

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

COMPUTER SCIENCE SOCIETY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022



UPCOMING EVENTS

Pokémon Tournament

March 11, 2022
6:30 PM to 9:30 PM

Game Night at M Chapters

March 17, 2022
6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

WinHacks 2022

Friday March 25th @7:00 PM -
Sunday March 27th @ 3:00 PM

HACKING, LEARNING, AND MONEY?

BY JEREMIE BORNAIS

Two questions I'm often asked from first and second year students are "how do I level up my coding skills as a beginner?" and "how do I make my resume stand out with no work experience?" While there are many different ways to accomplish these things, what I always end up recommending is for these students to check out **hackathons**.

Participants form teams of 1-4 members, and bring a project idea to life for a chance to win money. Sometimes there's a theme or a specific challenge, and other times it's more open to interpretation. The reason why I always recommend hackathons to students is because they're free, fun, and incredibly helpful in learning new skills. From attending workshops about new tech, to receiving advice from mentors, to connecting with your teammates, there are a TON of ways to learn new stuff at hackathons!

One of the cool things about hackathons is you can potentially use a hackathon in three different parts on your resume: you can list the project you built under "projects", the hackathon itself under "competitions", and any prizes you won under "awards". Since MLH has hackathons every weekend, within the span of a month you can go from nothing on your resume to multiple projects and competitions!

Have I piqued your interest? Well, you're in luck. The University of Windsor has its own hackathon - WinHacks! WinHacks will take place from March 25-27, and there will be plenty of workshops, events, and opportunities to win money! I urge everyone to [apply for the hackathon here](#). Also to participate, you must [join our Discord server](#). I look forward to seeing you all there!



PLEASE DON'T ASK ME TO FIX YOUR PRINTER

BY BEN CHITTLE

Computers. Everyone's got one. They're in your pocket, on your wrist and sending you push notifications every time a squirrel runs past your doorbell camera. But even as a computer science student, when someone asks me to fix their printer, I'm no more qualified for the job than a car mechanic is to fix an airplane.

Sure, any printer worth its weight in ink cartridges these days is going to be filled with electronic features like a touch-screen menu interface and the ability to connect to Wi-Fi, and yes, I deal with computers that also have these features on a regular basis. However, this does not mean that I know why your printer must be constantly realigned, allowing it to gleefully spew a page's worth of ink onto a piece of paper "for calibration purposes." Nor do I know why your paper tray is always empty, though it probably has something to do with goblins.

But if you must recite the sacred words, "Will you please fix my printer?" then you give me no other choice. I must come to your house. I must find your printer. And I must unplug it for five seconds before plugging it back in. This is my fate. You're welcome.

BATTLE ROLLERS - MY GAME DEV EXPERIENCE

BY MASSIMO ALBANO

Game development can be overwhelming, especially if you don't know where to start, and while I'm not a seasoned developer yet, I've learned a lot and am loving every step of the way!

I began my game development journey in the Winter of 2020 after taking a game development course. After the semester ended, over winter break, I began working on a game that I had an idea for a year prior. After about a month and a half, I had a simple game which I called Dungeon Rollers. The game is a dungeon crawler where you battle enemies by rolling dice. My game had no animations, one looping song and was just generally clunky and rough around the edges. With this game, I experienced first-hand what I always hear from established game developers. Don't spend long on any of your early projects. I had learned so much in the short time that I was working on Dungeon Rollers that to move forward in development I would have to completely redo most of the groundwork that was in place, essentially starting from scratch! Although the game was not what I had originally envisioned, I still consider it to be a great success and it was an amazing experience. On top of learning so much from development, a Twitch streamer that I watched named Dan Gheesling played it on his show and brought fresh eyes to my game (a few hundred people watching live and over 2000 watched the YouTube video after), which led to 701 page views, 358 browser plays, and 41 downloads at the time that I'm writing this article.

