



SIMmersion, LLC awarded Phase I SBIR from U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command

Today SIMmersion, LLC announces its award of a Phase I Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) contract, granted by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command in support of the Department of Defense SBIR Program (<http://www.dodsbir.net/about/about.htm>).

([PRWEB](#)) April 20, 2005 -- Today SIMmersion, LLC announces its award of a Phase I Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) contract, granted by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command in support of the Department of Defense SBIR Program (<http://www.dodsbir.net/about/about.htm>).

SIMmersion LLC (<http://www.SIMmersion.com>) will work in partnership with the National Capital Area Medical Simulation Center [(SimCen), <http://simcen.usuhs.mil>] and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc. (<http://www.hjf.org/>) to develop computer simulated patients. Ultimately, the simulation will be used as part of the DoD's programs for training early detection of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high explosive (CBRNE) events.

The simulation, to be built by SIMmersion, will train physicians and other clinicians to distinguish between symptoms associated with an attack and similar symptoms associated with common ailments. Specifically, this human interactive simulation will train physicians to distinguish between smallpox, chicken pox, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Medical practitioners will have the opportunity to speak with a simulated patient to identify symptoms, make a diagnosis, and to implement a patient management plan.

To create a patient for the software, SIMmersion will use video of an actor. The realism of the simulated patient will be further enhanced by a memory and an advanced emotional model; in combination, these functions enable the character to respond to the physician's statements as a real patient would. They will interact with the simulated patient in a face-to-face conversation using a microphone or a mouse to communicate. User statements and questions are scripted to include a variety of natural choices; likewise, the responses are scripted to emulate what real people would say at the current stage of the conversation given the motives and character of the simulated person.

The patient simulation will be different every time the simulation is used. User feedback will be given in a variety of ways including an on-screen help agent that provides non-verbal cues, help buttons for both user questions and character responses, scoring, and instant replay features that enable users to review portions of their conversation or the entire dialogue.

Training physicians to properly identify smallpox is a critical, proactive step in response to the potential threat of a biological attack. Physicians must have the knowledge, experience, and confidence to accurately diagnose smallpox and to implement an appropriate patient management plan. Accordingly, the patient simulation will build skills, increase confidence, and improve information retention to create a training solution that currently thousands of physicians need. Reduced training costs and increased accessibility of the product are important attributes of SIMmersion's simulations.

Upon completion of Phase I in July 2005, an evaluation will determine the effectiveness of the system for identifying the indicators of a potential terrorist attack. Contingent on a Phase II SBIR award, SIMmersion will create a fully developed simulation system for use by the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences



and will expand its market to government agencies and civilian medical organizations. This medical training simulation is the first in a series planned by SIMmersion.

About SIMmersion, LLC

SIMmersion LLC, a spin-off of Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, is a software development company in Columbia, MD. The realistic simulations developed by SIMmersion build skills and increase learner retention. Each simulation designed and created by SIMmersion is customizable to meet specific client training needs.

Visit <http://www.SIMmersion.com> for more information.

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