



October 7, 2009

The revamped MoleClues 2.0 opens today. The new Web site (www.MoleClues.org), a veritable on-line playground for curious youth, introduces several new features. Visitors can play games, watch videos, take quizzes, conduct interviews with remarkable people and enter a virtual world of molecules. The site remains home to the Molecular Frontiers Inquiry Prize, the only competition that rewards youth for simply asking good questions about science. The discussion forums, familiar to past MoleClues visitors will continue to develop on the new site.

For registered users, the entire visit to MoleClues may be seen as a game. Many activities give 'points' to participants, enabling the user to raise his or her ranking. "It is just very satisfying to receive an award every time you do something, like for example joining in a discussion or taking a quiz" says Dr. Per Thorén, MoleClues project manager and the main creator of the site.

"There is so much more to do on this new site, and our goal has been to make it really interactive," says Dr. Thorén. With its simplified navigation, the new clean-looking MoleClues is designed with improved functionality and easy access to all contents.

Everything on MoleClues is based on the concept of molecules and molecular interactions. This unique approach is meant to illustrate and, where possible, explain the fundamental role that molecules play in nearly everything that happens in our daily lives.

The MoleClues Web site and other youth-oriented activities constitute one of the two sides of Molecular Frontiers (www.molecularfrontiers.org), a non-profit organization dedicated to promote the appreciation of science globally. The Molecular Frontiers scientific advisory board, an international group of eminent scientists, makes important contributions to the content of the MoleClues Web site, some of them appearing in videos or interviews.

The new Web site will keep growing even after opening. Virtual jigsaw puzzles will soon become available, Dr. Thorén says. The structure of the new site will make it easier to follow a theme from one activity to another. For example, at the end of a video about RNA, the user will find a link to an interview with a Nobel laureate who can describe important discoveries from personal experience.

Users of MoleClues include youth from more than 100 countries. Multinational surveys undertaken in preparation for the new site showed that young people have quite diverse preferences for content. MoleClues 2.0 will therefore offer something for everyone, Dr. Thorén says.