

# Donavon West

Senior Staff Front End Engineer / Engineering Leadership  
New York City or remote

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## // About Me



Senior staff-level front end engineer and hands-on technical leader specializing in React and TypeScript, with a track record of shipping high-impact products at scale. Conference speaker and author, including talks at Meta's React Conf and React New York.

## // Skills

Deep expertise in React, Remix, and full-stack TypeScript, with a focus on front-end architecture, performance, accessibility, and design systems. Proven ability to lead through code, mentorship, and standards, partner effectively with product and marketing teams, and leverage AI-assisted tooling to improve development velocity and code quality.

## // Professional Experience

### **Daffy Charitable Fund**

Sr. Staff Engineer

Mar 2023 – Jan 2026

- Led front-end development for a large-scale Remix application spanning core product and high-conversion marketing landing pages at [daffy.org](https://daffy.org)
- Partnered with Marketing, Design, and Product to deliver performant, accessible, and SEO-focused user experiences
- Provided senior technical leadership through architecture decisions, code reviews, and front-end standards

### **Sessions FM**

Founding CTO

March 2020 – Mar 2023

- Architected and built a B2C platform enabling professional musicians to connect with audiences and generate new revenue
- Implemented peer-to-peer video calling and real-time features
- Led the core engineering team using React, TypeScript, and AWS services

### **Donavon LLC**

President and CTO

Jan 2020 – Mar 2023

- Provided hands-on architecture leadership and execution for startups, growth-stage teams, and industry-leading organizations
- Delivered full-stack TypeScript solutions across React, Node.js, and AWS

### **American Express**

Developer Relations

April 2018 – Nov 2019

- Built and led the American Express Developer Relations program, serving as the public technical voice to attract top engineering talent
- Authored high-impact technical content, including the #1 Google-ranked article "React Best Practices", driving significant inbound hiring traffic
- Delivered talks and workshops on advanced React and JavaScript, elevating Amex to a Top 10 NYC Tech Brand on Hired

## // Professional Experience (cont)

**American Express**  
Engineering Director  
Nov 2016 - April 2018

- Led two full-stack teams supporting the logged-in experience for one of the highest-traffic properties at American Express
- Championed React best practices through hands-on development, code reviews, and leadership of internal React Communities of Practice
- Partnered with Product to define and deliver roadmap features using React, JavaScript, and GraphQL

**Barnes & Noble College**  
Engineering Director/CTO  
Oct 2011 - Nov 2016

- Led the entire 120-person engineering organization as acting CTO
- Oversaw 25 people covering all aspects of front-end client development for iOS, Android, Mac, Windows, and SPA web as Director of Engineering
- Part of the leadership team defining enterprise processes and guidelines
- Worked with Project, Product, and Design to define and execute vision

### **Etcetera**

Earlier roles include Director, Engineering Manager, and individual contributor positions at Barnes & Noble, WordPerfect, and USRobotics.

## // Community and Personal Involvement

**useReactNYC**  
Organizer  
April 2019 - Oct 2023

- Organizer for a New York City React meetup at [useReact.NYC](#)
- Used contacts in the React community to solicit top industry speakers
- Worked with local companies to host events
- Fostered diversity and inclusion in the React community

### **Open Source**

Wrote and maintained several OSS packages.

- [usePersistedState](#) - A custom React Hook that provides a multi-instance, multi-tab/browser shared, and persistent state
- [useDarkMode](#) - A custom React Hook to help you implement a "dark mode" component for your application
- [useEventListener](#) - A custom React Hook that provides a declarative `addEventListener`

See more on [github.com/donavon](https://github.com/donavon)

### **Publications**

Published widely read technical articles across [donavon.com](#), American Express Technology Blog, Hacker Noon, Medium, MSDN Magazine, and freeCodeCamp.