

# Graduating media arts and sciences student co-creates game that explores sobriety

By Sarah A. McCarty, ASU News  
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**Editor's note:** This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [fall 2025 graduates](#).

Zamara Porter makes art through coding — a passion she discovered at ASU.

“I was a traditional artist through and through,” Porter said, “and my interest in coding hadn’t really sparked until I came to Arizona State University.

“Programming wasn’t really something that was accessible to me growing up, as it was much easier for me to pick up a pencil and paper and get to work rather than finding a programming tutorial online,” she said.

Porter, who moved to Arizona from her native Cleveland at 14 years old, enrolled at ASU as an art intermedia student, but then she learned about The GAME School’s media arts and sciences program.

“I had switched over to media arts and sciences when I saw all that the major had to offer,” she said. “I saw it as a way of making art with coding.”

This fall, Porter is graduating with a BA in media arts and sciences, with a concentration in art, from The GAME School in the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts.

For her capstone project, she is working as the artist and animator on “Day in the Life: Sober Edition” — a video game that deals with addiction and the trials and tribulations that come with sobriety.

She’s been working on the game with her partner Esha Sethi for a year and plans to continue after graduation.

“When Esha first spoke about the idea with me, I was really intrigued, but also knew the ramifications that came with making a game like this,” she said. “I’ve had family and friends who

were affected by addiction. Some made it out and are living life sober, and some unfortunately did not.

"I was a little bit nervous at first, on how this game was going to be received, but after a while of working on it, I grew more confident," Porter said. "This game is my baby; me and Esha's."

Another highlight at ASU was participating in an exchange program with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

"I received a scholarship my first two years and it was really important because I got to participate in an exchange program with that scholarship," she said. "I had gotten the Congressman Ed and Verma Pastor Scholarship and the Brit LeCompte scholarship from the AZ Community Foundation. I had also gotten a grant from ASU itself, the Go Global Grant. All of those fundings combined have greatly helped me in my education journey."

In the exchange program, Porter spent six months abroad as part of a fine arts cohort, where she participated in a concept art class and a design class that helped her with animation and interactive media.

"The experience was definitely life-changing and enlightening," she said "I was the first person in my family to do something like that, and it was a shock for me when I had come upon that realization. I valued the experience a lot and wouldn't trade it for the world."

**Question: What's something you learned while at ASU — in the classroom or otherwise — that surprised you or changed your perspective?**

**Answer:** When I was in one of my game design classes, there was a discussion about how "serious" college was, or rather, how it was portrayed in high school. I say that I still somewhat agree with that sentiment and that college has a level of seriousness in the sense that the responsibilities are brought on to the students. The finances, the aid, the classes, are all things that should be taken seriously if you want to be successful in any college, not just ASU. However, the portrayal of professors, and how harsh they can be, the staff and faculty cracking down harder than high school teachers and junior high teachers combined? I don't really agree with that sentiment, as I've personally never felt like I was in the presence of a pretentious professor, or one that would crack down on you if you got a single thing wrong.

**Q: Why did you choose ASU?**

**A:** It was the school that gave me a chance. I grew up in the lower middle class for the most part, and while I had good grades and paid attention in school, I didn't grow up having a lot of money. ASU was my choice in the sense that I knew what I wanted to do and could see that ASU gave different avenues, majors and road maps. The Herberger Institute had options that were there and that were visible. It's a school that has made a name for itself, which is something that I can't really say for other schools in the state.

**Q: What's the best piece of advice you'd give to those still in school?**

**A:** Try to find your people, whether it be friends, a club, a community. Finding community and people who were very similar to me in circumstance and upbringing really helped me realize that I am not alone and that my problems are normal for a person like me. It also helps with finding

resources and solace in others.

**Q: What was your favorite spot on campus?**

**A:** The Digital Archives Lounge in the Stauffer Building. I was able to work there from time to time in silence, and also volunteered there.

**Q: What are your plans after graduation?**

**A:** I do have a job lined up, but I plan on continuing my education after ASU. I know that even though I am graduating, there is much more for me to learn and to see. I also plan on going abroad for work. I want to be a technical artist, and maybe, somewhere down the line, an art director. My dream job is to work as an artist in a video game studio.

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*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



Zamara Porter graduates this fall from The GAME School with a BA in Media Arts and Sciences with a concentration in art. Photo by Josh Belveal/ASU