Helen Y. Chang

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SENIOR DIRECTOR / MANAGER PRODUCT DESIGN

Accomplished design leader with expertise in visual and UX design, animation, and illustration within the educational technology industry and creative agencies. Whether leading design teams, or tackling design tasks hands on, thrives on understanding users and aligning their needs with business goals to deliver high-quality, impactful experiences that engage and inspire learners. Adept at fostering cross-functional collaboration and alignment, and empowering teams to do their best work through clear and open communication.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Leadership | Team building | Creative direction | Design thinking | People management | Talent development & mentorship | Cross-functional collaboration | User-centered design | User experience design | Interaction design | Visual design | Product design | Design systems | User research | Illustration | Storyboarding | 2D animation | Playful learning | Game design | Storytelling | Paper & digital prototyping

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Paramount | Senior Director, Product Design, Kids & Family   **Feb 2024 - Dec 2024**

Paramount+ is a D2C subscription based video on-demand and live streaming service. I was invited to join the Paramount+ team to lead design for Kids & Family when Paramount closed Noggin.

- Led product design initiatives to deliver Kids & Family content and shape viewing experiences across OTT, mobile, and web platforms to ensure engaging, user-centered experiences for young viewers and families with kids
- Partnered across product and engineering teams to conduct AB tests to drive creation and usage of Kids Profiles, introduce interactive games, and feature generative AI collections

Nickelodeon | Senior Director, Product Design   **Nov 2021 - Feb 2024**

Noggin is the little kids learning app where kids ages 2-7 learn and grow with their favorite Nick Jr. characters through interactive games, activities, ebooks, and episodes. (Noggin was closed by Paramount and privately acquired later in 2024)

- Built and managed a team of 5 UX/UI and Interactive Designers across Noggin's mobile and tablet apps, website, and interactive content
- Planned and facilitated design sprints with cross-functional teams and stakeholders to rapidly ideate, prototype, and test new concepts in order determine how to best meet our our kid and grownup users' needs
- Partnered with product, content, learning, research, analytics, marketing, and engineering teams to reimagine Noggin's streaming app and launch a personalized, fun, and interactive learning experience winning the 2024 Kidscreen Award for "Best Learning App - Branded"
- Delivered on improved learning outcomes and engagement increasing time spent per session by 18% compared to the previous 12 months

- Initiated and oversaw the growth and evolution of Noggin's design system to define and document patterns, align components with code for scalability, improve design and engineering workflows, and ensure a cohesive user experience

nCino | Senior Product Designer   July 2020 - Oct 2021

nCino is a worldwide leader in cloud banking working to transform the financial services industry through innovation, reputation and speed.

- Collaborated with product managers, SMEs, engineers, and designers to understand the complex needs of our users in order to deliver clean and elegant user experiences for our financial institutions and their customers
- Created user flows, wireframes, and high fidelity mockups to iterate on, validate, and deliver design solutions for risk management in commercial lending
- Partnered with a team of designers and engineers to build and maintain a scalable design system integrating the Salesforce Lightning Design System with custom components and patterns
- Helped define and craft company wide users personas to align internal stakeholders, employees, and new hires around our users' needs

PlayMada Games | Executive Creative Director   Apr 2012 - Apr 2020

PlayMada creates web and tablet based STEM learning resources for middle and high school students.

- Built and managed a team of 8 UX, visual, and game designers; engineers, educators, and product managers for our science learning product
- Partnered with cross-functional teams to define requirements, conceptualize, and design a new product framework to deliver a system 8 of Webby Award nominated digital science games for web and mobile platforms
- Worked hands on with design, pedagogy, and engineering teams throughout research, ideation, prototyping, visual design, user testing, iteration, and QA testing to translate science concepts into interactive playable experiences in an agile environment
- Defined and leveraged design systems in collaboration with engineering to simplify and streamline UI and UX design implementation across individual learning experiences within our suite of products
- Leveraged data analytics insights and user feedback to iterate on and refine gameplay and the overall UX and increased usage by 96% over the same 3 month period from the prior year
- Oversaw, executed, and maintained visual and UX design across product and marketing functions for our science and math products including digital and printed marketing collateral, websites, and supporting classroom materials

BrainPOP, NYC | Art Director + Senior Animator   Aug 2006 - Apr 2012

- Collaborated with a team of animators, educators, writers, and developers to launch BrainPOP ELL, an engaging and effective digital English language learning product for kids in grades K-8
- Partnered with the design and animation teams to establish the overall UX including artistic style, visual design, and user flows
- Defined production processes and cross functional workflows, and provided creative direction on scripts, storyboards, and movie iterations for content and animation teams.

- Created 2D animated shorts, visual, and audio assets for interactive games and features for over 20 web based lessons teaching language rules and grammatical concepts
- Established design systems to shape best practices for the animation team consisting of prop and background asset libraries, animation templates, style guides, and advanced character puppets

Smart Design, NYC • Production Designer   **Jan 2006 - Aug 2006**
- Worked as the in-house designer collaborating with marketing, and communication and interaction design teams to conceptualize, design, and execute marketing tools and collateral
- Partnered with cross-functional stakeholders to redesign and launch the company website
- Designed and produced digital brochures, project case studies, client/project presentations, and an internal digital asset library
- Served on the design team to improve and revamp the exterior graphics of NYC Taxis

JADE Learning, Raleigh, NC • Designer/Animator   **Dec 2003 - Dec 2005**
- Created animations, illustrations, and activities to visually depict and support educational concepts for both print and online courses
- UX/UI design for product websites, course material content management systems, content simulation tools, and course templates

Propellor ID, Durham, NC • Multimedia Developer   **May 2001 - Jan 2004**
- Concepted, designed and developed 2D animations, presentations, CD-ROMs, screensavers, and promotional banners
- UX/UI design and development of client websites ranging from small advertising firms to large telecommunication companies

TECHNICAL TOOLS

Figma | Adobe After Effects | Adobe Animate | Adobe Illustrator | Adobe InDesign | Adobe Photoshop | Adobe XD | Lottie | Sketch | Usertesting | Miro | Jira/Confluence | Google Workspace | Google Analytics | HTML/CSS | Wordpress/Elementor

EDUCATION

Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Design Management (with Distinction)

Pratt Institute, New York, NY

Bachelor of Art and Design (BAD); Minor in Business Management (cum laude)

North Carolina State University, College Of Design, Raleigh, Nc
Study Abroad: Concentration In Ceramics -- University Of Science & Technology, Kumasi, Ghana

AWARDS & HONORS

Kidscreen Awards, 2024 - Best Learning App - Branded Noggin App
The Webby Awards, 2020 - Nominee - Games, Kids & Family, Collisions: Play Chemistry
The Webby Awards, 2018 - Honoree - Games, Social Impact, Collisions: Play Chemistry