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Dear education professional,

Computer and video games may not be the first things that come to mind when you think of opportunities for your students' futures. In fact, video games are often thought of as an enemy of academics, and students who express a strong interest in them may even be labeled antisocial. But for young people who are creative, technically adept, and simply passionate about interactivity with computers, video games could turn out to be more than a diversion. **A career in game development is a respected, highly prized profession that helps develop an emerging legitimate art form.**

Some facts about game development:

- **The opportunities for aspiring game developers are incredibly diverse.** Computer programmers are the profile most commonly associated with making games, and in fact they represent approximately 50% of the game development population. Equally important, however, are digital artists, game designers, producers, musicians, and many others who collaborate in the making of a game.
- **The range of products game developers make is also incredible diverse.** Interactive simulations (like the much-lauded SimCity), graphic adventures (like Myst), and puzzle games (like Tetris) are some of the most popular genres of games. In fact, first person shooters like Quake represent less than 10% of the market of video games.
- **Salaries for established game developers average up to \$100,000/year, including bonuses and can be much higher.** Though the fame and fortune many students dream of are as rare in games as any industry, game development is a complex and challenging process that requires specialized skills, with commensurate compensation.
- **The interactive entertainment business is roughly the same size as the film industry, each bringing in about \$6 billion dollars domestically in 2000.** Games are expected to surpass film revenues in the next couple of years, making it the fastest growing segment of the entertainment market, and an excellent field for career advancement.

Why are we writing you about this career opportunity for your students? It's not that the game development industry is lacking in interested recruits. The reality for a young person

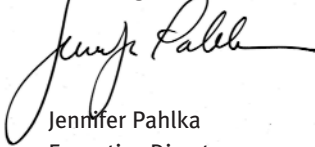
trying to break into the industry is brutal competition from thousands of other would-be game makers. **But from the perspective of creative and technical professionals working in the industry today, we feel the business and art form of games will develop best when aspiring developers:**

- Have the appropriate skill sets for their desired jobs
- Are well prepared and aware of the realities of working in the entertainment field
- Are a diverse group, including women and minorities.

Until recently, it was difficult for aspiring game developers to prepare for a successful career. Now that games are increasingly recognized as an art form akin to film or any other creative endeavor, educational programs in game design and development can be found at new and established schools all over the world. One of the goals of the IGDA's Education Committee is to help talented young people with an interest in a games-related career get the information they need to prepare intelligently. Please help us by promoting our website www.igda.org/BreakingIn/ to students or others you feel it would benefit. Full of information on the game development field, a list of colleges and universities with programs in game development, and profiles of various professional developers, you may even find it educational for yourself. The enclosed poster can be displayed in a career counseling office or other area of the school to help get the word out.

Please help your students and the emerging art form of interactive entertainment by passing this information along.

Warm regards,



Jennifer Pahlka
Executive Director
International Game Developers Association
www.igda.org/BreakingIn/

PS: The IGDA is an independent non-profit association serving interactive entertainment developers. The message has been sponsored in part by the University of Advanced Computing Technology in order to keep the costs of our communications down. The IGDA does not endorse and is not affiliated with the UACT.