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Intel Helps Convert Unused PC Processor Power Into an Instrument to Fight Disease and Study Climate Change

New Application Combines Social Networking Power of Facebook With the Life-Changing Promise of Volunteer Computing

SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Often in the fight against cancer, researchers are not limited by their ingenuity, but the resources available to make research effective. The processor power needed to handle complex calculations is often in short supply. To help address this need, Intel Corporation today announced Progress Thru Processors, a new volunteer computing application built on the Facebook platform that allows people to donate their PCs' unused processor power to research projects such as Rosetta@home, which uses the additional computing power to help find cures for cancer and other diseases such as HIV and Alzheimer's.

In addition to Rosetta@home, Progress Thru Processors participants can choose to contribute excess processor computing power to the research efforts of Climateprediction.net and Africa@home. Climateprediction.net is dedicated to increased understanding of global climate change by predicting the Earth's climate and testing the accuracy of climate models. Africa@home is currently focused on finding optimal strategies to combat malaria by studying simulation models of disease transmission and the potential impact of new anti-malarial drugs and vaccines.

"In the same spirit as Intel's Small Things Challenge, Progress Thru Processors underscores our belief that small contributions made by individuals can collectively have a far-reaching impact on our world," said Deborah Conrad, Intel vice president and general manager, Corporate Marketing Group. "By simply running an application on your computer, which uses very little incremental resources, you can expand computing resources to researchers working to make the world a better place."

Launched today as a public beta and available to all Facebook users at www.facebook.com/progressthruprocessors, the application automatically directs a computer's idle processor power to fuel researchers' computational efforts. The application will activate only when a PC's performance is not being fully utilized. When the participant's computer usage demands more processor performance, the application defers and sits idle until spare processing capabilities become available again.

The application runs automatically as a background process on a PC and will not affect performance or any other tasks. Additionally, Progress Thru Processors does not require participants to leave their computers powered up unnecessarily. By keeping their PCs on only as they normally would, participants will still be contributing to life-changing research.

Intel's long history supporting volunteer computing projects includes sponsorship of SETI@home as well as Intel's Philanthropic Peer-to-Peer Program, which donated computer processing power to cancer research.

For Progress Thru Processors, Intel has teamed with GridRepublic, a not-for-profit volunteer computing organization that seeks to bring together people with spare processing power with worthy projects in need of computing resources.

"The social and scientific utility of volunteer computing is a function of the number of participants - the more people we sign up, the greater the good we can collectively do," said Matt Blumberg, executive director of GridRepublic. "We're optimistic that the combination of the Facebook platform and Intel's global reach will help bring large numbers of new people into volunteer computing, enabling research and discovery which would otherwise be impossible."

Progress Thru Processors was developed in collaboration with the National Science Foundation-funded BOINC project at the University of California, Berkeley. Marketing and creative for Progress Thru Processors was provided by noise, a New York-based marketing agency.

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