

Sammy Studios, Inc. Supports UCSD's Experimental Game Lab And The Center For Research In Computing And The Arts

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The University of California, San Diego today announced a gift of more than \$290,000 from Sammy Studios, Inc., the Carlsbad, California-based videogame company, a subsidiary of Sega Sammy Holdings, to support UCSD's Experimental Game Lab (EGL) at the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts (CRCA).

"UCSD and the Division of Arts and Humanities are enormously grateful to Sammy Studios for this generous gift," said Georgios Anagnostopoulos, interim dean of Arts and Humanities. "It is the start of what we hope will become a long collaboration that will advance this region as a robust base for exploring and developing new art forms through computation, a field in which UCSD art departments have been pioneers for decades."

CRCA's EGL builds upon the extensive opportunities provided by the California Institute of Telecommunications and Information Technology [Cal-(IT)²]. Its focus is to create new forms of art, which extend the expressive capacity of technologies developed through the fields of computer gaming and scientific visualization.

"The creation of the Experimental Game Lab has enormous relevance to our industry," said John Rowe, president and Chief Operating Officer of Sammy Studios, Inc. "It brings a dedicated video game curriculum to a nationally ranked digital media arts program, ultimately producing a greater number of creative and savvy entrants into the industry. It also further promotes the San Diego area as one that is burgeoning in this field. Sammy Studios and UCSD are natural partners in this program, and we are delighted to be the ones who help support its launch."

EGL research will focus on issues relevant to next-generation platforms, such as persistent evolving multi-user on-line worlds, streaming media within games, on-demand asset derivation, soft body dynamics for character development, rendering techniques, and prototyping technologies.

"Computer games are a defining cultural form for the 21st century," said Sheldon Brown, director of CRCA's Experimental Game Lab and leader of the New Media Arts Layer at Cal-(IT)². "The technology and aesthetics of computer games are driving the future development of computer graphics, visual communications and information infrastructures. The intellectual exchange at the core of this relationship will support the development of new types of expressive capacities through technological innovations."

Sammy Studios will also provide the EGL with the cost-free use of its game engine, SCORE. Designed for the creation of large scope 3D video games for home consoles, SCORE comprises proprietary technology created by the company's internal development as well as commercial middleware. The middleware integrated into SCORE include graphics, physics and online technologies, which are currently among the most widely used for game development, with UCSD granted license for their use through this partnership with Sammy Studios. SCORE will be incorporated into new artistic projects involving graduate and undergraduate students from the university's Interdisciplinary Computing in the Arts (ICAM) program, which is the fastest growing undergraduate major at UCSD.

"Academic researchers, working with practitioners in industry on the future forms and technologies of computer games, is a cornerstone of our New Media Arts thrust in Cal-(IT)²," said Larry Smarr, director of Cal-(IT)². "Computer gaming is one of the fastest growing segments of the California economy, so this new partnership with Sammy Studios and CRCA will help us move more aggressively into this exciting and rapidly evolving field."

UCSD's rise into the ranks of the world's premiere research universities has been supported by an ongoing commitment to work at the edge of cultural and technological advances. In addition to top ranked schools in the sciences and engineering, UCSD is a leader in digital media arts. UCSD's graduate program in this field is currently ranked number six in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*. The relationship between Sammy Studios and CRCA exemplifies the multidisciplinary nature of the campus and will build on the tradition of marrying cultural and technological research that CRCA has fostered for more than 30 years.

This gift contributes to the \$1 billion fund-raising goal of The Campaign for UCSD: *Imagine What's Next*. Campaign priorities include supporting students and faculty through scholarships, fellowships and endowed chairs; creating and expanding academic programs; funding research endeavors and health sciences advancements; and providing innovation funds and unrestricted support. To date, UCSD has raised \$656 million; the campaign is scheduled to conclude in June 2007.

About Sammy Studios, Inc. Founded in 2002 and headquartered in Carlsbad, California, Sammy Studios creates original video games and publishes internally and externally developed game titles in North America. The company will release the biggest portfolio of games ever to be published under its brand in 2004, and will make its internal development debut with the anticipated cinematic first-person shooter "Darkwatch" in early 2005. Sammy Studios is the videogame subsidiary of Sega Sammy Holdings Inc. of Tokyo, Japan, an entertainment and amusement conglomerate traded publicly on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. For more information, please visit www.sammystudios.com.

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