



Provider World Phase II Launches

'Provider Pals announces that the additions and improvements to their educational gaming site are complete.'

(Libby, Montana) - Provider Pals, a Presidential Award winning urban/rural cultural exchange program, announced Monday, March 1st, that Phase II construction of its' on-line virtual village educational gaming site has been completed.

The web site, [Provider World](#), allows students and guests to visit farms, forests, ranches, mines and fishing operations and cultures in an interactive educational gaming format. The original *Provider World* was launched in late 2007 with support from the [Caterpillar Foundation](#) and included educational gaming such as managing a computer generated forest for both environmental and commodity values, caring for a milk cow given each player upon entering the world and games centered on the career opportunities available in the fields of agriculture, mining, fishing, and forestry. Phase II, largely funded through a grant from [Monsanto Fund](#), includes expanded game offerings in the agriculture portion of the world, easier sign-up procedures, a buddy list for the players and other improvements and updates.

"Monsanto is committed to supporting the communities where it does business," said Deborah Patterson, President of Monsanto Fund. "We are supporting this organization's effort because it is encouraging cross cultural communication and enhancing the agricultural knowledge of students across the globe."

"This division between urban and rural areas continues to grow worldwide," said John Carpenter, President of Caterpillar Forest Products. "Provider Pals is a great avenue for cross cultural bridge building and CAT is proud to share their vision and provide monetary support to help accomplish their objectives."

Provider Pals was piloted in rural Montana and has expanded into cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Detroit and Washington, DC. Ford Motor and others continue to provide support for the program as it has grown to include over 10,000 students per year in over 25 cities in the United States and Canada. The *Wall Street Journal* has called the program 'the most exciting educational initiative in decades.'

Provider Pals programming facilitates urban classroom 'adoptions' of rural resource workers in the fields of farming, ranching, mining, logging and fishing. In addition, students from rural areas travel to urban centers to visit schools of their city peers and participating urban schools travel to Libby, Montana, and join rural students for a week of fun and learning at the Presidential Award Winning Historic Raven Natural Resource Learning Center.

Bruce Vincent, Executive Director of Provider Pals, is excited about Phase II of their virtual village. "Our programming is now enjoyed by students and teachers in hundreds of classrooms," said Vincent, "but thanks to Caterpillar and Monsanto Fund's support, we are able to facilitate cultural understanding and respect between hundreds of thousands of youth each year." "There is a huge need for the resource managing customer base to reach out to their urban peers and shares with us the desire to use cutting edge technologies to accomplish this worthy task," he said.

About Provider Pals®

Provider Pals® is a 501c(3) Non-Profit Education Organization that is in its eighth year of full time operation. The mission of this Presidential award winning program is to build bridges of cultural understanding and respect between rural youth, urban youth, and their natural resource providers.

**For more information on Provider Pals, please contact Bruce at (406)293-8822 or bruce@providerpals.com.
You can also visit them on the web at www.providerpals.com.**