



All, Alice had a very positive reception at SIGCSE 2006, in Houston last week. The next newsletter may contain more details. This newsletter will focus on the summer Alice workshops, the creation of a listserv, and some important information concerning Alice 3.0.

## TOPICS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER:

- An important partnership between Electronic Arts and Carnegie Mellon University
- The CMU Summer Alice Institute
- The new Alice listserv
- The Duke Summer Alice workshop

### An important partnership between Electronic Arts and Carnegie Mellon University



Below is a slightly edited form of a press release, detailing Electronic Arts Inc. involvement with the creation of Alice 3.0. Not included in the press release is the fact that Alice 3.0 will have the ability to generate Java code, thus creating an easier transition from Alice to Java. The object model in Alice will much closer match Java's. EA's contributions should be particularly beneficial at middle school and high school, as well as in colleges. Based on Ph.D. student Caitlin Kelleher's dissertation work, there is strong evidence that authoring stories (as 3D movies) is highly motivating to middle school girls, and the art assets from Electronic Arts will lead to the ability to use humanoids with a richer set of primitive methods (so that

instead of only having move, turn, roll, etc., humanoids may have the built-in ability to kiss, slap, walk, kneel, etc.)

### PITTSBURGH March 10, 2006

Carnegie Mellon University has entered into a groundbreaking collaboration with Electronic Arts Inc., that has the potential to revolutionize and reinvigorate computer science education in the US from middle school through senior high and beyond. EA has agreed to help underwrite the development of Alice 3.0, and provide essential arts assets from *The Sims* the best selling PC video game of all time. *The Sims* content will transform the Alice software into a more compelling...programming environment. Development for Alice 3.0 will begin immediately and will span the next 18 to 24 months. Experts say that when the transformation is complete, the new programming environment will be in position to become the national standard for teaching software programming.

EA comes to this with the goal of doing well by doing good. Inspiring next-generation game makers is a primary objective", said **Bing Gordon, Chief Creative Officer at EA**. "Alice has already proven to be a powerful tool to engage all kids most particularly girls. Our hope is to contribute in a way that further accelerates its success. Getting the chance to use the characters and animations from *The Sims* is like teaching at an art school and having Disney give you Mickey Mouse, said **Computer Science Professor Randy Pausch**, director of the Alice Project at Carnegie Mellon. The Sims is EAs crown jewel, and the fact that they are willing to use it for education shows a kind of long-term vision one rarely sees from large corporations. **Steve Seabolt, vice**

**president, university and marketing education at EA**, said, By marrying the characters, animations and playful style of The Sims to Alice, we are helping make computer science fun for a new generation of creative leaders.

Alice is an open source system developed over the last 10 years and provided as a free public service by Carnegie Mellon. In combination with novel educational materials developed by **Computer Science Professors Wanda Dann of Ithaca College and Stephen Cooper of St. Josephs University**, Alice is already in use at more than 60 colleges to teach various introductory computer science/computer programming courses. Individual hobbyists and enterprising game programmers may also download the software free of charge at [www.alice.org](http://www.alice.org), and the teaching materials free of charge at [www.aliceprogramming.net](http://www.aliceprogramming.net).

Introductory computer programming has historically been a frustrating experience for many students. Recent attempts to include object-oriented programming in first semester university curricula have only compounded the problem. There has also been a 50 percent drop in the number of computer science majors in the last five years\*. The Alice programming language represents a breakthrough in object-oriented computer programming. One of its greatest strengths is making abstract concepts concrete in the eyes of first-time programmers. In Alice, objects appear as 3D characters, animals, furniture, etc. Theyre controlled by using a drag-and-drop editor that prevents syntax errors and allows students to write code like move forward one meter or rotate left one-quarter turn. These commands are easily understood by students and the

computations are displayed on screen in real-time animations. The spectacular art assets and animations from *The Sims* will transform Alice. Students using Alice 3.0 will essentially be working in an environment that looks and feels like *The Sims*. Characters will look and move like Sims characters and the library of *The Sims* emotional reaction animations will be integrated into the program.

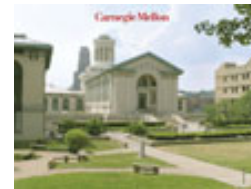
\* According to a UCLA study:  
<http://www.cra.org/CRN/articles/may05/vegso>

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## The CMU Summer Alice workshop

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The 2006 Alice Summer Institute at Carnegie Mellon University (running July 24-30) registration is now open. Please go to:



<http://www.intro.cs.cmu.edu/alice-institute/>

This website also contains information about the workshop. Due to space considerations, the number of participants is limited. Please register early if you are interested.

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## The new Alice listserv

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We have received many comments requesting an Alice listserv, to be able to rapidly post questions and answers. An electronic discussion list has been created to enable conversation and communication among all members of the Alice

community. This list is a place for members of the community to ask exchange ideas and discuss issues related to the use of the Alice software. Membership is open to experienced users, new users, those considering the use of Alice, those who are hoping to learn more about Alice, and members of the Alice development team.



This list is moderated, to prevent commercial solicitation and other messages that are inappropriate for the goals of this list.

Please note that you must subscribe to thislistserv to become part of it. To subscribe to the list go to:  
<https://lists.andrew.cmu.edu/mailman/listinfo/alice-list>

Questions and concerns about the list should be sent to:  
[alice-list-owner@lists.andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:alice-list-owner@lists.andrew.cmu.edu)

If you are having any difficulty signing up for the listserv, please contact **Don Slater** ([dslater@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:dslater@andrew.cmu.edu)) directly.

## The Duke Summer Alice workshop

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If you are planning to attend one of the summer Alice workshops at Duke University (June 19-21), please go to: <http://macs.sju.edu/alice/> to register **now**. This is especially important for the folks who attended one of last summer's Alice workshops (at The University of Mississippi, Duke University, or Haverford College). Our NSF grant will cover a portion of returnees' costs, but these funds are limited, and will run out soon. To date, the registration numbers have been unusually high, and we don't want you to get shut out of this opportunity.

Regards,  
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