Media Release
17 February 2016

Join the fun at the Moray Game Jam!

The third Moray Game Jam, running from Friday 18th to Sunday 20th March 2016, is set to be the biggest yet hosted by Moray College UHI.

Applications are open on www.moraygamejam.com and according to organisers, they are rolling in.

Applications close on Wednesday 9th March 2016 and potential applicants are being advised to secure a place before it's too late. The Moray Game Jam is open to students and professionals across Scotland.

Once again, video game designers will be joined by teams with innovative board game ideas for the 48-hour competition to create new games.

The winning video game will receive industry-based mentoring by Elgin-based Hunted Cow Studios and Business Gateway Moray, and California-based Victory Point Games will mentor the triumphant board game.

Andrew Mulholland said, "Hunted Cow are pleased to once again be one of the sponsors of the Moray Game Jam. The event provides an excellent platform for upcoming creative talent in Moray across a broad range of disciplines."

Craig Robertson of Business Gateway Moray added "We are delighted to support 'Moray Game Jam' this year, especially given the opportunity to work with Hunted Cow Studios to mentor these young entrepreneurs whilst they develop their ideas into a potential new venture."

Teams of up to five people can enter and all members should be 16 or over. There will also be a 'matching service' for solo entrants at the event.

This year, the Moray Game Jam will again offer workshops led by industry experts, which are completely free and open to the public. The workshops will run all day on Saturday 19th and in the morning of Sunday 20th March.

The workshops will provide hands-on learning opportunities for software design packages – Blender, Unity, Sculptris and designing apps for i-pads and i-phone. Plus, there will be a 2D Art Concepts session, interested artists, please bring your sketchbook!

Alan Emrich of Victory Point Games will again lead a Masterclass – Random Events, It's not Always About a Pie in the Face! Phil Harris, of One Thumb Mobile and Moray Game Jam judge since the beginning, will hold a session entitled 'The World Around Us', about why knowing what you're talking about really helps.

Full details of all the workshops and how to book can be found on our website, http://www.moraygamejam.com/workshops.html. Please note, young people under 12 should be accompanied by an adult.

This year there will be an opportunity to try games created during the Moray Game Jam, a Mini-Gaming Playground will open in the Alexander Graham Bell Centre's Conference Room, at Moray College UHI on Sunday 20th March, from 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm.

Amanda Millen, director of XpoNorth screen and broadcast network, ScreenHI, said: "It's really exciting to see the teams starting to come together for the third Moray Game Jam.

"There's an energy surrounding this event which is quite unique and it builds to a crescendo after 48 hours of intensive collaboration between the teams.

"The gaming sector is growing exponentially in Scotland and I'd also advise anyone with a serious interest in forging a career in it to take part in some way; be it on a team or taking part in one of the free workshops.

"There's also a chance to try out the games in development over the course of the weekend – something which will appeal to gamers young and old!

"We are also delighted to welcome back internationally known gaming industry veteran, Alan Emrich, who is flying in from his base in the US to share his knowledge in a masterclass."

The event re-unites the partnership between Moray College UHI, ScreenHI who deliver XpoNorth Screen and Broadcast – feeding into the main XpoNorth festival in June in Inverness, Elgin-based games publisher Hunted Cow Studios, and this year joins forces with Business Gateway Moray.

Participants are encouraged to follow Moray Game Jam on Facebook and Twitter for updates, and to connect and create teams.

<u>NOTES TO THE EDITOR</u>

XPONORTH SCREEN AND BROADCAST

ScreenHI is the screen and broadcast network of creative industries support organisation, XpoNorth.

It operates all year round and supports businesses and individuals working in film, television, radio and video games across the Highlands & Islands of Scotland.
ScreenHI offers free hands-on workshops and courses, mentoring support and provides networking opportunities for anyone creating digital content on broadcast platforms.

ScreenHI is funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the European Regional Development Fund. Its director is former BBC drama producer, Amanda Millen. Amanda is also director of the XpoNorth network.

