2010 Game Garage sees grads building new video game in Charlottetown

Mentors from PEI's growing video game cluster help graduates build games, careers

July 22, 2010 (Charlottetown) – Ten graduating game design and animation students from across the Atlantic region will plug their laptops into the Atlantic Technology Centre this summer to pursue their dreams of driving their video game ideas from concepts to market-ready prototypes.

The graduates are members of two teams selected for GameGarage 2010, an initiative of the Interactive Media Alliance (IMA), the PEI-based interactive media industry association, with support from Telefilm Canada and Innovation PEI.

Participants were chosen from a national competition that invited graduating new media students and recent graduates to submit original game concepts, or submit their resumes for a chance to work on someone else's concept.

This year's winning submissions were from two teams of game design and animation graduates from the New Brunswick Community College – Miramichi Campus, Holland College, and the University of PEI.

Team 1		
Name	**Background**	**Position**
Bryan Viau	Residency: PEI Graduate: New Brunswick Community College, Video Game Art and Design program	Artist/Designer
John Landry	Residency: New Brunswick Graduate: NBCC, Video Game Art and Design program	Artist/Designer
John Sollows	Residency: New Brunswick Graduate: NBCC, Video Game Art and Design program	Artist/Designer
Kyle Leet	Residency: New Brunswick Graduate: NBCC, Video Game Art and Design program	Programmer
Sam Bowdridge	Residency: New Brunswick Graduate: NBCC, Video Game Art and Design program	Artist/Designer

Team 2		
Matt King	Residency: PEI Graduate: UPEI Computer Science, major in Video Game Programming	Programmer
Greg King	Residency: PEI Graduate: UPEI Computer Science, major in Video Game Programming	Programmer
John Hughes	Residency: PEI Graduate: Holland College, Video Game Art and Design	Artist/Designer
Kent Giddings	Residency: PEI Graduate: Holland College, Video Game Art and Design	Artist/Designer
Marshall Harrington	Residency: PEI Graduate: Holland College, Video Game Art and Design	Artist/Designer

After only a few weeks in the Charlottetown incubator, team artist John Hughes has a taste for how professional game developers work.

"A lot of the tools we are using are pretty advanced," said John Hughes. "We've been really learning the way the top industry people work."

IMA President Mark Sandiford said the GameGarage was created to support and develop both the Atlantic-region's video game talent and industry.

"There is a solid and growing cluster of video game companies based in Charlottetown that needs a steady stream of talent and ideas to fuel its success and growth, just like any business sector. GameGarage seeks out Canada's top video game program graduates and gives them the necessary tools and expert advice to build a marketable game prototype," he said.

Under the guidance of mentors from PEI's video game companies, the teams have three months to build their prototypes, and one year to find game-development companies or publishers to purchase or finance the prototypes' full development. The graduates' games will be showcased at the Telefilm Canada GameGarage gala on September 2, 2010.

"While the goal of the three-month incubation period is to get the game prototypes ready to be pitched for sale, if the teams would rather start their own companies to complete and market their games, then we'd all welcome them to set up shop in our growing game sector here on PEI," Sandiford added.

As for career options, another GameGarage benefit will be working with leaders from PEI-based new media companies – leaders who could end up offering the graduates employment.

"This is a great hands-on apprenticeship program that sees participants build on their talents in a market-driven work environment, with many getting gaming industry jobs as a direct result," said Gord Whittaker, Atlantic Regional Director – Business Development and Feature Film Executive, Telefilm Canada. "Telefilm has partnered with GameGarage because it develops both Canadian talent and the Canadian audiovisual industry, and as a workforce builder, it has a direct and positive economic impact in Atlantic Canada."

With the financial assistance of Telefilm Canada and Innovation PEI, the IMA will provide participants with the necessary office space, hardware and software required to build their games. The project runs from June 1 to August 31, 2010 at the Atlantic Technology Center in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

-- 30 --

About the Interactive Media Alliance of PEI
The IMA is an alliance of video game and other interactive media companies based in Prince Edward Island with a mandate to develop and support the new media and video game industry.

Contact: Mark Sandiford, President
Phone: Email: mark@sandiford.ca

About Telefilm Canada
Telefilm Canada is a federal cultural agency dedicated to developing and promoting the Canadian audiovisual industry. Telefilm provides financial support to the private sector to create distinctively Canadian products that appeal to domestic and international audiences. Telefilm also administers the Canada Media Fund. Visit www.telefilm.gc.ca.

Contact: Eva Hartling, Senior Advisor, External Communications
514-283-0838, ext. 2090 and hartlie@telefilm.gc.ca