Braden Hancock

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AI RESEARCH LEADER

15 years of AI research experience | 5 years of executive experience
Founder of $1B AI startup | Stanford Ph.D. with 1k+ citations in AI | Manager of 100+ person teams

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Founder and executive of an AI platform company with 8-figure ARR, $135M raised, $1B valuation, 125+ employees
- Researcher at Stanford, Google, Facebook, MIT, Johns Hopkins; published at NeurIPS, AAAI, ACL, Nature Comms, etc.
- Invited speaker at NVIDIA GTC, O'Reilly AI Superstream, Open Core Summit, Investing in Ethical AI, etc.
- Co-delivered enterprise AI solutions at Fortune 500 companies based on my research, resulting in $1B+ projected value
- Proven track record of taking innovative research all the way to production where it affects the bottom line

CURRENT POSITION

Snorkel AI | Bay Area, CA   May 2019 – Present
Co-founder & Head of Technology

I lead the company and applied research teams developing the technologies for customizing CV and NLP foundation models or LLMs by focusing on the critical ingredient: the data. Snorkel AI has Fortune 500 customers in most verticals (including 7 of the top 10 U.S. banks) and was recognized in 2023 in lists such as the Fortune AI 50, Forbes AI 50, and LinkedIn 50 Top Startups.

Leadership & Strategy
- Guided the company from 5 to 125+ employees, through stages of high growth, economic recession, and an AI boom
- Defined company-wide AI strategy, identifying opportunities and emerging industry trends, setting priorities, etc.
- Raised $135M from top-tier investors: Blackrock, Addition, Lightspeed, Greylock, Google Ventures, SV Angel, etc.
- Secured strategic partnerships with Microsoft Azure, GCP, and AWS for compute, pipeline, and thought leadership
- Managed hybrid teams across four time zones consisting of full-time employees, contractors, and affiliated researchers

Research & Technology
- Defined the core concepts, terminology, and workflows for weak supervision used industry-wide and taught in ML courses
- Developed and launched Snorkel's first generative AI offering, driving 30% of company ARR within 6 months of kickoff
- Led research initiatives in programmatic data development, LLM evaluation, synthetic data, etc. for both NLP and CV
- Oversaw the large-scale distributed training of multi-billion parameter models on up to 10TB+ of data with 40+ GPUs
- Transitioned multi-quarter research projects to production with functional prototypes and extensive enablement materials

Talent & Culture
- Designed interview loops, closed candidates, and ran 100s of interviews for tech, non-tech, and executive roles
- Fostered a diverse and inclusive environment with twice the national average percentage of women on AI research teams
- Organized and ran weekly team meetings, bi-weekly company all-hands, and quarterly workshops developing research skills
- Received consistent 90+% favorable manager rating from direct reports based on feeling supported, motivated, etc.
- Recognized on Forbes 2023 Best Startup Employers list based on employer reputation, employee satisfaction and growth

PAST RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Full publication history available on Google Scholar [profile](#)

Facebook AI Research (FAIR) | Paris, France   Sep 2018 – Apr 2018
- Improving chatbot quality with continual learning from user interactions post-deployment with FAIR Paris and NYC

Google Research | Mountain View, CA   Apr 2017 – Jun 2017
- Reducing hallucinations in generative AI search results for semi-structured web content with Search and Google Brain

Stanford University | Stanford, CA   Sep 2015 – Apr 2019
- Machine learning systems, large language models (LLMs), and weak supervision in the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Lab

MIT Lincoln Laboratory | Lexington, MA   May 2014 – Aug 2015
- Recommender systems, topic modeling, and computation on encrypted data in the Computing and Analytics Group

Johns Hopkins University | Baltimore, MD   May 2013 – Aug 2013
- Natural language processing (NLP), social media mining in the Human Language Technology Center of Excellence

Brigham Young University (BYU) | Provo, UT   Sep 2011 – Apr 2015
- Multi-objective optimization algorithms (evolutionary and gradient-based methods) in the Design Research Group

Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) | WPAFB, OH   May 2007 – Aug 2011
- Evolutionary optimization methods, computational fluid dynamics, and airfoil design in the Turbine Engine Division

EDUCATION

Stanford University | Stanford, CA   Sep 2015 – Apr 2019
- Ph.D. and M.S. in Computer Science; 4.00 GPA
- *Advisor*: Christopher Ré
- *Thesis:* Weak Supervision from High-level Abstractions

Brigham Young University (BYU) | Provo, UT   Sep 2010 – Apr 2015
- B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, Minor in Mathematics; 4.00 GPA, summa cum laude, graduation speaker
- *Advisor*: Christopher Mattson
- *Thesis:* Direct Generation of a Smart Pareto Frontier

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS

- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSF GRF)
- National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (NDSEG)
- Phi Kappa Phi Marcus L. Urann Fellowship (6 awarded per year nationally)
- AIAA Vicki and George Muellner Scholarship (1 awarded per year nationally)
- ASME Kenneth Andrew Roe Scholarship (1 awarded per year nationally)
- Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Proud Midwesterner, winner of the annual Snorkel cornhole competition
- Superfan of amateur violin and cello concerts and whatever little league sport is in season for my three children
- Voracious reader, traveler, and tinkerer