Karen E Stevens

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Contact@KarenStevens.com
http://KarenStevens.com

Skills

- Technical Leadership
- People Management
- Employee Development
- Business Planning & Budgeting
- Software Development Lifecycle
- Software Engineering

- Program Management
- System Requirements
- Executive Pitches
- User Experience Design
- Process Improvement
- Agile / Scrum / Waterfall

- Product Development
- Public Relations
- Risk Analysis
- Legal Compliance
- Data Analysis
- Universal Design

Work History

Gearbox Publishing

Technical Director, 11/2022 – 8/2023
- Created CVAA and European Accessibility Act compliance documentation for use across Embracer parent company subsidiaries, including Gearbox Publishing
- Evaluation of game milestones using a variety of criteria, including accessibility and compliance
- Game Developers Conference speaker, continuing my series of GDC accessibility talks

Electronic Arts

Director of Accessibility, 10/2020 – 5/2022
- Company-wide evolution of previous EA Sports Accessibility Lead position, with all prior responsibilities expanded across the company, and additional headcount for a business analyst, quality designer, and user researcher
- Directed overall strategy, documents, schedules, and roadmaps for game accessibility at EA
- Worked with first parties on accessibility platform features and certification requirements
- Oversaw cost and feature analysis of potential third-party accessibility solutions
- Highest possible manager satisfaction survey score, 2022 manager award nomination
- Top-rated speaker at the Game Developers' Conference for 5 years in a row
- Four granted game accessibility patents, detailed at http://KarenStevens.com

EA Sports Accessibility Lead, 8/2017 - 10/2020
- Managed EA Sports Accessibility Team, including a consultant, writer, and engineer
- Managed sprint schedules, long-term planning, executive reports, pitches, and press releases
- Analyzed games and provided accessibility recommendations across EA Sports, improving the experience of those with disabilities
- Created feature briefs and roadmaps for EA Sports titles, such as Madden NFL, FIFA, NHL
- Collaborated with legal to ensure titles followed government regulations, such as CVAA
- Improved customer service support pipeline inclusivity
- Launched ea.com/able website to better fulfill alternate game interaction needs
- Engaged with customers directly via twitter, ea.com, email, and more

- Founded Accessibility employee resource group to support disabled employees
- Won 2018 company-wide award for improving disabled gamers' experiences
- Created and ran training on accessibility topics

Madden NFL Software Engineer / Product Owner, 6/2013 - 8/2017
- Madden NFL accessibility features, product owner & developer; colorblind support, game element resizing, haptic feedback options to aid totally blind players, and more
- Won 2017 studio innovation award for improving the experience of disabled gamers
- Won 2014 studio game jam for Madden NFL accessibility features, allowing me to become a product owner in addition to an engineer, expanding my role to include feature briefs, scheduling, long-term planning, and design

Microsoft Corporation

Software Engineer, 5/2005 - 4/2013
- Tech Lead for all 11 games that shipped with Windows 7
  - Includes Minesweeper, Solitaire, Hearts, Spider Solitaire, FreeCell, Chess Titans, Mahjong Titans, Purble Place, plus Internet Spades, Checkers, and Backgammon
  - Created team's work/feature schedule, took part in feature requirement creation
  - Led both cross-team and international collaboration during product lifecycle
- Tech Lead for multi-platform Xbox Avatar development, including web and mobile
  - Led international team, worked with local teams for large-scale collaboration
  - Specified overall network architecture and interfaces, along with user requirements
  - Managed features, roadmaps, schedules
- Tech Lead for Games for Windows LIVE features
  - Ownership of both design and project management aspects
  - Created schedule, feature roadmaps, briefs, demos, and managed headcount
- Game Developer, Project Spark, for Xbox One, Windows
  - Graphics developer, focusing on particle effects, materials, lighting
  - Content pipeline tools support, Maya, 3ds Max, Granny, Havok, C++, XML, HLSL
  - Placeholder artist; creating models, animations, particle systems, materials, etc.
- Miscellaneous Projects
  - Took part in updating Microsoft's accessibility standards to be device agnostic
  - Xbox platform code development for Kinect-enabled dashboard
  - Created DirectX shipped sample, including a performance tools tutorial
  - Created new/updated PIX for Windows DirectX, including updates for Visual Studio
  - Two granted patents related to game development, detailed at http://KarenStevens.com

Guidant Corporation

Software Engineer, 6/2003 - 4/2005
- Multi-platform tool development for implantable medical devices, such as pacemakers

Education

- Master Software Engineering, May 2003, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, GPA 4.00
- B.S. Computer Science, May 2001, Michigan Technological University, GPA 3.93