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## Teaching game wins MacArthur award



Rosanna Garcia and Ann McDonald developed a web-based teaching game that won a \$150,000 MacArthur award. *Courtesy photo*

**May 20, 2010**

A web-based teaching game developed by two Northeastern faculty members in collaboration with a faculty member at the University of Massachusetts Amherst has won a 21st Century Learning Lab Award of \$150,000 from the MacArthur Foundation.

The game, entitled NoxNoMore, is the brainchild of Associate Professor of **Marketing** Rosanna Garcia and Assistant Professor of **Graphic Design and Interactive Media** Ann McDonald, both at Northeastern, and Song Gao, an assistant professor of transportation engineering at the University of Massachusetts.

Theirs was one of 10 projects chosen for awards out of more than 800 international submissions to the innovative digital media and learning projects competition. The MacArthur Foundation created the program to help educators re-imagine learning for students immersed in digital environments and social networks.

The concept behind NoxNoMore is grounded in research that indicates that people are more likely to change behaviors and make environmentally friendly choices when the learning is linked to their own personal experience. The game uses GPS data to teach students about the environmental impact of their family's transportation choices. Players upload GPS-gathered personal travel data and attempt to reduce carbon emissions and air pollution in game play and real life through use of alternative fuel vehicles, public transportation, consolidation of trips, and walking or biking.

"The goal is to educate students of all ages about simple, everyday actions that they can take now to impact the environment tomorrow," Garcia said. "Today's kids will soon be making their own transportation choices and those choices will include tomorrow's alternative fuel vehicles."

The pilot phase of the game project will be launched this fall. In 2011, members of the Northeastern University student group Husky Energy Action Team will bring a beta version of the game to middle school students as part of an environmental science curriculum. Students will be encouraged to involve their parents in gathering the GPS data and to influence the family's transportation decisions.

"Utilizing in-game data visualization and participatory challenges, NoxNoMore will give kids creative ways to consider the pros and cons of their actions and take steps to help their family and friends make meaningful changes," said McDonald.

The MacArthur Foundation digital and learning initiative looks at how young people learn, play, socialize and participate in civic life, and how digital technology affects their behavior.

For more information, please contact Samantha Fodrowski at 617-373-5427 or at [s.fodrowski@neu.edu](mailto:s.fodrowski@neu.edu).

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