**Joan M. Savage, PhD**

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**RESEARCHER, INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER, HCI**

**L&D | Data Collection | Project Management | UX | Strategy Development | High-Performance Teams**

**Exemplary record in high-quality research, learning & development, and virtual reality solution development.**

15+ years’ global experience driving learning service delivery, operational strategy & business solutions in several industries (e.g., health) by leveraging data/technology. PhD in Human-Centered Design with deep experience in training, data collection, IT, data analysis, research, & idea creation. Excels at low- & high-fidelity prototyping for virtual environments, usability testing & process optimization. Passionate about driving technological & educational growth of underrepresented populations. Skilled at conveying complex concepts clearly. Award-winning innovator, published author & grant recipient (for suicide intervention video game). Managed 15 staff, 10+ projects & $1M budget.

*Key Strengths:*

Research | Data Capturing/Visualization | Gaming (VR) | Software Implementation | Organizational Behavior & Development | Field Testing | Interviewing | Subject Recruitment | Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed Methodologies | PR | Social Change | Instruction | Relationship Cultivation | Innovative | Empowering Leadership | Persuasive Communicator | Problem-Solving

**Selected Highlights**

* **Garnered excellent feedback from students at Florida Institute of Technology by generating thorough feedback** for each online assignment, as well as notifying students in advance of the issues and solutions based on their feedback
* **Designed effective methodologies for physicians, nurses, and participants dealing with usability issues while managing a $1M project** at the Roudebush VA Medical Center.
* **Created mental wellness instructional courses featuring virtual reality environments; in six months boosted the number of mental wellness event attendees from three to 80 individuals each week**; received excellent feedback and support, with interviews indicating that this was a highly successful application.
* **Developed a low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototype for veteran recruitment, training, and placement that enabled 12 test subjects at Roudebush VA Medical Center to successfully complete training and job readiness**; completed interviews with and needs analysis of at-risk veterans, who were struggling to attain and retain jobs; completed presentations and white papers outlining details for VA-CASE executives; mediated local nonprofits and organizations who supported veterans to come and give presentations, training, and services; created and developed from infancy *Film Set Vets,* preparing and training veterans for internships with local filmmakers; completed and launched this in three months.
* **Awarded $19K to build an interactive suicide intervention and prevention video game/ simulation** in four monthsthrough partnership of IUPUI School of Informatics and IUPUI Psychology; developed low- & high -fidelity prototype for interactive simulation about suicide intervention and prevention; completed an interactive video game for suicide prevention that was showcased on *Thinking Worlds*; completed several papers, and presented at several conferences.
* **Recruited by Microsoft Research Asia** for HCI internship; paper was accepted and presented at CHI’ 2013.

**Professional Experience**

**Florida Institute of Technology | Melbourne, FL | 2021-Present**

**Adjunct Lecturer – School of Business**

Lead two remote classes: Management Information Systems and Global Impact of Information Systems. Analyze course content, develop challenging course additions, and evaluate courses.

* Mentor graduate students as needed.
* Guide students in technology usage for virtual reality conferencing, virtual meetings, and presenting software.

**Florida Institute of Technology | Melbourne, FL | 2014-2019**

**Research Assistant/ Virtual Reality Instructor and Builder**

Conducted UX research, design, and project management for doctoral[dissertation](https://repository.lib.fit.edu/handle/11141/3057) and for other associates and their projects, such as [*Tangible Interactive Systems*](https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319302690)*: Grasping the Real World with Computers*; contributed STEM and STEAM research specifically for women in technology; performed behavioral analysis, and training for mental wellness and practical skills for daily living. Created innovative ways of helping to improve quality of life of underrepresented populations (e.g., *Autism Awareness* game and education and *Mental Wellness*). Presented research before Offices of Sen. Marco Rubio, Congressman Bill Posey, and Sen. Bill Nelson, as well as Buzz and Andy Aldrin for USAerobility. Oversaw information architecture; developed and applied interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and conducted observations; field study; needs analyses; completed instructional designs and research based course content for weekly interactive VR educational courses like [*Isolation Relief*](https://account.altvr.com/worlds/1004161961362981668/spaces/1132248966843335229), as well as [Star Trek Social](https://account.altvr.com/events/963278457356157748), an interactive RPG, social gathering, and marketing solution for official Star Trek actors/producers and Star Trek fan movies; hosted and served 300+ clients through Star Trek Social events, and oversaw and managed different workers involved in building and teaching. Hosted weekly informative VR events while interviewing, promoting, and working with high powered and influential guests.

