

# GAME DESIGN

Master of Fine Arts



AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER

## Articles

**RONALD BOURBEAU:**

*Outsourcing Life*

**BRIAN ESCOBEDO:**

*Normally Abnormal*

**BRYANNA MENARD:**

*The Status of Stats  
in the States*

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## Message from the Chair

The fear, anxiety and the quality of life issues brought on by the pandemic is changing the way we live every day. How do we take the effects of this tragic event and redefine our existence? I believe that a primary takeaway is the great learning opportunity in what lies ahead concerning education and communication. And let's not forget the positive changes that are popping up due to the pandemic, like our planet's climate improvements, alerts for improvement in health concerns and new levels of communication and learning.

What motivated us last fall has changed, and games can become a positive driving force in preparing generations to come. Many of you WOW fans remember the streets of Stormwind and Ironforge strewn with corpses in 2005. The first ingame pandemic that not only afflicted players, but their pets and minions as well. Who would have thought that scientists today would be using statistics from that experience to better understand motivations, economic structures and transmission paths of actual pathogens.

Games safely help us to create simulations to better understand global health in times of crisis without the real-world consequences we are now experiencing. Young gamers are quickly finding creative spaces to communicate with others in their community and learn together. Eduardo A. Caballero is the executive director of Camp EDMO which, among its other offerings, uses gaming to teach social and emotional learning. For the curriculum, the camp teamed up with the University of California, Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center to figure out how to best incorporate character building into gaming, and other STEM activities. Caballero said he sees these gamers develop empathy for others, become more considerate of others and find ways to problem solve together.

"Can You Save the World" is one of the many games popping up as a means to educate and motivate people to be conscious of how a small amount of action by one individual can impact many. "I think it's the first social distancing game and the first COVID-19 game," Prof Wiseman said. "It encourages everyone to avoid others and makes the point that it does make a difference."

I would like to encourage you to read the commentary in this month's newsletter written by three of our graduate students in the MFA in Game Design program at LCAD. Their perspectives are fascinating, engaging and inspirational.

So please continue to wear your masks, adapt with a positive attitude. Move forward in creating content that makes this a learning experience that helps to better prepare us in the event that something like this ever happens again.

Wishing you good health,

**Sandy Appleoff Lyons**

Chair, Game Design MFA