

Kyra Wills-Umdenstock

BROOKLYN, NY 11219 | 516-491-4188 | KYRA@EGDCOLLECTIVE.ORG | LINKEDIN @KYRAJADE

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Games industry events, community, and education professional passionate about DEI with 10 years of experience. Extensive experience advising students from marginalized or underrepresented backgrounds and non-traditional college students. To date, directly prevented over 200 students from dropping out or getting academically dismissed from university. Serves on the [NYC Digital Games Industry Council](#) to advise the city's policies and programs in the digital games sector. Regular speaker at industry events and volunteers extensively within STEAM education and the games industry. Part of the [Game Awards 2021 Future Class](#).

SELECT WORK HISTORY

Administrator & Adjunct Lecturer, Digital Game Development | City College of New York September 2024 – Present

A public research university, City College was the first free public institution of higher education in the United States.

- Founding administrator of a new bachelor's program, approved by NYS in May 2025 with ~70 declared majors
- Assisted in developing pedagogic goals for accreditation; lecturer for SCI 31105 Identity and Representation in Games
- Plans/manages all program events, including orientations, campus tours, open houses, showcases, and graduation
- Advises 110+ students, providing guidance on academic and career pathways with a focus on the evolving workforce
- Supports faculty recruitment, space planning, and the allocation of government discretionary funds (Resolution A)
- Represents the program externally at public events and strategic planning meetings; support communications strategy and student engagement initiatives

CEO and Program Director | EGD Collective November 2016 – Present

A nonprofit organization dedicated to higher education retention and career preparation, providing mentorship, professional development, and project experience to students and emerging professionals in the games industry.

- Leads staff and volunteer team of 15 and manages community of 2500 college students
- Builds trust relations with key partners, has closed over 50 partnerships to date
- Monitors the progress of the planning and execution of annual gaming convention and expo (500+ attendees)
- Lectures weekly to cohort of ~80 students on topics in career discovery and development, design, and current events
- Manages caseload of 50 students, assisting them in making informed decisions about their academic and professional goals
- On-call for 24/7 crisis line for at-risk students, handling academic, financial, emotional, familial, housing, and medical crises

Center of Excellence Administrator and Industry Liaison | New York University September 2022 – August 2024

The NYU Game Center is The Department of Game Design at New York University's world-famous Tisch School of the Arts.

- Managed a 5-year grant (\$333,333 annual budget) from NYS with the goal of promoting commercial game development
- Acted as department's main contact with the industry, developing partnerships and student/career opportunities
- Provided career support to students, including one-to-one mentoring and advisement, career event planning
- Coordinated all aspects of department High School Program, including admissions and curriculum development

Production Coordinator | Games for Change November 2021 – September 2022

A nonprofit providing support, visibility, and resources to individuals and organizations using serious games for social change.

- Produced all aspects of live events for G4C Learn programs, including game jams, arcades, panels, and awards ceremonies
- Conceptualized and managed the alumni network for Game Exchange, a virtual exchange program for students in the US and MENA countries; maintains community through events and regular engagement
- Created extensive databases of contact information for NYC public middle/high schools, immersive media production studios, and industry organizations that support diverse creators

Independent Contractor | Various August 2019 – November 2021

- Designed seminars in professional development/design/college access for Tech Kids Unlimited, Youth Education and Sports
- Event production, project management, broadcasting, QA, and graphic/sound design contractor for various clients, including Super League Gaming, NYXL, Kitty Arcade, Liveware Lab, Straight Up Sports, and the US Open.

EDUCATION

MPA: Nonprofit Administration, Baruch College (Expected 2027)

BA: Emerging Media, Hunter College

HONORS / AWARDS

GDC Scholarship, Global Game Jam (2025)
Full Bloom Mentorship Program Participant, Sunbloom Media Arts Center (2024)
FORGE Fellowship, Forge NYC Arts Consulting (2023)
Heartwarming Young Heroes Grant, Youth Service America (2023)
Future Class, The Game Awards (2021)
JBL Quantum Grant, 1000 Dreams Fund (2021)
Verizon Business Mentorship Program, College of Staten Island (2021)
Anykey Changemakers Grant, Anykey (2020)
CUNY Startup Accelerator Cohort, City University of New York (2020)
CUNY Cultural Corps Fellow, City University of New York (2017)
Breakthrough US Action Lab Participant, NYU Steinhardt Department of Media, Culture, and Communication (2017)
Muse Honors Scholar, Hunter College (2016)
Gold Award, Girl Scouts of the USA (2016)
Nassau NYSCAME Scholarship, New York State Council of Administrators of Music Education (2016)
Sponsors of the Arts Scholarship, RVC Sponsors of the Arts (2016)
Xerox Award for Innovation and Information Technology, University of Rochester (2015)

CONFERENCE TALKS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Floating Industry Mentor, Speaker, Games for Change Festival Next-Gen Summit (2025)
Networking for Introverts, Panelist, Pixelles Montreal (2025)
Breaking into the Games Industry, Speaker & Hackathon Judge, Stony Brook University Hack@CEWIT (2024)
Level Up: Video Game Paths in Higher Ed, Panelist, Games for Change Student Challenge (2024)
Speaker Series: Level Up Your Skills and Career!, Speaker, Harlem Gallery of Science (2024)
Everything in Moderation: Building Digital Communities, Speaker, Games for Change Festival Next-Gen Summit (2023)
The Power of R&D Partnerships: Digital Game Development, Panelist, NYSTAR Webinar Series (2023)
What is an Internship and How Do I Get One?, Speaker, Girl Scouts of Nassau County (2023)
Survival Mode: College, Career, and Video Games, Speaker, Geeks Out Staten Island (2022)
Game Design and Employment Summer Workshop, Speaker, Tech Kids Unlimited (2022)
Games Careers and Communities, Speaker, Game Exchange Hackathon (2022)
Guest Speaker, School of Interactive Arts – Urban Arts Partnership (2021, 2022)
Gold Award Ceremony Keynote Speaker, Girl Scouts of Nassau County (2021)
Women in Tech Week Speaker, St. Anne's School (2021)
How We Can Make Scholastic Esports More Equitable, Panelist, Inven Global Esports and Academia Summit (2020)
Games Community Support and Inclusivity, Panelist, Intercollegiate Game Night (2020)
From Collegiate to Careers in Esports: Ft. NYXL, Moderator, Waffle Games 2.0 (2019)
Storytelling and World Building for Games, Speaker, Waffle Games 1.0 (2018)
Computer Science Education Week Workshops, Instructor, Girl Scouts of Greater New York (2016)
Thinking About World Thinking Day, Speaker, Girl Scouts of Nassau County Oktoberfest Leaders Training (2013)

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE

[Digital Games Industry Council](#) Member, NYC Office of the Mayor (2022-Present)
Chair, IGDA Students SIG (2020-Present)
Pro-Bono Consultant, Various Collegiate Esports Programs (2018-Present)
Scholarship Review Board, The Virginia A. Wills Gold Award Scholarship (2016-Present)
Exhibition Advisory Board - **[The Great Connector](#)**, Harlem Gallery of Science (2023)
Juror, Games for Change Awards (2020, 2021, 2023)
Delegate, Girl Scouts of Nassau County (2020, 2022, 2023)
Contributor and Editor, **[Inclusive Excellence Handbook](#)** - Voice of Intercollegiate Esports (2021)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (2023-Present)
Higher Education Video Game Alliance (2022-Present)
American Society for Public Administration (2020-Present)
International Game Developers Association (2016-Present)
Girl Scouts of the USA (2003-Present)