For further info or images on XpoNorth screen and broadcast network, ScreenHI, please contact Jan Patience on *janpatience@me.com* and 07802 427207 or Amanda Millen on *amandamillen@xponorth.co.uk* and 07887 605 062

About Hunted Cow Studios

Hunted Cow Studios is a leading game developer and publisher which was founded in 2003 with the goal of producing fun and accessible games, but with a layer of deeper and engaging gameplay for experienced players. Their most popular browser game is Fallen Sword which has attracted over four million players since its launch in 2006.

Andrew Mulholland - Co-Director, Hunted Cow Studios Ltd
Director at Hunted Cow Studios Ltd – https://www.huntedcow.com/

Andrew Mulholland graduated from Abertay University in 2003 after studying Computer Games Technology and went on to form Hunted Cow Studios with Glenn Murphy. He has over 10 years' experience in the industry and has helped bring successful games such as Gothador and Fallen Sword to market.

About Moray College UHI

https://www.moray.uhi.ac.uk/about-us

Moray College UHI has been developing and expanding its range of courses since the inception of the University of the Highlands and Islands in 2011. The status of university provides greater opportunities for the college to develop its research activities and contacts with local industry. The new Moray Life Science Centre, known as the Alexander Graham Bell Centre, is a recent addition to Moray College UHI. This £6.5 million project funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, NHS Grampian, European Regional Development Fund and Moray College UHI will provide facilities for, and expertise in, life science research and education bringing together academia, research and business under one roof.

The college offers a broad range of courses covering many subject areas which is continually expanding, particularly within the Higher Education sector and prospective students can now study up to Masters and PHD level. The college also continues to offer courses from pre-employment training through all levels of Further Education.

This ensures that locally, prospective students can access education at any level to match requirements, abilities and qualifications. Many courses are offered on a flexible, part-time as well as a full-time basis to suit students' learning needs. Many students want to improve their qualifications or skills in order to gain employment or to improve their employment prospects. Others want to study for a qualification that they intend to use as a stepping stone to a higher qualification. Some will register for courses simply for leisure and interest. Moray College UHI can offer it all.

Alan Emrich – Victory Point Games
Founder – http://www.victorypointgames.com/about-victory-point-games/ …'about us' section:

Most great game ideas begin with an impassioned gamer thinking about a game and saying, "Wouldn't it be cool if…?" Victory Point Games came about in much the same way. Working with aspiring and veteran designers, combined with a print on demand model, Victory Point Games takes on cutting edge game ideas that no one else dares to even look at.

Today, Victory Point Games has grown into a full-fledged team of talented game developers. Each of us brings our own thoughts and hard work to the table, producing a company that is among the most diligent, tight-knit, and unashamedly quirky in the board game industry. Working with gamers, for gamers, and as gamers ourselves, we couldn't ask for a better way to be spending our time. We firmly believe that it is the people you get to work with that makes the game industry so great.

Business Gateway Moray
http://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/moray?gclid=CKPZr5zHtcoCFVRAGwodT0IPkw

Business Gateway Moray is your gateway to expert local business advice and practical guidance. Whichever sector your business is in, or whatever stage it is at, their one-to-one support, specialist advice, business skills workshops and networking events will help.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Game Jams provide a great platform to design, develop, create and test a new game – all in 48 hours – a true challenge, offering an opportunity to connect and collaborate with like-minded people, experiment and innovate, whilst building portfolios for a growing industry.

A Game Jam is a competition to create a new video game – and in some cases a board game). It usually involves the coming together of groups of individuals with an interest in or experience of video gaming either through programming or design.

Usually entering in teams, participants will not be aware of the theme until they arrive at the competition, the structure of which is common throughout the world.
Teams meet on a Friday afternoon and spend 48 hours creating a new idea/ concept based on the theme of the specific games jam.

A game jam may be centred around a theme, which all games developed within the jam must adhere to. The theme is usually announced shortly before the event begins, in order to discourage participants from planning for the event beforehand and from using previously-developed material. Themes are meant to place restrictions on developers, which encourages creativity.

For more information:

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