Winter Graduation

DigiPen graduated thirteen more students at the end of the fall 2007 semester, with graduates from two degrees: the Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation degree, and the Master of Science in Computer Science degree. Students graduating from the R.T.I.S. degree completed 154 credits. Master of Science graduates completed 30 credits, with the option of completing a thesis or extra coursework.

Graduating from the Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation degree:

- Benjamin Horbul
- Ryan Ascheman
- Ian Hall
- Jonathan Wills
- Micah Chase
- Dustin Fischer

Graduating from the Master of Science in Computer Science degree:

- Kyle Walsh
- Michael Dawe
- Evan Lewis
- Will Alberts
- Elias El Kozah
- Patrick Moghames
- Guy Shahine

DigiPen graduates students each fall, spring, and summer semesters, but has one graduation ceremony per year. All graduates from the academic year are eligible to attend this ceremony. This year’s graduation ceremony will be on April 27, 2008, at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, Washington.

This year we are excited to graduate our first cohort of students with the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Production Animation. The B.F.A. degree will have roughly 20 graduates who are expected to complete their coursework in the spring 2008 semester.

- Lindsay Heimer

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DigiPen Alumni

FALL REUNION REPORT

On Tuesday November 13, about 90 DigiPen alumni gathered with faculty and staff to catch up over dinner and drinks at the Wild Rover in downtown Kirkland. Alumni from all graduating classes were in attendance, including former students who drove down from British Columbia and graduated in the 1990s when the school was known as DigiPen Applied Computer Graphics School in Vancouver, BC.

This is one of two alumni reunions that occur annually. The Fall Reunion takes place in the Redmond area, and the Spring Reunion coincides with the annual Game Developers Conference in the Bay Area. Details on this event will be available soon.

To better serve the more than 600 alumni, DigiPen will be launching a new alumni website in the next couple of months. This site will make it easier for alumni to keep abreast of what is happening on campus, to sign up for our alumni email newsletter, to look for work, and to post a resume. The new website will highlight opportunities for ways that alumni can get involved with the college, such as volunteering for guest lectures, answering questions for prospective students, or mentoring current students.

Alumni who wish to be included in further announcements should email studentservices@digipen.edu with their current email address. Please keep us updated on your professional status so we can continue to build our alumni network.

- Gordon Dutrisac
In 1999, Mr. Gale came to DigiPen and began working as a full-time 3D animation instructor in the Associate of Applied Arts in 3D Computer Animation program. He taught all of the 3D courses for this two-year program. He is currently an adjunct instructor of 3D modeling and animation, and this year he is teaching the GAT 300 and GAT 350 courses. He enjoys helping students learn how to add 3D models and animations to their game projects. When teaching, Mr. Gale helps students understand when to "call a project good." He recognizes that one of the traps they—and some industry professionals—fall into is the situation of constantly tweaking things to make a project “perfect.” As he warns, “this will blow up every deadline that you have to meet.”

Outside of DigiPen, Mr. Gale does numerous freelance projects, mostly for the Lake Washington School District. He is currently working on promotional material for the career and technology education courses offered across the district. He is also preparing to teach a one-month 3D course to Danish exchange students at Edmonds Community College. Additionally, he works part-time at Juanita High School, teaching courses in computer graphics, web design, and video production. If he did not have his hands full doing all these various jobs, he would be running a surfboard rental shop on Maui’s North Shore or leading horseback historical tours of Civil War battlefields.

In his spare time (such as it exists), Mr. Gale engages in a range of activities. His range of unique interests and industry experience make him a valuable member of DigiPen’s art faculty.

Three-dimensional modeling and animation instructor Jay Gale began working in the 3D computer graphics field in 1987. He worked for a defense contractor building 3D environments, vehicles, and weapons effects for real-time vehicle and flight simulations. The Department of Defense awarded him a Distinguished Service Award for work done re-creating a key battle from the Persian Gulf War. “Xin Li and I are old work friends,” he says. They both worked for the same company before coming to the Institute. Mr. Gale has also spent the last twenty years as a freelance graphic designer and graphic producer. He holds a B.A. in broadcast communications from the University of Colorado and has taken numerous courses in mathematics, computer graphics, and web design.

