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HIGHER EDUCATION VIDEO GAME ALLIANCE RECOGNIZES LEADERS WITH AWARDS PROGRAM

San Francisco, Calif. — Today, the Higher Education Video Game Alliance (The Alliance) recognized video game industry leaders during its first annual awards program, announced at the Game Developers Conference in San Francisco. Over the past year, The Alliance brought together higher education leaders from across the country to share best practices, build partnerships and help universities strengthen their video game education programs. These programs foster the next generation of video game engineers and designers to create an environment of committed students and establish a pipeline of talent.

The professors and leaders in the industry make this all possible. The Alliance selected the following award recipients for their important contributions to the field:

- **Advancing Theory and Research:** Mary Flanagan, professor at the Department of Film and Media Studies at Dartmouth College;
- **Changing the Conversation:** James Gee, Mary Lou Fulton presidential professor of literacy studies at Arizona State University; and
- **Building the Field:** Suzanne Seggerman, co-founder of Games for Change.

Learn more about each recipient:

Advancing Theory and Research

The Alliance recognizes Professor Mary Flanagan for outstanding contributions to the conceptualization and systematic investigation of video games. Scholars recognized by this award are academic trailblazers, intellectual architects and innovators. Professor Flanagan is changing the way the industry thinks about and studies video games as an interactive medium and is shaping the current landscape game-related academics across departments and fields. Other nominees include Michael Mateas, games coordinator at the University of California – Santa Cruz; and Ian Bogost, Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts distinguished chair in media studies at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Professor Flanagan notes, “I am delighted to receive this award from The Alliance. It’s an honor to see that my peers value the historical, artistic and evidence-based approaches in my work that span several disciplines. It means that we are ready to learn equally from data and the creative fields to build the future of the art form. I’m honored to be recognized by this astute and esteemed group in its inaugural awards program.”

Changing the Conversation

The Alliance recognizes Professor James Gee for his work in transforming the culture and conversation around video games. Professor Gee significantly influences how academia and the public see the role and value of video games and game-based scholarships in culture and society. Other nominees include Leigh Alexander, editor-at-large and former news editor for Gamasutra — a news and features site for video game developers — and Frank Lantz, the director of the New York University Game Center.

“Games are just now entering a new age of innovation where the genres, purposes and audiences for games are widening and deepening. We are entering the beginning of the Age of Games for Impact, to make a real change in today’s world,” said Professor Gee upon receiving the award.

Building the Field

The Alliance recognizes Suzanne Seggerman for helping lay the foundation for research and game design in higher education. Seggerman’s work with fellow academics is creating a sustainable, growing field for games research and design. Other nominees include Kent Foster, senior program manager of Academic Relations at Facebook; and Brenda Laurel, chair and professor at the California College of the Arts Graduate Program of Design.

“I’m honored to receive the award for field-building for my work as co-founder of Games for Change,” noted Seggerman. “Games have extraordinary potential to promote powerful and positive social change and many sectors have joined in this emerging movement. From industry to government, from film-making to philanthropy, we all recognize this evolving medium as a meaningful and versatile platform for exploring the pressing issues of our day.”

ABOUT THE HIGHER EDUCATION VIDEO GAME ALLIANCE:

The Alliance is a platform for higher education leaders that underscores the cultural, scientific and economic importance of video game programs in colleges and universities. The key is to create a robust network of resources – including unified advocacy, policymaker engagement, media coverage and external funding – in order to incubate and harness the impact of this community in a 21st century learning environment.

The list of current charter members can be found at: www.HigherEdGames.org.

Learn more at: www.HigherEdGames.org or follow The Alliance on Twitter: @HigherEdGames.

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