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IMMEDIATE RELEASE: The Branch to host Global Game Jam event in South Bend January 23-25

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The Branch, a coworking and office provider serving startups, telecommuters, freelancers, and small businesses in the Michiana area, will serve as one of the international hosts of the 2015 Global Game Jam (GGJ) Event (January 23-25) at its downtown South Bend location. This is the second year in a row that The Branch has hosted this unique event in the Michiana area.

To register for the event, please visit Eventbrite: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/south-bend-global-game-jam-2015-tickets-14676805721> Registration is just \$10.

Global Game Jam (GGJ) is an event for people of varied backgrounds and skills to come together for a weekend to make games. The games might be video games for web or mobile devices, or could be board games or card games, or anything else the participants imagine. The individuals that form a team to create a game will determine the type of game.

This year's event will host more than 514 sites in 77 different countries. Michiana has grown from having just one site each of the last two years to now having a site at Goshen College as well as downtown South Bend. We anticipate 30 people joining the South Bend site.

GGJ is a weekend-long event, starting on Friday afternoon with kickoff activities, and concluding on Sunday afternoon with teams demonstrating their completed games. The short timeframe facilitates creativity and adds a fun sense of urgency. During the weekend, activities will include envisioning a game, forming a team to create the game, designing game play, creating art, composing music or sound effects, and combining all the game play elements into a new creation.

This event is great for people with a wide range of talents and ages. A team of individuals of varying skills are best for creates games. It is also valuable to have varying backgrounds on the team. The breadth of ability that is required makes GGJ a great opportunity to meet new people with different, but complimentary, gifts. Regarding the event, Dan Neumann, owner of The Branch, said, "Global Game Jam is an example of the types of community-building events that we like to host. In life, the best results are going to be achieved when a diverse group of individuals with varying skills and backgrounds

collaborate to create something new. That's what we hope to foster with Global Game Jam, as well as with the interactions that happen between members of The Branch."

While the skills and games will be unique, each year the organizers of Global Game Jam release a unifying theme that is a common thread across all the games created. Two years ago the theme was the sound of a beating heart. Locally, that theme led to games as silly as a unicorn that was trying to make healthy lifestyle choices while avoiding diabetes, to a maze game that involved making repairs to a circulatory system. The year's theme will be announced at 5:00 PM Friday, as part of the kickoff activities for our local site. "Time and time again, people say you need to just go out and do. This is one of the best ways to do just that. Every year, my goal is to make a small, complete game and so far, each year has been more and more successful. It is a great way to see how much you progress." Charlie Guse, lead organizer, said reflecting the last two years of Global Game Jams.

This year's event is open to participants of all ages. We do require that participating children under the age of 15 be accompanied by a participating parent while at the event.

Registration for the South Bend site will be open via Eventbrite will be open through Thursday at 11:59 PM, Eastern Time. If the registration cost is a barrier to participation, contact the organizers via the Contact Organizers option on the Eventbrite page so that they can explore making accommodations.

ABOUT GLOBAL GAME JAM:

The brainchild of Susan Gold in collaboration with Gorm Lai and Ian Schreiber, the Global Game Jam (GGJ) was founded in 2008, inspired by the many game jams before it, such as the Indie Game Jam, Ludum Dare and Nordic Game Jam. GGJ was a project of the International Game Developer's Association (IGDA) from 2009-2012. Starting with GGJ 2013, the event has been managed by Global Game Jam, Inc.

The 1st annual Global Game Jam was held in 2009 to much critical acclaim and success. With over 1600 participants in 23 countries, and a theme of "As long as we have each other, we will never run out of problems," the GGJ produced 370 games. In 2010, the number of participants increased to over 4300 with 900 finished games on the theme of "Deception." GGJ participants worldwide have continued to dramatically increase in numbers during each subsequent year of this unique event.

GGJ is a volunteer-run organization, built upon the very hard work of its leadership, site organizers, and participants. For more information, please visit: <http://globalgamejam.org/about>

ABOUT THE BRANCH:

The Branch is a coworking space, providing office, meeting, and telecommuting accommodations at affordable rates for startups, telecommuters, freelancers, and small businesses in the Michiana area. The mission of The Branch is to create an environment where both companies and individuals "connect,

grow, and cowork.” The Branch is located on the 5th floor of the Jefferson Center, in the heart of South Bend’s Central Business District. The street address of The Branch is 105 E. Jefferson Boulevard, Suite 500, South Bend, Indiana 46601. For more information about The Branch, see the website at <http://thebranchsb.com/about/>.