

## **UC Irvine**

### **2022 Games + Learning + Society Conference Proceedings**

#### **Title**

Increasing Equity in Entertainment Through Education

#### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7xv5g5rc>

#### **Authors**

Isaacs, Steven  
Frenzel, Allison  
Wilson, KiMi  
[et al.](#)

#### **Publication Date**

2022-09-18

Peer reviewed

## Increasing Equity in Entertainment Through Education

Steven Isaacs, Epic Games

Allison Frenzel, California Department of Education

Dr. KiMi Wilson, BRIC Foundation

Nicole Hendrix, BRIC Foundation

Arabian Prince, NWA, CEO

**Abstract:** This panel discusses how to challenge the status quo and create alternative career opportunities, especially for diverse talent. Through career technical education programs and the development of a registered youth apprenticeship for Animation, VFX, and Game Design, young people will have access to industry training as a part of their free and public education.

### **Mission and Goals:**

Representation matters, especially in entertainment, gaming, media, and tech. Through partnership with industry, government, and education leaders, the panelists aim to transform the foundations of these businesses and create greater opportunities for underrepresented people in entertainment and gaming.

The members of this panel are inspired to help drive change around how entertainment and gaming companies approach and discuss hiring around diversity. They believe that engaging underrepresented students in middle and high school will help drive the evolutionary equality the entertainment industry desperately needs.

The panelists' mission is to inspire others to re-examine how current talent pipelines and infrastructure in the entertainment industry function with a goal of creating inclusive opportunities for women and underrepresented people within leadership roles in the entertainment industry.

The California Department of Education (CDE) established the Arts, Media, and Entertainment (AME) industry sector to support high school students interested in pursuing careers in California's thriving creative workforce. The panel will share how industry leaders came together to write the CA-AME CTE Model Curriculum Standards for a new pathway: Animation, VFX, and Game Development, which will guide all AME CTE programs in California.

Steve Isaacs is the Education Program Manager at Epic Games. His mission in this role is to support educators and students in exploring career opportunities that leverage interactive 3d skills. Prior to his role at Epic, Steve was a public-school teacher for 28 years, teaching game design and development as well as other courses related to creative uses of technology. Steve enjoys spending time with family and friends. His hobbies include video games, biking, snorkeling, hiking and live music.

Allison Frenzel is an education programs specialist with the California Department of Education's High School Innovations and Initiatives Office. She supports all arts, media and entertainment (AME) and secondary arts education programs in the state of California. Prior to her work at CDE, Allison spent 15 years as a classroom teacher and program coordinator in Sonoma County, and founded Pulse Arts, a 501(c)3 dedicated to connecting professional creatives and public education. Through programs like the AME Workforce Development Program, the Hip Hop Education and Equity Initiative, and partnerships with the California Film Commission and creative industry, Allison's work is centered around supporting a school to career pipeline for CA students from diverse backgrounds and increasing access to industry-connected opportunities for AME programs in the state of California.

KiMi Wilson is the Chief Learning Officer at GRX Immersive and an Assistant Professor in Curriculum and Instruction at California State University, Los Angeles. KiMi's research has been examining mathematics and science identity development for Black students in K-12 public schooling in relation to STEM education and participation. His published works have focused on identity development of Black males pursuing STEM in higher education and teacher identity development in mathematics. He anticipates expanding his research to focus on Black students' mathematics and science learning in elementary classrooms. KiMi has formerly worked as a public school teacher in California as an elementary teacher and a secondary math and science teacher, with experience working with pre- and in-service teachers. He is passionate about eliminating educational inequities in STEM for all students, specifically students who are historically marginalized in STEM college majors and careers.

Nicole Hendrix is a four-time Emmy-winning Producer and has won five PromaxBDA GOLD awards as a Producer and Creative Director. With a multi-disciplinary background, Nicole has used storytelling as the main ingredient in her successful campaigns that span across television, games, live events, and film. She is currently working as a Producer and Marketing + PR Consultant with clients like Niantic, Baobab Studios, and 9B Collective.

She is the Co-Founder/Executive Director of the BRIC Foundation, an organization that focuses on increasing representation for women and people from underrepresented groups in the entertainment industry, where she directs their yearly Talent + Innovation Summit. She is also the Co-Founder of the Concept Art Association, and organization focusing on elevating and raising the profile of concept artists within the entertainment industry, where she directs their yearly Concept Art Awards show.

She is an international public speaker, where she talks about Storytelling for a Brand and Creativity & Gender. She has given lectures at the University of Connecticut, CG Futures in Melbourne & Sydney, Australia, ing Creatives in Dubai, and many more.

In her spare time she works with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault as a volunteer crisis counselor advocate for Peace Over Violence.

Arabian Prince is a founding member Rock hall of fame group N.W.A., Co Founder/CEO MDDAO/MYMEDV, Founder/CEO iNov8 Next Open Labs, Founder/CEO GGGOAT, President LAFTC Robotics Competition. In addition to his musical prowess, he has a love of technology and bridging a gap between health communities for those who still don't have access to it. Continuing his work for the community, Arabian Prince has founded a company called MdDao, a company changing the future of healthcare. MdDAO presents a first-of-its-kind opportunity to join a global community coming together to create the world's first medical Metaverse. Metaverse is built on Web 3.0, blockchain, NFT, and health tokens.