* Designed and drove VR world building and course development to visually, interactively, and educationally support each lesson: for example, *Mental Wellness: Real-Life Superheroes* (Avengers theme) and *Defeating* *Depression: Defense Against the Dark Arts* (Harry Potter theme). VR interactive world, music, and slideshow reflected unique themes.
* Propelled an ongoing event called *Mental Wellness* that was showcased on VR platform AltspaceVR in 2017.
* Mixed, Qualitative, and quantitative methodologies.

**Earlier Roles Include:**

**Program Manager/ Research Assistant – Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center/ VA Center for Applied Systems Engineering (VA-CASE), Systems Redesign Roudebush VAMC | 2012-2014** (identified & managed life cycles of multiple projects simultaneously; interviewing physicians & nurses; data-capturing; observing; field testing; focus groups; needs analyses; white papers; presentations to executives for updates)

**Research Assistant – Microsoft Research Asia | 2012** (assisted senior researchers in qualitative analysis involving combining abstract content analysis, user research, UX, content strategy, interviewing & observing CEOs and executives, surveys, questionnaires, and design thinking to engineer interactive technologies that reshaped communication and presentation activities; paper was accepted and presented at CHI’ 2013)

**Co-Owner/Developer/Public Relations – Virtual Fireflies, LLC | 2011-2012** (developed 3D environments using multimedia content; created and promoted health education at [Indiana Museum of Arts](https://soic.iupui.edu/news/students-design-online-games-for-the-indiana-state-museum/) and American Legion)

**Teaching & Research Assistant (Advisor: Dr. Joseph Defazio, Director of Media Arts & Science) – IUPUI School of Informatics | 2010-2012** (Awarded $19,000 grant to research, design, and develop an interactive video game and research its effectiveness on student and veteran mental health, education, and well-being; data collection; surveys; interviews; observations; questionnaires; participated in award-winning 3D video; presented and promoted research at several conferences with published papers. Qualitative and mixed methodologies; developed interactive single-cell using Virtools and VR Cave)

**Rapid Response/ Recruiting & Placement Specialist – WorkOne | 2009-2010** (performed market and risk analyses, cold-called employers and candidates, and worked with state agencies, CEOs, directors, and contractors; recognized as the most effective recruiter by Adidas)

**Research Assistant/ Radon Associate – Environmental Protection Agency | 2008** (recruited state senators and representatives for participation in public service announcements for their represented states; produced marketing material and video for radon awareness strategies; researched radon strategies, feedback, and effectiveness of different methodologies per state)

**Associate – The Washington Center | 2008** (attended six-week leadership training titled *Diplomacy: Protocol and Professional Conduct: A Practical Application of Communicating with Visitors and Dignitaries*)

**Marketing/ Public Relations/ Video & Audio Production/ Content Writer/ Media Specialist – University of Indianapolis | 2006-2009** (researched current affairs; implemented strategies for advertising USS Indianapolis; gathered news and captured data for UIndy newspaper *The Reflector,* UIndy TV station, and UIndy radio)

**Education, Certification & Professional Development**

**PhD in Human-Centered Design** – Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) (GPA: 3.7)

**MS in Media Arts & Science/ Human-Computer Interaction** – Indiana University- Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) (GPA: 3.9)

**Bachelor of Science in Communication/ Electronic Media** – University of Indianapolis (GPA: 3.7)

**Bachelor of Science in Psychology** – West Texas A&M University (GPA: 2.7)

**Industry Training** – Specialized Leadership Training, VA Medical Center | Lean Management Training, VA Medical Center | Basic Mandarin & Spanish | Diplomacy Training, Washington Center | Python Programming (Online), Udemy, Rock Springs, WY | Microsoft Dynamics 365 (Online), Udemy, Melbourne, FL | Researching and Writing Grants (Online), CollaborNation, Melbourne, FL | VR Developer (Online), Udacity Nanodegree Program, Melbourne, FL | Lean Six Sigma Training (Green Belt) Systems Redesign, Indianapolis, IN | Lean Six Sigma Training (Yellow Belt) Systems Redesign, Indianapolis, IN | Human-Computer Interaction,Stanford University, Indianapolis, IN | The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Jump Start: Habits 1-3*,* FranklinCovey Co., International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET), Indianapolis, IN | The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Jump Start: Habits 4-7, FranklinCovey Co., IACET, Indianapolis, IN | The 4 Imperatives of Great Leaders, FranklinCovey Co., IACET, Indianapolis, IN | Project Management Fundamentals: Managing Projects that Succeed, FranklinCovey Co., IACET, Indianapolis, IN | Unleashing Your Team's Talent, FranklinCovey Co., IACET, Indianapolis, IN | The Speed of Trust Foundations,FranklinCovey Co., IACET, Indianapolis, IN | Business Writing Skills: Getting Your Point Across with Power, FranklinCovey Co., IACET, Indianapolis, IN | Patient Centered Care Training Course, Richard L. Roudebush VAMC, Indianapolis, IN | Human - Computer Interaction Advanced Seminar I, Indiana University School of Informatics, Indianapolis, IN

