Amy X. Lu

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Summary

I am a graduate student at the Vector Institute for Artificial Intelligence. I am interested in **developing biologically-principled machine learning methods**, with an emphasis on **self-supervised representation learning, generalizability, and biological interpretability**. I also serve on SVAI, which organizes research collaborations of genomics/AI researchers and industry partners for patients of understudied diseases.

Education

- **University of Waterloo** — Waterloo, Canada
  Bachelors of Science, Honours Science, Bioinformatics Option — *2014 – 2019*
- **University of Toronto, Vector Institute** — Toronto, Canada
  Master's in Computer Science — *Jan 2019 – Present*
- **Stanford University** — Palo Alto, USA
  Visiting Student, Departments of Computer Science and Genetics — *Sept 2019 – Present*

Experience

- **Stanford University** — Palo Alto, USA
  Visiting Student Researcher — Domain Adaptation in Regulatory Genomics, Dr. Anshul Kundaje — *2019 – Present*
  - **Domain adaptation, ChIP-seq analyses:** Using domain adaptation to improve classifier performance and learned genomic sequence features for transcription factor binding when evaluating in a different cellular context.
- **University of Toronto/Vector Institute** — Toronto, Canada
  Masters Student — Representation learning in genomics, Dr. Alan Moses & Dr. Marzyeh Ghassemi — *2019 – Present*
  - **Self-supervised learning, natural language processing:** Applying contextual word embedding models to learn generalizable and interpretable representations for genomic and proteomic sequences.
  - **Generalizability, computer vision:** Benchmarked a new "paired cell in-painting" method for out-of-sample generalization in microscopy against various common computer vision algorithms. (*NeurIPS 2019 – 21% acceptance rate; ICML 2019 Self-Supervised Learning Workshop*)
  - **Algorithmic fairness, clinical decision support:** Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of bias in "black box" contextual clinical word embeddings, and exploring debiasing methods using adversarial gradient-reversal. (*NeurIPS 2019 ML for Healthcare workshop – 34% acceptance rate; submitted to FAT* 2020*)
- **Harvard Medical School/Boston Children's Hospital** — Boston, USA
  Research Intern — Machine Learning in Clinical Genomics, Dr. Piotr Sliz — *2018 – 2019*
  - **Variant analysis, denoising, genotype-phenotype studies:** Applied false-positive variant filtering pipelines and batch effect denoising algorithms to a whole exome (WES) dataset of epilepsy patients.
  - **Machine learning, dimensionality reduction:** Built machine learning models to classify disease phenotype from high-dimensional exome variant data, with emphasis on capturing non-linearities arising from epistasis.
- **University of Waterloo** — Waterloo, Canada
  Undergraduate Thesis Student — Deep Learning in Regulatory Genomics, Dr. Andrew Doxey — *2017 – 2018*
  - **Convolutional neural networks in genomics:** Implemented a convolutional neural network which recognizes ATAC-seq region sequences with 91% accuracy.
  - **Interpretability:** Distilled biological knowledge from the "black box" network by reconstructing first-layer features as position-weighted matrices (PWMs) of "motifs" (i.e. genomic patterns). All motifs found statistical matches in JASPAR (database of known motifs).
  - **Phylogenetics, metagenomic data mining:** Used various bioinformatics pipeline tools (HMMER, BLAST, etc.) to understand and discover potential novel toxin homologs in metagenomic databases.
  - **Self-directed learning:** Self-learned deep learning concepts and Python as a biology student.
- **École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne** — Lausanne, Switzerland
  Research Intern — Molecular Dynamics Simulations, Dr. Matteo Dal Parero — *2017*

- **Molecular dynamics:** Contributed three potential findings on enzyme-membrane mechanisms of bacterial "superbugs" using computational molecular dynamics (MD) simulations.
- **Automating workflows:** Automated workflows and analyzed simulations using R, tcl/tk, and Csh scripts.

- **University of Toronto** Toronto, Canada
  Research Intern — Data Visualization in Pharmacoepidemiology, Dr. Suzanne Cadarette *2015 – 2017*
  - **Pharmacoepidemiology:** Took initiative to redesign manual workflows. Contributed two co-authored publications, one poster, and figures for an international epidemiology conference within two months.
  - **Data visualization:** Wrangled data using R and SQL to create animated and interactive co-authorship networks.

Awards

- **NSERC Michael Smith Foreign Supplement**: Supports high-calibre Canadian graduate students in pursuing research abroad. Valued at $6,000.
- **Canada Graduate Scholarships-Master's (CGS-M) Award**: NSERC federal research grant. Valued at $17,500.
- **Scholarship of Excellence in Research**: One of 13 students sponsored for research at EPFL. Valued at CHF 4,500.
- **University of Waterloo**: Various entrance awards totaling $6,000.
- **Associate of The Royal Conservatory (ARCT)**: Performer's Diploma in Piano.

