

# Army Game Studio Provides Variety of Outreach, Training Products

By Clifford Kyle Jones, NCO Journal

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Jeff Sallas, Army Game Studio software engineer test lead and support, shows screens from the 'Go Army Career Navigator' application. (Photo by Clifford Kyle Jones / NCO Journal)

The Army Game Studio's products extend into a variety of media to help boost the Army's message and help Soldiers perform their missions. Some other highlights:

## 'Career Navigator'

This free application, available for Android and iPhone iOS operating systems, takes information from GoArmy.com and makes it available on recruiters' and other users' mobile phones. It includes information on the Army's more than 150 military occupational specialties and links to any videos the Army has produced about an MOS.

"Everyone uses their phones these days, so we try to put the basic information that you would find on GoArmy.com inside an app. Recruiters can download all the information so they can use it when they're not connected to the Internet," said Marsha Berry, deputy program director for Army Game Studio. "Kids can download it and search using their cell phones, because that's how they get information."

Are potential recruits interested in officer career paths? Are they looking for engineering-related positions? The app provides a variety of filters, so users can easily sort and find the information most relevant for them. It also lists the requirements for each MOS, such as Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and training scores.

When a potential recruit decides he or she is ready to talk to a recruiter, the app uses a phone's Global Positioning System to show a user where the closest Army recruiter is and the recruiter's contact information.

The app also includes information for parents of potential recruits.

"It's one of our more popular apps," Berry said. "Recruiters are using this to play MOS videos straight from their cell phones so they don't have to have their laptop everywhere they go. Users are finding out more information so that when they do go to a recruiter, they know a little bit more and they are a little bit better equipped to ask the right questions."

## 'America's Army' comics

Perhaps the studio's best known product is the video game "America's Army," a first-person shooter for computer platforms that first launched in 2002. The studio has built on that game's success with a tied-in comic book, also called "America's Army." The comic just marked its 15th issue and is available for download through an app called "Comics."

Berry said the comic provides some of the backstory for the video game and develops some of the characters. Each issue focuses on an area relevant to today's Army. One, for instance, tells the story of a young man making the decision to join the Army. Another highlights a particular MOS and shows some of the technology the Army uses.

"One of our primary missions is to communicate how high-tech the Army is," Berry said. "It's correcting a common misconception."

## **Local application**

The Army Game Studio recently partnered with engineers at the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Center and an advanced leadership class to design a mobile app for the local Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, community to stay informed on official information.

The studio developed code for the Redstone Explorer app, which provides critical alerts, links to Team Redstone social media feeds, information about resources on Redstone, and maps pointing out gates and gate traffic, as well as where recreation and other services are located. The app allows for push notifications, allowing Team Redstone officials to communicate breaking news with users.

"Because of our expertise, the customer brings us their vision and we help bring it to life," Berry said.

The concept was developed by team members of the Aviation and Missile Command's 2016 Advanced Leadership Investment for Tomorrow Class. When it came time for class members to decide on a project to benefit Redstone, they settled on the idea of an app quickly.

"It's an app made by Redstone for Redstone," said Markeeva Morgan, a NASA engineer and LIFT member. "We want to be able to communicate with the community and with Team Redstone employees, in the most time critical and time sensitive way we can. We all have extremely important missions, and we're all very busy, so if we can help shave minutes off the day on ingress and egress, that's very critical."

"The LIFT program wanted this to be executed by the end of 2016," Berry said. "After discussing high level requirements, we collectively determined it was a 'Go'. Because we have an extensive asset and code base library, we were able to use existing code formulas to keep the program on schedule."

— *U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command contributed to this report*