Jarod Sjogren

https://github.com/JSSjogren - https://gitlab.com/JSSjogren - https://jarodsjogren.com

EDUCATION

The University of Georgia, Athens, GA
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Certificate in New Media, May 2019
- Zell Miller Scholarship Recipient
- Graduated Magna Cum Laude

WORK EXPERIENCE

Gameplay Programmer II, Hi-Rez Studios, Alpharetta, GA (Remote), February 2024 - February 2025 (Laid off in 3rd round of mass layoffs)
Brought over from sister-company, Prophecy Games, to help speed up the development process for SMITE 2. Shipped SMITE 2 into its closed alpha and open beta phases.
- Contributed to the launch of SMITE 2 into its closed alpha and open beta phases, peaking at nearly 33k players across all platforms including Xbox, Playstation, Steam, and Epic Games.
- Designed and implemented the ranked gameplay system and matchmaking process (utilizing TrueSkill and other factors) for SMITE 2, collaborating with our Senior Data Analyst to ensure balanced and competitive player experiences increasing new player conversion rate by 21%.
- Collaborated with the Senior Data Analyst to implement a vastly improved role preference system in SMITE 2, reducing the rate of least preferred role assignment (an incident that was found to greatly increase player churn) by 90%.
- Served as the primary gameplay programmer for the development of Mordred, a brand-new god exclusive to SMITE 2, and contributed to the creation of Aladdin, another exclusive character, both designed to push the boundaries of UE5.
- Led the porting of three gods (Hercules, Medusa, Rama) from SMITE 1 (UE3) to SMITE 2 (UE5), optimizing abilities and mechanics for UE5 while preserving player familiarity. Enhanced Medusa and Rama with new features ("plus ones") to deliver fresh gameplay experiences.
- Collaborated with the audio team to implement a dynamic audio system that customizes sound effects based on team relationships (enemy, ally, neutral), enhancing immersion and gameplay clarity.
- Contributed to the development of the new aspect system in SMITE 2, enabling deeper customization and gameplay for players for all new and ported gods.
- Partnered with GetGud to integrate gameplay data into their analytics platform, enabling the community team to identify and address issues such as feeding and AFK players using machine learning.
- Enhanced player communication systems by improving the VGS chat and emote systems, streamlining in-game interactions and player engagement.
- Delivered bi-weekly content updates, ensuring timely integration of new features and refinements, as well as consistently delivering 4-5 bug fixes for our daily patch cycle.
- Stepped in when team leads were unavailable to facilitate our morning team meetings.

Prophecy Games - Alpharetta, GA
Gameplay Programmer, August 2021 - August 2023
Gameplay Programmer II, September 2023 - February 2024
Worked in a fast paced development environment on various projects under the direct supervision of our CEO.
- Contributed to the launch of various projects into closed beta states on the iOS app store, Steam, and Epic Games, including Draft Gods (iOS only), Starsiege: Deadzone, and Tribes 3: Rivals.
- Chosen as one of the first two programmers transitioned from Draft Gods to Starsiege: Deadzone, laying the gameplay foundation by implementing an extended version of Unreal Engine's GAS (Gameplay Ability System) and establishing core mechanics.

- Designed and architected robust game features and systems using C++ within Unreal Engine 5 such as a battle royale style fog system, various new gamemode iterations, as well as a designer-friendly ranked gameplay system. All designed to work efficiently in a networked server client environment.
- Rapidly iterated on previously architected systems to accommodate changing design directions including inventory, ammo, and death/revive systems that were often changed with the gamemode iterations.
- Mentored and trained new gameplay programmer hires, ensuring a smooth transition into the team.
- Provided design feedback and contributed ideas for the roadmap of our products.
- Optimized and fixed bugs in our gameplay systems.
- Spearheaded the development of UX navigation for console or gamepad users in Starsiege: Deadzone.
- Integrated Unreal Engine's Replication Graph into an early iteration of Starsiege: Deadzone, optimizing network efficiency and reducing required object replication by up to 90% in some cases.

Software Developer (Agile Product Owner), State Farm, Atlanta, GA, May 2019 - July 2021
Worked with the team responsible for facilitating the enterprise's shift to cloud architecture.
- Successfully assumed the role of product owner and developer for my team's intake website, utilizing AWS.
- Pioneered proof of concepts and designed patterns for the movement of data between State Farm's on-premises data stores and their newly adopted AWS datahub, ensuring data integrity and accessibility.
- Spearheaded research and implementation of GitLab CI/CD pipeline integration in our AWS patterns/POCs.
- Advised State Farm's capability areas as they transitioned from on-premise servers for analytical data to AWS.

PROJECTS

Gameplay Programmer, Project Tall Grass, May 2019 – July 2021
Worked with an indie team to develop an open world monster battling RPG.
- Successfully transitioned the prototype real-time combat system from Unreal Engine 4 blueprints to C++, improving performance and efficiency.
- Integrated online & local multiplayer options for the game along with integration of Steam & Discord, expanding the game's reach.
- Integrated UE4's Gameplay Ability System into the game and ensured its reusability for the rest of the team.
- Crafted a flexible UI base for the team's artists within UMG, and connected the UI to in-game events and values.
- Provided valuable input for the direction of the game and architected the design for several in-game systems.
- Utilized source control in the form of a GitLab repository to maintain a central copy of the game.
- Attached the basic animations & assets created by the art team to the appropriate in-game events and abilities.

University of Georgia, Athens GA, August 2015 – May 2019
- Developed a marker-based AR app called We Get ARound on Unity 3D, previously available on the iOS App Store.
- Completed a directed study wherein I designed, developed, and refined a computer game using Unreal Engine 4.
- Dawg Drive-In Website (Used java servlets, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and ran on Tomcat using agile methods)

SKILLS

Game Programming: C++, Unreal Engine 4 & 5, Blueprints/UMG, Replication Graph, Gameplay Ability System, Network Optimization, Gameplay Mechanics Implementation, Porting and Optimizing Systems Across Engines (e.g., UE3 to UE5), Shipping Games to Various Platforms, Linear Algebra

Additional Technologies:
- **Languages:** C#, Java, Python, HTML, CSS, PHP, JavaScript
- **Tools and Version Control:** Perforce, GitLab, Visual Studio, JetBrains Rider