

Malachi Randall

VP of Engineering - PHP

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SUMMARY

Hands-on PHP engineering leader with eight years across **scalable application architecture**, delivery execution, security, **code quality**, and people development. Progressed from Senior PHP Engineer into management, including more than three years leading teams of six to eight engineers through roadmap delivery, technical hiring, architecture decisions, and quality improvement. Brings practical judgment when translating portfolio goals into actionable technical plans, balancing capacity, delivery commitments, and long-term code health. Regular **1-on-1s**, **Skills Matrices**, mentoring, and career discussions help engineers grow with clarity. AI-assisted coding and review workflows support faster delivery with human approval, PHPUnit checks, and secure development practices. Ready to bring thoughtful technical leadership, empathy, and dependable execution to Meridian Learning Systems.

EXPERIENCE

Technical Manager, PHP Engineering

Northstar Learning Platforms 📅 January 2025 - Present 📍 Durham, North Carolina

Lead a seven-engineer PHP product team supporting enrollment and learning-management capabilities. Own team-level architecture, **delivery oversight**, technical quality, capacity planning, and direct people leadership. Partner with Product Managers and engineering peers on roadmap sequencing, AI-assisted development, hiring, and sustainable service ownership.

- Lead a seven-engineer PHP team delivering enrollment and learning-management capabilities while balancing architecture decisions, **coaching**, and quarterly commitments.
- Reworked service boundaries and API ownership for a multi-tenant platform, giving **Product Managers** clearer sequencing choices and reducing cross-team design ambiguity.
- Established AI-assisted coding review patterns with secure prompt practices, human approval gates, and PHPUnit coverage checks that protected code quality during faster delivery cycles.
- Track cycle time, escaped defects, review aging, and incident trends, then convert findings into focused process changes and technical improvement work.
- Conduct recurring **1-on-1s**, maintain Skills Matrices, and create development plans that helped two engineers assume broader technical ownership.
- Lead **PHP technical interviews** and calibrate evaluation rubrics with engineering peers, bringing greater consistency to backend and full-stack hiring decisions.

Engineering Manager

Blue Ridge Academic Software 📅 January 2023 - December 2024 📍 Charlotte, North Carolina

Managed a distributed six-engineer team responsible for student information integrations and educator-facing workflow services across a PHP application portfolio. Connected portfolio roadmaps with actionable technical plans, quality data, capacity decisions, architecture reviews, and career development while supporting three concurrent product initiatives.

- Managed a distributed team of six engineers delivering student information integrations and educator-facing workflow services across a **PHP** application portfolio.
- Converted **portfolio** roadmap themes into sequenced technical plans with Product Managers, surfacing dependencies, capacity constraints, **security** concerns, and release risks before commitments.
- Introduced lightweight architecture reviews and decision records for major integrations, improving maintainability and giving reviewers a consistent basis for approving service changes.
- Built a monthly quality dashboard from deployment, defect, support, and incident **data**, directing remediation toward recurring failure points instead of isolated symptoms.
- Coached senior and mid-level engineers through design reviews, production retrospectives, and career milestones while maintaining a high-trust, accountable team environment.
- Partnered with recruiting and engineering leadership on **technical interviews**, onboarding plans, and **capacity** reviews that supported delivery across three concurrent initiatives.

Lead PHP Engineer

CivicPath Technologies 📅 July 2020 - December 2022 📍 Richmond, Virginia

Served as technical lead for a five-engineer team modernizing a PHP monolith into maintainable domain modules for education-sector customers. Guided architecture, **API design**, migration planning, testing, roadmap decomposition, mentoring, and safe AI-assisted documentation while preserving customer access during incremental releases.

- Led a five-engineer modernization effort that separated a **PHP** monolith into **maintainable** domain modules while preserving uninterrupted access for education-sector customers.

