ANDRES VALBUENA

Game Designer

andresvalbuena.com | gonderlane@gmail.com | (336) 989-9054 | linkedin.com/in/andres-valbuena

Game designer who builds puzzles, minigames, levels and quest systems, then implements them in Unreal Engine 5 Blueprint, Creation Kit and Unity. Four games released on itch.io. Gold winner of the 2025 GDC Game Narrative Review. Native English and Spanish.

GAME DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Lead Area Designer & Narrative Designer | Winter's Hunger — 2024 to 2025

Unreal Engine 5 horror capstone, 6-person team

- Designed every puzzle, each with multiple solutions whose costs carry into later systems.
- Blocked out and iterated the area layouts, pacing the horror through lighting, geometry and choke points.
- Built the Wendigo's behavior trees, combat encounters and quest scripting in Blueprint.
- Designed sanity and flashlight systems that change enemy aggression; documented every system in the 33-page GDD.

Game Designer | It Starts With a Summon — Game jam

Visual novel with 3 romance routes, Ren'Py

- Designed 4 minigames around 4 skill types (memory, deduction, timing, intuition), scaled across 5 in-game days.
- Tied each minigame to a stat that unlocks route scenes while keeping every route completable.
- Wrote the 9-page design document, with scope fallbacks and an implementation order for the jam.

Game Designer | Gelatoss! — Pirate Software Game Jam

Couch competitive game, Godot, 5-person team

- Pitched the split-to-score mechanic: smaller slimes score less but are the only ones that fit jackpot zones.
- Tuned slime physics and built the multiplier logic; ran mid-jam playtests on launch feel and onboarding.

Producer & Game Designer | MSF: Mason Salvation Force — 2024 to 2025

Unity co-op shooter, 24-person student team

- Ran the team's Agile and Jira pipeline; core features shipped 2 weeks ahead of schedule.
- Designed boss and arena layouts, implemented boss encounters in C#, and resolved 100+ bugs through QA.

Solo work: *Original 3D Environment*, all assets hand-modeled in Unity (6 weeks). *Realm Ball*, a 3D breakout game (1 week).

NARRATIVE AND SYSTEMS DESIGN

Narrative Designer | Schism, Far Owl Studios — Nov 2025 to Present

Original fantasy espionage IP, Unreal Engine 5, 5-person remote team

- Build content for the core loop: players choose which insights to report to each faction, shifting affinity and the story.
- Build conversations in Articy:draft gated by affinity, friendship and lie-tracking variables.

Narrative & Quest Designer | Fallout: Cascadia — Feb 2025 to Present

Fallout 4 total conversion, 30+ person volunteer team

- Designed 3 branching faction questlines and scripted reusable Papyrus encounter systems used as team templates.

Narrative & Quest Designer | Beyond Skyrim: Elsweyr — Aug 2025 to 2026

Skyrim total conversion, 15+ person volunteer team

- Designed 5 multi-stage faction questlines and created the team's quest handoff documentation standard.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Events & Scheduling Manager, Assistant Secretary | Snowpity Inc. (nonprofit) — 2023 to Present

- Schedule multi-day programming and vendors for an annual convention whose charity auction has raised over $100,000.

Conference Associate | GDC Festival of Gaming, San Francisco — Mar 2026

AWARDS & EDUCATION

Gold, GDC Game Narrative Review 2025, for an analysis of player agency in *Vampire: The Masquerade - Bloodlines*.

BA, Computer Game Design, George Mason University, 2025. Tencent Game Scholarship, 2024 to 2025.

SKILLS

Design: core loops and systems, puzzle design, level layout and pacing, minigames, encounters, difficulty tuning, GDDs

Tools: Unreal Engine 5 (Blueprint), Unity (C#), Godot, Creation Kit, Papyrus, Articy:draft, Shader Graph, Git, Jira, Notion