Richard Acosta

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Profile

DevOps engineer with 12+ years building infrastructure automation and CI/CD platforms. Physics graduate with extensive experience in infrastructure-as-code, cloud architecture, and software development. Proven track record designing automation systems from scratch for mission-critical environments including NASA missions.

Experience

- **NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory** — Pasadena, CA
  Technical Group Lead — *Aug. 2024 –*
  Lead DevOps Engineer — *Apr. 2021 – Aug. 2024*
  Senior DevOps Engineer (Contractor) — *Jan. 2019 – Apr. 2021*
  - Providing technical guidance and mentorship to 25 person DevOps group as Lead
  - Designed and implemented infrastructure as code frameworks (Puppet, Terraform) used in 10+ NASA missions
  - Experience deploying on mission-critical hardware on premesis, in the cloud, and in space
  - Site reliability and monitoring (Splunk, Zabbix, vCenter, Cloudwatch)
  - Penetration testing, cybersecurity auditing, and system hardening
  - Docker application development, testing, and deployment (AWS ECS, Fargate)
  - Linux server administration and debugging (CentOS/RedHat)

- **PierPlay** — Culver City, CA
  Senior Software Engineer/DevOps — *Oct. 2016 – Jan. 2019*
  - Responsible for all client and server build and deployment pipelines (CI/CD, Jenkins, Ansible, Spinnaker, AWS)
  - Framework-level software development and design (C#)
  - Backend monitoring, alarms, and profiling (PagerDuty, Datadog, NewRelic, AppDynamics)
  - Mobile application profiling and optimizing (Unity, Xcode, Android Studio)
  - General automation and scripting (Python, Ruby, Bash, Groovy)
  - Developed testing frameworks from the ground up for client (Calabash) and server load testing (Locust)

- **Playtika (Buffalo Studios)** — Santa Monica, CA
  DevOps Manager — *March 2016 – Oct. 2016*
  DevOps Engineer — *Jan. 2014 – Sept. 2016*
  - Configuration management for several different platforms, environments, and projects (Chef, Vagrant, Docker)
  - Infrastructure design and troubleshooting (cloud and on premises)
  - Software development and production support
  - Continuous Integration and Deployment strategies (Jenkins, Capistrano)
  - Process Automation and Refactoring

- **Buffalo Studios** — Santa Monica, CA
  Build Engineer — *Feb. 2013 – Jan. 2014*
  - Developing and maintaining build and release scripts (Ant, Jenkins, Python, Adobe AIR, Bash)
  - VCS management: branching and merging strategies (SVN, git)
  - Database administration (MySQL)

- **Buffalo Studios** — Santa Monica, CA
  Senior QA Engineer — *Oct. 2011 – Feb. 2013*
  - Software testing, code auditing (Java, PHP, and ActionScript 3)
  - Developing automated test scripts (PHP, Python) and test plans
  - Training new and current employees on test methodology and technology

Education

- **University of California, Santa Barbara**
  Bachelor of Science in Physics
  - Undergraduate research programming microcontrollers for the Martinis Quantum Computing Group, lead by Nobel Prize winner John Martinis.

Skills and Activities

Security Clearance: Active Secret clearance with the U.S. Government

Computer Technologies: AWS (Lambda, RDS, EC2, CloudFormation, Opensearch, ElastiCache, DynamoDB, ECS, S3, IAM), Jenkins, Redis, MySQL, Linux (CentOS/Red Hat, FreeBSD, Debian), Git, SVN, Docker, Podman, Vagrant, Puppet, Terraform, Ansible, Chef, Unity, Xcode

Volunteer Work: One year at East Valley Animal Shelter as a certified dog walker and trainer. Two years at Santa Barbara County Animal Shelter specializing in dog behavior and socialization. Two years with the UCSB Physics Circus- an outreach group that visits local schools (K-12) to give demonstrations and lectures.

Awards and Recognition

- **NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory**
  - 2 Individual Voyager Awards for exceptional contributions and performance above and beyond expectations
  - 6 Team Achievement Awards for successful mission milestone completions
  - Capture the Flag Pen Testing Competition - 2023: 2nd Place Overall (out of 150+ participants)
  - Capture the Flag Pen Testing Competition - 2022: One of 8 participants to fully complete the challenge (out of 150+ participants)