

DDR Charity Event Raises Money for Local and Worldwide Cause

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Both seminary and undergraduate students participated in a Dance Dance Revolution tournament in the Low last Wednesday to raise money for charity.

Also, Master of Divinity student Sterling Franklin successfully achieved a goal of a 25,000 point combo, playing 48 difficult songs consecutively without a break or missing a single step.

The proceeds of the event were donated to two causes: the family of the late Jarrod Voltz, a pastor from North Suburban Church who passed away in February, and Open Doors USA, a ministry that helps support members of persecuted countries in other nations.

For the few that don't know, Dance Dance Revolution, or DDR for short, is one of the most popular games on campus because of its interactivity. Players stand on a floor mat with arrows pointing up, down, left, and right, and try to match the arrows that they read on a screen with their steps. Mastering the game requires a combination of coordination, endurance, and good timing, especially in the game's higher difficulties.

Franklin is the most adept player on campus, and is nationally recognized, having held several records worldwide. He is the world's current number one player in Nonstop mode, and has won several tournaments, despite having only begun playing in the fall of 2003. His incredible (and exhausting) performance Wednesday can be seen on his website djsterf.net, along with a collection of other notable events in his career.

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Originating in arcades in Japan, DDR was shipped to the United States in 1998 and soon became a cult arcade hit with its unique platform display, high energy soundtrack, and interactive nature. The first release spawned several additional titles, which were released on home consoles, selling millions of units nationwide.

DDR also features a workout mode, in which dancers can keep track of the amount of calories they

burn and the amount of time they have spent playing. Using this feature, players can also see the equivalent of their efforts translated into distance spent running or swimming.

The game is now a worldwide phenomenon, having been shipped to parts of Europe and South America as well. Many different video game manufacturers have tried to capitalize on the game's immense popularity by releasing new versions that utilize the same basic idea, such as Pump It Up and In the Groove.

These and other interactive rhythm games have made national news recently, as many high schools have begun to utilize the games as a way of encouraging sedentary teenagers to stay active. According to the Washington Post, elementary schools in West Virginia have even adopted the game as part of their physical education curriculum in an effort to reduce their high rate of obesity.

As we head into a new millennium of gaming technology and advances, interactive experiences like these are without a doubt the games of the future.