Outside of DigiPen, Mr. Gale does numerous freelance projects, mostly for the Lake Washington School District. He is currently working on promotional material for the career and technology education courses offered across the district. He is also preparing to teach a one-month 3D course to Danish exchange students at Edmonds Community College. Additionally, he works part-time at Juanita High School, teaching courses in computer graphics, web design, and video production. If he did not have his hands full doing all these various jobs, he would be running a surfboard rental shop on Maui’s North Shore or leading horseback historical tours of Civil War battlefields.

In his spare time (such as it exists), Mr. Gale engages in a range of activities.

He enjoys reading histories of the Civil War, World War II, the Napoleonic Wars, and medieval Europe. In a related activity, he collects antique and historic firearms. He also does oil painting and sports photography. His range of unique interests and industry experience make him a valuable member of DigiPen’s art faculty.

DigiPen Alumni Contribute to Recent Video Game Releases

Over the years, DigiPen alumni have been involved in an impressive collection of industry projects. Some recently released titles that alumni have contributed toward include:

- Guild Wars: Eye of the North
- Guitar Hero 3
- Halo 3
- Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Anniversary Edition
- Mass Effect
- Portal
- Team Fortress 2

Check out these titles, and see what recent graduates have had a hand in creating!

Newsletter Disclaimer:

The views and opinions expressed by contributors to the DigiPen Newsletter are strictly those of the author and do not reflect the views and opinions of DigiPen (USA) Corporation and/or DigiPen Institute of Technology. DigiPen does not assume responsibility for the personal opinions expressed.
It is that time of the year again. If you are interested in financial aid for the 2008-2009 academic year, you must fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online. Please visit www.fafsa.ed.gov to do so. If you already have financial aid here at DigiPen and filled out a FAFSA for the current academic year, click on “Fill Out a Renewal FAFSA” under the second category. If this is your first time applying for financial aid, please click “Fill Out a FAFSA” instead.

You will also need to fill out a separate DigiPen Financial Aid Application, which can be found at www.digipen.edu/main/Financial_Aid. Once we get these two items, the Financial Aid Office will then be able to determine your eligibility.

Many financial aid programs are on a first-come, first-serve basis. It is important that you begin and complete the financial aid process as soon as possible.

Loans and Disbursement Dates for Spring 2008 Semester

3. Pell grants, AC grants, and SMART grants will be ordered by the Financial Aid Office on 1/21/2008. These typically take three to five business days for the money to appear in your student account.
4. Washington State Need Grants will also be ordered by the Financial Aid Office on 1/21/2007. These typically take the state two weeks after the 21st to process and to issue checks to DigiPen.

Please note that disbursement dates are important in calculating student living expenses for the month of January. Once the money disburses/appears in your student account, it can take up to 14 business days to issue students (Stafford loan, Grad PLUS) and parents (PLUS loan) any excess funds for living expenses (if any). The PLUS loan excess funds will be sent to the parents if the parents elected this option; they will then have to coordinate with their son/daughter to transfer funds for living expenses. It is a good idea to plan ahead for living expenses, as loan funds will not be immediately available to release to you.

If you or your parent(s) have any questions or concerns about any financial aid matters, please contact the Financial Aid Office at (425) 895-4427.

- Kim King

Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 2-6</td>
<td>Intersession – no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 7</td>
<td>Classes begin – Spring Semester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 13</td>
<td>Last day to add classes for Spring Semester; withdrawal deadline for 90% refund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>Final day to drop class without academic penalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 2</td>
<td>Withdrawal deadline for 75% refund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
<td>Founder’s Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
<td>Tuition deposit for Summer Session due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Presidents Day – no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 18-23</td>
<td>Spring Break – no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>Final day to receive a “W” on transcript for Fall Semester withdrawals; 30% refund; withdrawals from institute after this date will receive “F” grades on transcript; final day to drop a class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 20</td>
<td>Balance of tuition for Summer Session due</td>
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<td>Apr. 21-25</td>
<td>Final exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 25</td>
<td>Spring Semester ends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 27</td>
<td>Commencement</td>
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Environmental Design

When creating environmental designs for video games and animations, artists combine theories of architectural and landscape designs. They also draw from the toolkit of the cinematographer, adding classical depth cues, perspective systems, dramatic lighting, and mood-setting characterizations. Effective environmental designs combine functionality and aesthetics to create immersive and interactive environments that compose the video game experience.