**Computer Experience** – MS Office (Excel, Office, PowerPoint), Python, Google Workspace, Presentations/Slideshows, Writing Skills (WordPress, technical writing, journalism, research).

**Community Involvement**

Sweetwater Combined Communications Joint Powers Committee: State Appointed Board Member (2022) | Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen (2022) | Brevard Zoo: Conservationist Education Volunteer (2019-2021) | AltspaceVR: Community Leader/VR Church (2017-2020) | Toastmasters International: Member - Toast-Stars #9269 (2019) & Award-Winning Presenter (2013) | The American Legion Post# 0406: Nominated 1st Vice Commander (2016-2018) | The American Legion Post# 0406: Membership/Nominated 2nd Vice Commander (2015-2016) | Making a Difference for Women Veterans Event Planning Team: Veteran Representative | Women Veterans Health Committee: Board Member | Women Veterans Homeless Committee: Committee Member | The American Legion Post #0438: Officer and Member| Beacon Toastmasters International: Member

**Honors/Awards**

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi (2016 -current) | FIT Scholarship Recipient (2019) | Beacon Toastmaster Competent Communicator Award (2014) | Beacon Toastmaster First Place International Speech Contest (2014) | IUPUI 3D Film Festival Winner (2011) | International Speech Contest IUPUI Scholarship Recipient (2010-2012)

**Grants**

Defazio, J., Hardin, J. & Savage, J. (2011). *Suicide Intervention-Prevention: A Health Education Simulation.* The Solutions Center Venture Fund. Protocol #: 1105005665. Awarded $19,880

**Publications**

1. **Savage, J.** (2020). Socialization of Veterans Using Virtual Reality [Doctoral Dissertation, Florida Institute of Technology].
2. **Savage, J.** & Stephane, L.(2019). Socialization of Veterans Using Virtual Reality. *HCI International 2019.* Orlando, FL, USA. Springer International Publishing Switzerland.
3. **Savage, J.** (2016).A Veteran’s View: Comfortability Using Avatars to Express Emotion. *Journal of Management & Engineering Integration. 9*(2), 133-140.
4. **Savage, J.** (2015). Usability Assessment of a Suicide Intervention-Prevention Mini-Game. *HCI International 2015.* Los Angeles, CA.Springer International Publishing Switzerland.
5. **Savage, J.** (2014). A Veteran’s Guide to Civilian Living. Publisher: CreateSpace. ISBN/EAN13: 1502753685 / 9781502753687.
6. **Savage, J.** & Barrios, L. (2014). Veteran Navigation Improvement Efforts at VA-CASE. VA-CASE.
7. **Savage, J.** & Barrios, L. (2014). Veteran Recruitment, Training and Placement Efforts at VA-CASE. VA-CASE.
8. Edge, D., **Savage, J.** & Yatani, K. (2013). HyperSlides: Dynamic Presentation Prototyping. *CHI’13.* Paris, France.

**Conferences**

1. **Savage, J.** & Stephane, L.(2019). Socialization of Veterans Using Virtual Reality. *HCI International 2019.* Orlando, FL.
2. **Savage, J.** (2018). Socialization of Veterans Using Virtual Reality. *College of Engineering & Science Doctoral Candidate Student Design Showcase 2018.* Melbourne, FL.
3. **Savage, J.**, Carstens, D. & Zhao, Y.(2016). Being Human: A Personalized Approach to Veterans Mental Health. Poster presented at the 9th annual *Human Factors & Applied Psychology Student Conference.* Daytona Beach, FL.
4. **Savage, J.** (2016). Comfortability Using Avatars in Real-time to Express Emotions. *IEMS 2016.* Cocoa Beach, FL.
5. **Savage, J.** (2015). Usability Assessment of a Suicide Intervention-Prevention Mini-Game. Poster presented at *HCI International 2015.* Los Angeles, CA.
6. Edge, D., **Savage, J.** & Yatani, K. (2013). HyperSlides: Dynamic Presentation Prototyping. *CHI’13.* Paris, France*.*