students Learn 3D Design

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This fall, Manchester middle school students will have an opportunity to learn the basics of computer programming through “Alice,” an innovative 3D programming environment being offered at UNH Manchester.

Taught by Ali Rafieymehr, the newly appointed Dean of UNH Manchester, Alice teaches students the basics of computing and how to use 3D graphics to create animated videos to tell their own story. Alice is designed to be a student's first exposure to object-oriented programming. In Alice, 3-D objects (e.g., people, animals, and vehicles) populate a virtual world and students create a program to animate the objects.

The course will be offered for free to 20 students referred by teachers from Manchester middle schools. The goal is to provide hands on learning experiences, encourage students to use their imagination; and also to spark their interest in the field of computing.

According to the United States Department of Labor, computer occupations are expected to grow 22% from 2010 to 2020. Dean Rafieymehr feels strongly that programs such as Alice are critical to addressing the need for computing experts in the future. “We must ensure that we have sufficient students who pursue college education in the computing field. To spark interest in technology among K-12, an early intervention is the best practice. Alice programming for middle school students will allow us to spark interest in technology among the middle school students, especially female students,” said Rafieymehr.

The six week course will be offered September 26 – October 31 on Wednesday afternoons from 3:15 – 5:15 p.m. at UNH Manchester’s millyard campus on Commercial Street in Manchester. For more information about the program, Middle School teachers may contact Dr. Ali Rafieymehr at ali.rafieymehr@unh.edu. (Interested students and their family should contact their Middle School teacher for more information.)

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