Publications and Conference Proceedings

- **Accepted:** Lu AX, **Lu AXP**, Moses A. The Cells Out of Sample (COOS) dataset and benchmarks for measuring out-of-sample generalization of image classifiers. ***Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) 2019.***
- **Submitted:** Zhang H*, **Lu AX***, Abdalla M, McDermott M, Ghassemi M. Hurtful Words: Quantifying Biases in Clinical Contextual Word Embeddings. ***Submitted to ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (ACM FAT*).*** **Co-first authors.*
- **Published:** Ban J, Tadrous M, **Lu AX**, Cicinelli EA, Cadarette SM. Diffusion of indirect comparison meta-analytic methods to study drugs: a systematic review and co-authorship network analysis. ***BMJ Open.***
- **Under revision:** Consiglio GP, Maclure M, **Lu AX**, Cicinelli EA, Ban JK, McCarthy L, Cadarette SM. Guidance documents for the application of Self-controlled Crossover Observational PharmacoEpidemiology (SCOPE) designs are needed: systematic review and animated co-authorship networks. ***Submitted to Pharmcoepi Drug Saf.***

Workshop Papers and Poster Presentations

- **Accepted: Lu AX***, Zhang H*, Abdalla M, McDermott M, Ghassemi M. Hurtful Words: Quantifying Biases in Clinical Contextual Word Embeddings. Hurtful Words: Quantifying Biases in Clinical Contextual Word Embeddings. *Poster presentation,* ***NeurIPS 2019 Workshop on Fair ML for Health.*** **Co-first authors.*
- **Accepted:** Zhang H*, **Lu AX***, Abdalla M, McDermott M, Ghassemi M. Hurtful Words: Quantifying Biases in Clinical Contextual Word Embeddings. Hurtful Words: Quantifying Biases in Clinical Contextual Word Embeddings. *Extended Abstract,* ***NeurIPS 2019 Workshop on Machine Learning for Healthcare.*** **Co-first authors.*
- **Accepted:** Abdalla M, **Lu AX**, Zhang H, Chen I, Ghassemi M. Quantifying Fairness in a Multi-Group Setting and its Impact in the Clinical Setting. *Poster presentation,* ***NeurIPS 2019 Workshop on Fair ML for Health.***
- **Submitted:** Moses A, Lu AX, **Lu AXP**, Ghassemi M. Transfer Learning vs. Batch Effects: what can we expect from neural networks in computational biology?. ***Machine Learning in Computational Biology (MLCB) 2019.***
- **Presented:** Lu AX, **Lu AXP**, Moses A. Paired Cell Inpainting: A Multiple-Instance Extension of Self-Supervised Learning for Bioimage Analysis. *Poster presentation,* ***ICML 2019 Workshop on Self-Supervised Learning.***
- **Presented: Lu AX**, Rockowitz S, Poduri A, Sliz P. From data to precision medicine: predictive machine learning models to uncover disease-associated variants. *Poster.* ***Harvard Medical School BCMP Retreat 2019.***
- **Submitted: Lu AX**, Tam ES. Effect of prophylactic brimonidine on subconjunctival hemorrhage in laser-assisted cataract surgery. *Poster abstract.* ***Submitted to American Academy of Ophthalmology 2017.***
- **Presented: Lu AX**, Consiglio GP, Cadarette SM. Dynamic Visualization in Co-Authorship Network Analysis. *Poster presentation.* ***Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy Undergraduate Research Symposium.***
- **Presented:** McIlroy-Young R, **Lu AX**, Guenther N, Olarnyk A. A Network Analysis: Did the Arab Spring Impact the Academic Network of Tunisia Between 2010 and 2015? *Poster presentation.* ***Knowledge Integration Symposium***.

Service and Activities

- **SVAI:** Core Team of SVAI, a non-profit connecting patients of rare genomic diseases to the medical/AI research community and industry partners through collaborative research initiatives.
- **Residence Don, Velocity Incubator:** Leader for the residence program of Canada's most productive start-up incubator; fostered close relations with diverse students to support conduct and mental health crises.
- **Tosamaganga Hospital, Tanzania:** Supported operations at a rural Tanzanian hospital and shadowed surgical procedures. Expenses were covered by scholarships, fundraising, and part-time tutoring.

Teaching

- **Teaching Assistant, Genetics:** Taught weekly tutorials for BIOL 239 at the University of Waterloo.
- **Piano & theory:** Taught piano performance (up to RCM 7), RCM music history, and RCM Intermediate Rudiments.
- **Tutoring:** Tutor for IB Calculus, IB Chemistry, and English.

Talks

- **Vector NLP Talks:** Quantifying and Removing Biases in Clinical Contextual Word Embeddings. *Co-presenter.*
- **Harvard Medical School BCMP Retreat 2019:** From data to precision medicine: predictive machine learning models to uncover disease-associated variants. *Lightning talk.*

Hackathons and Projects

- **Chatsense:** Mobile chat app using a sentiment analysis machine learning API on voice messages and mapping dominant emotions to emojis, designed for the autistic community. ***Team project. "Can a Computer Hear How You Feel?" prize: YHacks at Yale.***
- **Alice:** Web login page using a trained facial recognition model to login to online banking without passwords, designed for dementia patients. ***Team project. Desjardin prize: ConUHacks III.***