- Designed API contracts, data migration sequencing, and rollback plans for enrollment workflows, enabling incremental releases instead of a high-risk platform cutover.
- Added automated **PHPUnit** coverage around payment, permissions, and roster scenarios, giving release reviewers stronger evidence for changes affecting sensitive customer records.
- Facilitated technical planning with **Product Managers** and translated broad roadmap objectives into estimates, dependencies, implementation slices, and acceptance risks.
- Mentored three engineers through pairing, design critiques, and production troubleshooting, expanding independent ownership of integrations and backend services.
- Piloted AI-assisted documentation and code-review workflows with explicit human validation, capturing practical guidance for safe PHP development.

Senior PHP Engineer

HarborPoint Software 📅 August 2018 - June 2020 📍 Norfolk, Virginia

Delivered backend capabilities for a PHP learning-services platform, owning requirements clarification, implementation, testing, release preparation, and production support. Strengthened application security, simplified high-traffic workflows, partnered with QA and Product stakeholders, and created practical onboarding material for newer engineers.

- Delivered backend features for a **PHP** learning-services platform, owning requirements clarification, implementation, testing, release preparation, and post-deployment support.
- Refactored high-traffic enrollment and account workflows into clearer service components, improving maintainability and reducing repeated logic across customer-facing modules.
- Partnered with QA and Product stakeholders to reproduce production defects, isolate data and authorization issues, and release fixes through documented change procedures.
- Strengthened application **security** with role-based access checks, input validation, and peer-reviewed handling of personally identifiable student information.
- Created technical notes and onboarding examples for recurring PHP patterns, helping newer engineers adopt repository conventions and local development practices.
- Contributed estimates and technical tradeoffs during sprint planning, building a foundation for later ownership of architecture discussions and roadmap execution.

PROJECTS

AI-Assisted PHP Quality Program 📅 2025

Created a practical workflow for AI-assisted code generation, secure prompts, human review gates, PHPUnit validation, and documentation checks. Program supported faster engineering cycles without weakening architectural integrity, security review, or maintainable PHP standards.

Enrollment Domain Modernization 📅 2022

Directed incremental decomposition of enrollment workflows from a PHP monolith into domain modules. Combined API contracts, migration sequencing, rollback planning, permissions testing, and stakeholder reviews to protect customer access throughout delivery.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- Engineering Quality Champion, Northstar Learning Platforms, 2025
- Managerial Excellence Recognition, Blue Ridge Academic Software, 2024
- Technical Interview Calibration Panel contributor, Northstar Learning Platforms, 2025 - Present

EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science

Old Dominion University 🎓 GPA: 3.7 📅 2018 📍 Norfolk, Virginia

Coursework: *Software Engineering, Database Systems, Computer Architecture, Algorithms*

CERTIFICATIONS

- IBM Generative AI Fundamentals 📅 2025
- PHP 8 Application Development Certificate 📅 2021

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **PHP Development:** PHP 8, Composer, Symfony
- **Testing Tools:** PHPUnit, Mockery, Behat
- **API Engineering:** REST, JSON, OpenAPI

- **Database Systems:** SQL, MySQL, PostgreSQL
- **Version Control:** Git, GitHub, GitLab
- **Architecture Methods:** Domain modules, ADRs, service boundaries
- **Security Engineering:** RBAC, input validation, PII handling
- **Delivery Analytics:** Cycle time, defect trends, incident metrics
- **AI Engineering Tools:** Code generation, AI review, secure prompts
- **Product Planning:** Portfolio roadmaps, technical plans, capacity models
- **Agile Delivery:** Sprint planning, retrospectives, incremental releases
- **Hiring Systems:** Technical interviews, rubrics, onboarding

SKILLS

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|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| • PHP | • Architecture | • Technical hiring | • Delivery analytics |
| • AI literacy | • Roadmap execution | • Mentoring | • Code review |
| • Team leadership | • Quality improvement | • Skills Matrices | • Security |
| • Line management | • Capacity planning | • Product partnership | |

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Technical Interview Calibration Panel, Northstar Learning Platforms, 2025 - Present
- PHP Developer Mentorship Circle, CivicPath Technologies, 2021 - 2022

LANGUAGES

- English (Native)
- Spanish (Intermediate)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST