



From the SIGHC Chair

All,

Welcome to the March 2009 newsletter of SIGHC. Spring will be busy for SIGHC with elections for three new officers and plenty of activities at NECC. We are also planning a professional development session on podcasting. More on that to follow soon.

Mark van 't Hooft
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SIGHC News

SIGHC Professional Development Opportunity

Picks from the App Store (presented by Tony Vincent on April 29, 2009).

The hottest handhelds today are Apple's iPod touch and iPhone. In addition to being great audio and video players, the iPod touch and iPhone run a mobile platform with over 20,000 software applications available from the App Store. With thousands of apps listed in the Education section of the App Store, it can be hard to find the very best apps for teaching and learning. SIGHC member Tony Vincent shares his educational app picks on Wednesday, April 29th at 3PM PST on Ustream.TV. Tony will present the first half-hour and the second half hour is reserved for participants to share their own picks and to ask questions. You can participate by joining the chatroom on Ustream.tv and by calling in your picks via webcam at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/tony-vincent>

This is the first in a series of free online workshops for SIGHC members and by SIGHC members.

SIGHC Elections

As you read this newsletter the elections are just around the corner. SIGHC will be electing:

- Chair Elect (Term 2009-2010, followed by the Chair term, 2010-2012).
- Secretary/Communications Officer (Term 2009-2011).
- Member at large (Term 2009-2011).

Make your voice heard and don't forget to vote!

SIGHC Award

The SIGHC Award Committee, headed by Veronica McGowan and Cathy Risberg, has been working hard on the proposal that is scheduled to be submitted sometime in April. This award, to be given out at NECC in 2010, will be the first award ever given out by the SIGHC. The deadline for submitting our proposal is July 15, 2009.

Thanks to those who've provided the Award Committee with feedback. If you have any questions about our proposal, please contact Cathy Risberg at mindsthatsoar@comcast.net. Thank you!

Cathy Risberg

SIGHC Name Change

The name change to SIGML has been approved and the official unveiling of the new name will happen at this year's NECC conference.

SIGHC Communication Tools

ISTE Community on Ning

ISTE recently launched a networking community on Ning. SIGHC has its own group set up on this networking site at <http://www.iste-community.org/group/sighc>. We invite you to join and use this site for any community activities and networking related to mobile learning. You will need to register on the main ISTE Ning site (<http://www.iste-community.org/>) to access the SIGHC Ning.

SIGHC Wiki



The SIGHC wiki continues to grow, and we always welcome more participation. Please go to <http://sighc.iste.wikispaces.net/space> to register (free!) and check it out. Just create a user name and password for yourself and start adding content. If you have ideas for topics that should be added to the wiki, please let us know, or add them yourself! Some topics we could add include:

- Mobile phones
- Podcasting
- Assessment
- Informal learning
- Research

We really want the wiki to be a resource for all of you!

SIGHC Website (www.iste.org/sighc)

And of course, if you have updates for the SIGHC website, please send them to Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu)

SIGHC Discussion Listserv (sighc-discussion@iste-listserver.iste.org)

We've had a discussion listserv for a while now and we've had some questions about why it's not being used. First of all, make sure that you sign up for the listserv using the SIG Manager tool (<http://www.iste.org/inhouse/membership/myprofile/sig-manager/index.cfm?>). Note that you will need to be logged on to the site using your username and password. You would also log into the SIG Manager tool if you want to unsubscribe from the listserv.

Second, if you have questions, stories, links, articles etc. related to the use of mobile devices for teaching and learning, please post them to the listserv. Somebody has to get the discussion started. If you would like to volunteer to post something to the discussion listserv on a regular basis (say, once per month), please contact the SIGHC Chair Mark van 't Hooft at mvanthoo@kent.edu.

SIGHC Announcement Listserv

If you are a SIGHC member, please make sure you are subscribed to this listserv as well as we use it to make announcements related to the SIG, including elections, newsletters, and NECC events. Note that only SIG officers can post to this listserv. Everybody else should post to the discussion listserv.

NECC News



NECC 2009

Information about the 2009 conference is available here (<http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2009/>).

SIGHC will have a forum, a sponsored session, and the annual business meeting at NECC 2009. This year's SIGHC picks are now posted on the SIGHC wiki at <http://sighc.iste.wikispaces.net/NECC+2009>.

SIGHC Sponsored Session

Title: The Missing Link: Preparing Teachers to Integrate SmartPhones Effectively.
Description: Teachers are vital to the effective integration and advocacy of this powerful 1:1 computing option. Learn to develop meaningful and effective smartphone classroom strategies.
Presenters: Ann Cunningham and Kristin Bennett
Date and Time: Monday, June 29, 2009, 11am-12pm
Location: TBA

SIGHC Annual Business Meeting

Date and Time: Monday, June 29, 2009, 4:45pm-6:15pm
Location: TBA

SIGHC Forum

Based on the survey responses and our business meeting at NECC, we have come up with what we think is an awesome forum for the 2009 NECC conference.

Title: Mobile, Connected, and Learning with Cell Phones.
Description: Join SIGHC at the World War II memorial in DC for a hands-on activity with camera phones, the web, and QR codes. Bring your phone!!
Presenters: Thomas McNeal and Mark van 't Hooft
Date and Time: Tuesday, June 30, 2009, 3-5 pm
Location: World War II Memorial
(see the SIGHC conference page at <http://sighc.iste.wikispaces.net/NECC+2009> for directions)

We still need volunteers to help us run the event, so if you're interested in helping out, please contact Mark van 't Hooft (mvanthoo@kent.edu). Volunteers will be asked to participate in a brief meeting on Monday to prepare for the event, and help out during the Forum on Tuesday, June 30, 2009 (3-5 pm). And who knows, there might be cool t-shirt in it for you!!

