



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Augmented Reality Sandbox Comes to Life in Portsmouth

Portsmouth, VA – The City of Portsmouth, GIS Division of Information Technology, is proud to announce they have recently built their own an Augmented Reality Sandbox. The AR Sandbox is an educational tool used to demonstrate and teach a wide variety of physical and environmental aspects. Superimposing responsive digital effects onto sand in a sandbox places educators, students, and policy makers in an augmented reality, offering a hands-on way to explore geoscience processes.

The AR Sandbox uses augmented reality programming developed by U.C. Berkley to project topographic images onto sand that is shaped into mountains, valleys, and lakes. Using an Xbox 360 kinetic camera and a projector, the camera reads the contour of the sand, which is then projected on to the sand via a standard digital projector. Users of the sandbox can shift and form sand, and the camera and projector will work in sync to show the new colors in real-time. Students can model rain storms by spreading an open hand over the sandbox, while raining a water simulation will flow down hills and accumulate in rivers, basins, and other low spots. The sandbox can model the flow and accumulation of water.

The AR Sandbox was initially launched in museum settings in 2012, and it has since been adapted for use in more than 150 universities, research centers, conferences, government organizations, and schools around the world.

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