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Jump and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign announce first engineering projects

PEORIA, Ill. (Jan. 16, 2015) – A robotic forearm designed to teach young, practicing physicians how to identify abnormalities, and a 3-D computer-generated person that would deliver medical information to patients are the first projects awarded funding under a new partnership between doctors and engineers.

Each team will receive nearly \$50,000 to develop their projects this year through Jump ARCHES, or Applied Research for Community Health through Engineering and Simulation. This joint venture between Jump Trading Simulation & Education Center and the University of Illinois College of Engineering at Urbana-Champaign puts doctors and engineers together to solve problems in healthcare delivery through creation of new devices, processes and technologies.

About the projects:

Personalized Avatars In Patient Portals – A 3-D audio-visual avatar capable of showing appropriate emotions will be used online to help patients understand their specific medical information, such as test results and medical guidance. The team includes Dr. Ann Willemsen-Dunlap, Director of Interprofessional Education at Jump and a UICOMP faculty member, and Dr. Thomas Huang, a research professor in electrical and computer engineering at UIUC.

Abnormal Muscle Tone Behavior Diagnostic Device – A robotic arm will help practicing physicians and students differentiate between abnormal muscle tone behaviors, which can help diagnose different brain lesions such as stroke, Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, or multiple sclerosis. The team includes Dr. Elizabeth Hsiao-Wecksler, a mechanical engineering professor at UIUC; Dr. Steven Tippett, Chair of Physical Therapy at Bradley University and a UICOMP faculty member; and Dr. Martin Morris, a mechanical engineering professor at Bradley.

"Partnering clinicians with engineers already has opened so many new doors to what's possible," said Dr. John Vozenilek, Medical Director at Jump.

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