



WASHINGTON
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WASHINGTON INTERACTIVE NETWORK ANNOUNCES GAME EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR AND GAME CHANGER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Local leaders are recognized by their peers for excellence.

BELLEVUE, Washington, April. 24, 2017 – Washington Interactive Network (WIN) announced today the recipients of their inaugural leadership awards. The awards are made to acknowledge those individuals that have made significant contribution to the Washington State interactive media industry.

Jesse Rapczak, Co-Founder & Co-Creative Director, Studio Wildcard will be awarded Game Executive of the Year. Katy Jo Wright, Director of Gaming for Everyone at Xbox will be awarded Game Changer of the Year. The winners will be presented with their awards on April 26th at the 10th Annual Power of Play event in Bellevue, WA.

The winners were nominated and selected by industry executives and the Washington Interactive Network Board of Directors. The purpose of these awards is to highlight local game industry leaders who have reached levels of excellence.

“These awards present an opportunity to showcase the leaders and difference-makers in Washington’s thriving game and interactive media industry,” said Kristina Hudson, Executive Director of Washington Interactive Network. “We are thrilled to honor Jesse and Katy Jo and are excited to see their continued success.”

Game Executive of the Year Jesse Rapczak helmed Studio Wildcard in Kirkland, WA as they have sold nearly 10M units of their first game, ARK: Survival Evolved to date. ARK’s concurrent player counts consistently put it in the top 5 games played worldwide on Steam every day, nearly two years after release. Ark: Survival Evolved is available on Steam, XboxOne, and PlayStation 4. The final version of the game and full retail release is still yet to come in 2017.

“I’m humbled at being named Executive of the Year,” said Rapczak. “Big revenue and high user counts are quantitative indicators of success, but the true success story is the amazing team of people I work with every day who passionately pour their hearts and talents into our unique culture and the products we’re creating. The deep game industry heritage of the Seattle region was a huge factor in our decision to start the studio here, and I’m super excited for what the future holds for our young company.”

Game Changer of the Year Katy Jo Wright started Gaming For Everyone with the sponsorship of Phil Spencer, Bonnie Ross, Shannon Loftis and Dave McCarthy. This program was poised to shift the mindset

in applying diversity and inclusion to not just the people, but to the product and gamers as well. With an end-to-end focus to integrate inclusive thinking and practices into everything they do at Xbox, Katy Jo and Gaming For Everyone has driven change in the product, the Xbox culture, and the employee base and is an influencer in driving change across the industry.

“I am deeply honored to receive this award! It has been a privilege to be a part of such an awesome journey with Team Xbox and our industry partners,” said Wright. “The desire to play is universal for all human beings, which makes it particularly meaningful to be a part of delivering our mission to enable fun for everyone! We are really just getting started, so it is exciting to have our momentum be recognized.”

Press release and images can be found at www.WashingtonInteractiveNetwork.org/
<http://washingtoninteractivenetwork.org/leadership-awards/>.

About Washington Interactive Network

Washington Interactive Network is a nonprofit organization at the hub of our vibrant and growing interactive media industry. Today Washington State’s industry boasts over 400 companies and over \$28 Billion in revenue and is a global leader for interactive media development and IP creation. Partnered with WIN is OneRedmond, a unique public private partnership dedicated to ensuring that employers have access to a richly skilled, technology savvy workforce while encouraging smaller businesses to grow and recruiting new firms to the region.

Established in 2004, the purpose of WIN is to promote, nurture, and grow the Interactive Media industry in Washington State, and in the last five years the program has created and retained over 3,000 jobs and over \$400 million in economic impact in the Puget Sound region. For more information, please visit www.WashingtonInteractiveNetwork.org.

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