Feature Articles

Are you doing some cool stuff with mobile devices? Do you have any good stories to tell? Fellow SIGHC members would love to hear from you! Please submit your ideas and stories to the newsletter. Heck, we'll even help you write up your story if need be! Please contact any of the SIGHC officers for details (contact info is at the end of the newsletter)! This month's contribution is from Cristy McBee from Rock Springs, Wyoming.

Technology Boot Camp Sweetwater School District #1: Rock Springs, Wyoming Cristy McBee



In an effort to meet the needs of 21st Century learners and to provide proficiency in academics, Mrs. Cristy McBee has worked for the past two years to create an all-digital kindergarten laboratory classroom. The lab classroom and Mrs. McBee's research, with handheld devices have been nicknamed "Technology Boot Camp." The focus of the lab classroom has been to use new technologies to increase student achievement and to motivate students to remain on task for longer periods of time.

The kindergarten students use the traditional technologies provided to many schools including: desktop computers (both Mac and PC), laptop computers, an interactive whiteboard, a document camera with a projector, video cameras, digital cameras, listening centers, and a variety of software and online programming; they use these tools with 80% overall proficiency. In addition to these items the students have experienced with a variety of new technologies that are being piloted in their classrooms, with the objective of determining if they are appropriate and effective to use in other classrooms and programs throughout the district. Some of these piloted technologies include: the *Wii* game system, *Bee-Bot* and *Pro-Bot* floor robots, iPods, iChat, and handheld computers.

Mrs. McBee's "Technology Boot Camp" has been working with two partner kindergarten classrooms, both in a neighboring school district (Sweetwater School District #2, Green River, Wyoming). This partnership allows the piloted technologies to be used in two different environments, increasing the impact and overall benefits of the tools. Mrs. McBee and the partner teachers, Mrs. Stephanie Cordova and Mrs. Dorrene Francom, meet once a month to discuss the results of their technology use and to brainstorm new ways to integrate the tools into the various curriculum areas. The trio has also provided workshops and presentations at several local, state, and national conferences, including NECC and I Teach K!



Students working on graphing the weather for math and science.



A student using Microsoft Word to practice his sight words for language arts.

Two years ago Mrs. McBee wrote a classroom technology grant to the Wyoming Department of Education and Qwest Communications foundation for the purchase of handheld computers for her classroom. The handheld

computers were to be used by kindergarten students to show that they can increase motivation and raise academic achievement. The project was funded for \$5,000, and with matching funds 48 HP iPaq handheld computers were purchased and placed in the three classrooms. The handhelds have been used with great success during both the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years.

Students have used the handheld computers in a variety of lessons including language arts, math, science, and social studies. The handhelds are wireless and have allowed students to gather current events and weather from the Internet; to use word processing programs to write with the stylus and type with the keyboard in both math and language arts; to play games that build thinking skills, strategy, and problem solving; and to review lessons with teacher-created flash cards including information like sight words, numbers, shapes and colors, and letter identification and sounds. One kindergarten student, Gavin Rheame, was quoted as saying, "We are saving the environment by using the handhelds because we don't have to use paper and pencil anymore."

The lab classroom's instructional coach, Mrs. Doris Lehman, has visited the classroom on several occasions now for two years and recorded students' time on task when they use the handheld devices. She was quoted as saying, "I witnessed about 90% of the students on task for almost 45 minutes, and normally we see kindergarten students beginning to lose interest after 15 minutes. The integration of handheld computers has really begun to make a difference and these young learners are fearless when it comes to using them."



A kindergarten student shows a 4th grade student how to use the games on the handheld.



A kindergarten student remembering how to connect to the Internet to check for current events for a social studies lesson.

Mrs. McBee is currently working on her dissertation and her topic of research will be the use of handheld computers in the kindergarten classroom to improve motivation and phonemic awareness. Her study will take place this spring and she will be observing classrooms in both school districts. With the success of her own classroom and the use of handheld computers, Mrs. McBee is confident that her research will prove that handheld devices both motivate and raise achievement levels in the experimental classrooms. If the research findings turn out to be positive then the two school districts will expand the program and provide additional handheld technologies to more classrooms and programs.

Mrs. McBee recently received a grant to purchase a classroom set of iPods, allowing her students to listen to and create their own podcasts. The students will also listen to poetry, songs, and literature on the devices, further saving the environment by making use of electronic print. In the future the iPods will be used to reinforce letter identification skills, sounds and number identification, and counting by creating and recording jingles for each letter and number. Students can then make use of the devices for extended lessons, interventions, and make-up work. Mrs. McBee will work closely with local community members and instructional coaches to develop these jingles and recordings, connecting the school to the local community and making her students' learning more relevant.

During the month of May, Mrs. McBee's kindergarten classroom hopes to provide a "technology night" as the community will be invited to learn more about the work being done in the lab classroom, specifically with handheld learning. The goal is to encourage others to experience a new technology and to gain a love for learning.

Member News

APAL is preparing online learning modules for compatibility with major mobile devices. Pilot widgets are:

1. for American English pronunciation practice: www.ELGuide.cc/SIW.html and
2. for personal communication skills: www.ELGuide.cc/CW.htm

We are seeking interested teachers, specialists and students for participation, consultation and collaboration. Please contact E. L. Lotecka, PhD, APAL@ElGuides.cc Program Director, APAL Foundation www.ElGuides.cc

And Finally...

As always, thanks to everybody who contributed to this month's newsletter. Don't forget to participate by submitting articles, or adding content to the SIGHC wiki ☺. Its success is depends on YOU!

If you have any news or info for a future newsletter, please send it to Mischelle Grubbs. Until the next issue...

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