



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Department
Office of Governor Deval L. Patrick
Press Release**

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**GOVERNOR PATRICK VISITS DIGITAL GAMES START-UP
ACCELERATOR IN MONTREAL TO STRENGTHEN
EMERGING VIDEO AND DIGITAL GAMING INDUSTRY**

MONTREAL– Thursday, October 10, 2013 – As part of the *Massachusetts – Canada Innovation Partnership Mission*, Governor Deval Patrick today met with digital gaming start-up companies and industry leaders in Montreal to identify opportunities for collaboration between globally recognized digital and video game clusters in Massachusetts and Canada.

The video and digital game industry is a shared strength between Massachusetts and Canada, particularly within the province of Québec, which ranks third in the world for video and digital game development, trailing only California and Japan.

“The Massachusetts digital and video game industry is booming because we have fostered the growth of our innovation economy in order to be ready for the future,” said Governor Patrick. “By collaborating with Canada, we will maintain our competitive edge in this emerging industry.”

The Commonwealth’s digital games sector employs approximately 2,041 workers with an estimated payroll of \$234 million. In addition, there are 2,400 students at Massachusetts colleges and universities majoring in some aspect of game development. The Canadian game development industry is also growing rapidly, totaling around 16,000 jobs, with approximately 8,000 located in Montreal.

Hosted by Execution Labs, a venture-backed games start-up accelerator, Governor Patrick was joined by Pamela Goldberg, CEO of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, Robert E. Johnson, Ph.D., President of Becker College and Chair of the Massachusetts Digital Games Institute’s (MassDiGI) advisory board, Timothy Loew, Executive Director of MassDiGI, and Monty Sharma, Managing Director of MassDiGI. Execution Labs co-founder Jason Della Rocca led a discussion around industry collaborations and hosted demonstrations by six of the accelerator’s start-ups.

“The digital and video games industry is a key growth industry for the Commonwealth,” said Goldberg. “Our colleagues in Canada have had great success in developing a world-class workforce in digital and video games, something we’ve begun to match through successful training programs at MassDiGI. Through events like these, our goal

is to kick start collaborations between innovators in each region, and build a spirit of cooperation between game developers and programmers throughout the Northeast.”

Representatives from Quebec and Massachusetts shared best practices and industry knowledge on the best ways to support and sustain a growing workforce in this high-tech sector. Given the strengths of higher education institutions in both regions, a large focus was placed on training, and how best to transition interested students into highly-skilled game developers.

“It is exciting to see the success of the games sector and the accelerator in Quebec,” said President Johnson. “This is where a robust economy begins, at the intersection of innovation and entrepreneurship. At Becker College, we’re now producing graduates who are world-ready, prepared to compete and thrive in the global marketplace. We are establishing a New Ventures Center to do the very same job in Massachusetts that is being done here in Quebec: Bring together students, games industry professionals and academia to produce the dynamic new organizations that will create great jobs in the 21st century.”

“We can’t wait to create stronger links between the games sectors in Quebec and Massachusetts,” said Loew. “We believe game development is truly an industry without borders, fueled by invention and the entrepreneurial spirit – two things we know something about in both Massachusetts and Canada.”

“We’re excited to host Governor Patrick and the Massachusetts delegation to discuss how we’re driving entrepreneurship in the Canadian game industry,” said Della Rocca. “Collaboration, particularly across borders, can help advance innovation, spur creativity, and lead to increased business opportunity that will grow startups in both regions. It is international forums like these that can help build a truly vibrant indie games ecosystem around the globe.”

Canada represents an important market for Massachusetts’ digital and information technology sectors. According to the U.S. Commercial Service, the Information and Communication Technology sector in Canada includes nearly 32,000 companies that generate over \$155 billion in annual revenues.

From October 8-11, Governor Patrick is leading a delegation of the Commonwealth’s government leaders on the *Massachusetts-Canada Innovation Partnership Mission* to strengthen the state’s partnership with Canada and expand opportunities between the two for economic development and job creation in the clean-tech, innovation, digital health, financial services, digital gaming, life sciences and academic sectors. Canada is the Commonwealth’s largest export partner. Last year, Massachusetts exported approximately \$3.5 billion in goods and services to Canada, and the two-way exchange was \$11.1 billion in 2012.

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