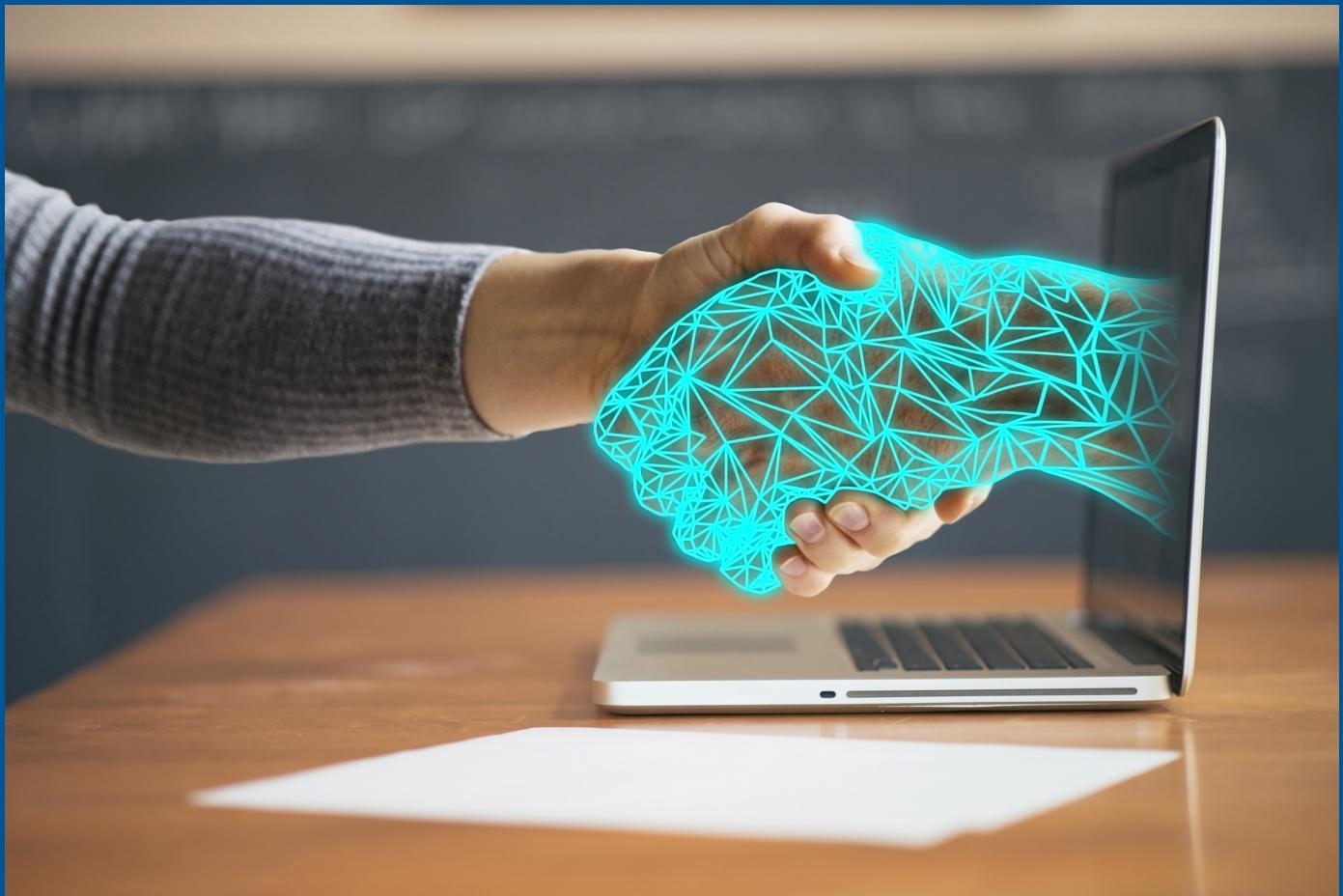
After releasing my first game, I was eager to keep developing. But this time, I focused on small projects to hone my skills. I ended up creating 2 more very small games through some game jams that I entered online and although the gameplay for those games isn't the most riveting, I learned so much from them such as how to set up animations as well as how to better handle user input. The things that I learned in these simple games are still things that I use to this day in my development!

After finishing the development on those games, I decided that I wanted to come back to Dungeon Rollers and make it more like the game I had always envisioned. I started working on the remastered version (which I had renamed to Battle Rollers as there was another game with the name Dungeon Rollers and I didn't want to cause any confusion). Development ran from the end of April to the beginning of June. Battle Rollers has 2 playable characters, 4 original songs for different areas, and 6 enemy types with unique behaviours! I was so happy with my game and what I had accomplished, and I thought that I would try something new and release it on Steam.

For those that don't know how releasing games on Steam works, just like I didn't, there are a couple important things to know. Valve charges a \$130 CAD fee for releasing a game on Steam and they take a 30% cut of any sales of your game, if you are selling it that is. With those things in mind, I went forward and released my game on Steam and have been very happy with the experience! While I haven't yet sold enough copies to break even on the Steam Direct Fee, it's a crazy feeling to know that anyone, anywhere, can open Steam on their computer and see my game. An even crazier feeling is seeing people from around the world buying my game. At the time of writing this, I have sold copies of my game in the UK, Germany, Russia, and South Korea! I've sold a total of 17 copies, with over 160 users keeping it on their Wishlist. At the end of the day, having this experience was amazing and I'm so glad I did it!

Hopefully I've inspired some of you to pursue game development in your future and I hope that you enjoyed reading my story! If there's one thing that you should learn from this article, it's to just develop your game. It won't be perfect out of the gate and that's totally okay! It doesn't need to be.

If you have any questions about game development, or my game, then get in touch with me! The best way to do so would be to send me an [email](#), or [Tweet](#) at me.



TECHNOLOGY ON A ROLL

BY LAILA ALBALKHI (INSPIRED BY RICHARD ASTLEY)

Never has the field of technology reached these heights. The advances we see day to day are absolutely going to change the world as we know it. Artificial intelligence and machine learning have allowed us to discover things that we previously thought were impossible. Now what's this article about? If you'll give me a chance, I'd like to talk about the drastic, incredible, and absolutely amazing advances that you may or may not have heard about. Some of these things may surprise or astound you, but it's only up to you to decide what you'll do with this information. But I can promise that your perspective will never be the same.

Going back to the beginning of the technological revolution, we can begin seeing a trend in tech starting to change our day to day lives. Technology helps you with many things to make your life easier. Phones let you communicate with people instantaneously, allowing you to connect with loved ones overseas! You can even check your e-mail, do your schoolwork, and check the weather, all before the sun goes down! Nowadays, virtual assistants like Alexa help with daily tasks. Engineers at the start of the century never would have thought talking to robots like Google Home would be possible! Ethical questions are going to arise from time to time, but the introduction of virtual assistants have helped greatly! In order to really understand how technology has progressed, think about how long it used to take computers to run and how quickly they can run now. The introduction of quantum computing introduces speeds of around 100 million times faster than any classical computer. Think of all the possibilities this will bring and the improvements to come! What does this mean about the old technologies? Should we just desert our old ways of thinking? What does this mean about what the future has to hold? Who knows, you might even have the chance to contribute to this new era!