

Virtual Training Partners and Shapiro Negotiations Institute Named Winners of Federal Virtual Worlds Challenge

Negotiation Training conducted in Second Life Recognized as Leading Example of Instructor Led Training in Virtual Environments.

BALTIMORE, MD--(Marketwire – May 20, 2010) – Virtual Training Partners (www.virtualtrainingpartners.com) today announced the Virtual World training it developed for Shapiro Negotiations Institute (www.shapironegotiations.com) won the U.S. Army Simulation & Training Technology Center's Federal Virtual Worlds Challenge for best instruction in a virtual world. Virtual Training Partners winning entry was featured on May 13-14, 2010, at the Federal Consortium of Virtual Worlds in Arlington, VA.

Twenty-four entries from corporate and government agencies across the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada were evaluated by the U.S. government and the public to uncover the most innovative and interactive training and analysis solutions. Evaluators included the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the U.S. Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Transportation, and Health and Human Services.

"I am thrilled with the new and innovative way that Virtual Training Partners married virtual world technologies with solid Instructional Design techniques," says Tami Griffith, Science and Technology Manager, U.S. Army Research & Development Engineering Command (RDECOM) and the creator of the challenge. "The program they have developed for Shapiro Negotiations Institute provides compelling learning opportunities that I anticipate the Government will be quick to explore in the future."

Virtual Training Partners was created as a result of challenges faced by organizations that were frustrated by the costs of front of the room training, but disappointed at the effectiveness of distance learning tools like Webinars. By creating an Avatar, a participant can attend a session with colleagues from around the world who have created their own Avatars. Participants can then interact, conduct role plays, and feel as though they are in the same room with the other participants. Using this immersive approach, Virtual World training became an alternative that created an interactive classroom experience with the cost savings of having participants attending programs via their office computers.

"Virtual Training Partners provides a great example of how Second Life can be used for a training solution," says Glenn Fisher of Linden Labs, creator of the Virtual World Second Life. "They have created negotiation scenarios and activities in Second Life that mirror their real-world training but create a more compelling experience."

"It has been a great validation of our Virtual World strategy," said Mark Jankowski, President of Shapiro Negotiations Institute and leader of the Virtual Training Partners team. "While cost savings is the most often cited reason to do training in Virtual Worlds, this award demonstrates that efficacy of that training is as viable as its efficiency."

About Virtual Training Partners and Shapiro Negotiations Institute

Virtual Training Partners is a division of Shapiro Negotiations Institute and focuses on the development of innovating training solutions delivered through 3D Virtual Technology. Shapiro Negotiations Institute, founded in 1996, has delivered negotiations, sales optimization and influencing training to over 250,000 people on six continents.

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