See how B.F.A. student Ryan Miller creatively and skillfully makes use of these tools and theories.
Four
John Williamson, President of Zombie Stu
completes her roundtable interviews with
development. Host Omaha Sternberg
two-part series on the business of game
There are several questions which need
disciplines. And there definitely is a way
due for the student. This means that students
have their own sets of project courses,
easy task from the outside; both groups
have their own sets of project courses,
nature, and that they have a
for teaching it to others. “They
are a one-on-one basis and go the extra
DigiPen students on a weekly basis?
Future
Jan 17, 2013
January’s PodClass is the second of a
two-part series on the business of game
development. Host Omaha Sternberg
completes her roundtable interviews with
John Williamson, President of Zombie Stu-
and Jeff Pobst, CEO of Hidden Path
Entertainment. Additionally, Ms. Sternberg
discusses with Lawrence Schwedler,
Audio Director of Nintendo Software,
the ins and outs of sound, from music to
soundtrack to audio engineering in game
development. These interviews were all
conducted at the World Cyber Games
Conference in Seattle this last October.
Listeners can subscribe to the podcast via
iTunes or can go to DigiPen’s website. If
you have a topic you would like to hear
about on the podcast, please email your
suggestions to podclass@digipen.edu.

Jami Lukins
Bachelor of Fine Arts

Once an aspiring cardiac surgeon, Jami
Lukins set aside her medical school
plans to attend DigiPen. Her mother
had heard about DigiPen from a friend
working at Nintendo, and she asked
Jami if she had ever considered
the video game industry. As Jami remem-
ers, “The more I thought about it the
better it sounded. Animation combines
acting, writing, art, science, technol-
ogy... everything I was interested in
together into one great, cutting-edge field.”
But she was concerned that the hard
work she had done to prepare for the
University of Washington’s pre-med
program would go to waste. However,
she realized “that the grueling AP
course load I took was the best way
to prepare for DigiPen. I may not apply
everything I learned, but I found that
I could apply all the time saving, time
management, and work ethic skills and
attitudes I developed.”

Jami discovered that the courses that
had encouraged self-directed learning
prepared her best for the B.F.A. pro-
gram. She credits a high school course
about the Constitution for giving her
some foundational skills that have
been useful here. Jami identifies her
time as editor-in-chief of her high
school yearbook as “the most effective
experience I had for developing work
environment skills, team skills, and
self-directed learning.” To complete
this massive project, she taught herself
Photoshop and InDesign and learned
a great deal about publishing, layout,
and design. Prior to DigiPen, her art
experience was mostly self-taught.
Although she took art courses and
passed the AP art exam, she found
these experiences to be less important
than her personal exploration of art.
She supplemented this with workshops
at DigiPen and a month-long DigiPen
course at an alternative high school.

Jami identifies the professors at
DigiPen as the highlight of her time
here. She recognizes that they love
their profession and that they have a
passion for teaching it to others. “They
are willing to work with students on
mile to help students get ahead or to
simply understand,” she says. Jami
states that time management skills
have helped her get through the first
year-and-a-half in the demanding
B.F.A. program. “Work smarter not
harder,” might be cheesy, she admits,
“but it holds true here.” She advises
her peers to really consider an assign-
ment and to ask why an instructor has
assigned it. “Once you figure that out,
focus on that part,” she recommends.
“Don’t worry about the frills. Get the
lesson down cold, and then move on.”
She also advises her peers to prioritize
sleep. “Sleep is healthy,” she states,
“and it helps you focus and do better
work. Studying a little and getting a
good night’s sleep is way better than
cramming all night.”

Like all DigiPen students, Jami enjoys
playing video games in her spare time.
She finds that when she manages
her time well, she has plenty of time
for non-academic activities. She also
prioritizes spending time with her
friends outside of school. “Your friends
will support you through finals week,”
she says, “and they’re a shoulder to
cry on and people to laugh with. Addi-
tionally, being close with your team-
mates makes work happen faster and come
out better.” Jami also LARPs. “It’s the
nerdiest thing you could ever do,” she
admits. “For those of you who don’t
know, LARP stands for live-action role
playing. It’s a combination of stage act-
ing, improve, and D & D.” Jami enjoys
LARP’s creative quality, especially with
character development.

After DigiPen, Jami hopes to go into
the industry as either a character
animator or environment animator.
She wants to be part of a large game
studio that has room for her to develop
her career. Jami would like to eventu-
ally become a lead animator or art di-
tector. “I’ve chosen this path because
I want to wake up every morning excited
about going to work,” she states. “This
is what I’m passionate about, and I
want to be the best I can be at it.”