

## CONTACT INFORMATION

y.ch@vt.edu  
<https://chensivan.github.io/>

## BIO & RESEARCH INTERESTS

Yan Chen is an Assistant Professor of Computer Science at Virginia Tech (USA). Yan is active in the Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) research community. His research spans programming support tools, and CS education. His research focuses on bringing the benefits of small-scale tutoring to large-scale programming classrooms. His work has been published at top HCI conferences, including ACM CHI, UIST, and CSCW. He received the Best Short Paper award at VL/HCC 2020, the Best Paper at L@S 2024, and Best Paper Honorable Mention Awards at UIST 2022 and CHI 2023. Yan was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto (Canada), working with Tovi Grossman. He received his Ph.D. degree, advised by Steve Oney, from the University of Michigan (USA), and BS and MS degrees in Applied Math and Electrical & Computer Engineering from the University of Colorado, Boulder (USA).

**Keywords:** Computer Science Education, Human-Computer Collaboration.

## EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, US

Ph.D. in Information Science (2014 - 2020)

- Dissertation: On-demand Collaboration in Programming
- Advisor: Steve Oney
- Committee: Mark Ackerman, Mark Guzdial, Philip Guo

University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, US

M.S in Applied Mathematics (2014)

- Master Thesis: Asymptotic Series Solutions To One-Dimensional Helmholtz Equation
- Thesis Advisor: Harvey Segur

B.S. in Applied Mathematics and B.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering (2014)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, USA

- Assistant Professor, Computer Science Department (March 2023 - present)

University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

- Postdoctoral Fellow, (Jan. 2021 - Dec. 2022)
- Host: Tovi Grossman

Google, Mountain View, CA, US

- UX Research Intern, (May. 2019 - Aug. 2019)
  - Host: Dr. Tao Dong
- Supporting programming learning via live streaming [8]

Snap Inc., Seattle, WA, US

- Research Intern, (Jan. 2018 - Apr. 2018)
  - Hosts: Dr. Andrés Monroy-Hernández and Dr. Rajan Vaish
- Interviewed with staffed Snap Story curators on their curation tools experience. Drew design implications. Developed a hybrid-machine workflow and system for rapid video curation. Conducted a large-scale (30k+ video) study to explore the effectiveness of the approach [4].

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US

- Undergraduate Research Intern, (Jun. 2013 - Aug. 2013)
- Advisors: Professor Katharina Reinecke, Professor Krzysztof Gajos  
Developed a web application that quantifies websites' aesthetics and predicts visual preference of people with different cultural background.

University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, US

- Research Assistant, (Sep. 2012 - May 2014)
- Advisor: Professor Tom Yeh  
Developed and conducted in-lab experiments for the active authentication project on personal computer and smart phone. Applied image and video processing techniques for pattern recognition [1].

University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, US

- Research Assistant, (Sep. 2012 - May 2014)
- Advisor: Professor Harvey Segur  
Generalized hyperasymptotic series mechanism to approximate other functions. Discovered unavoidable oscillation in hyperasymptotic series mechanism.

CONFERENCE  
PAPERS AND  
JOURNALS

23. Tong Wu, Xiaohang Tang, Sam Wong, Xi Chen, Cliff Shaffer, **Yan Chen**. The Impact of Group Discussion and Formation on Student Performance: An Experience Report in a Large CS1 Course. *SIG Computer Science Education* 2025
22. Tianjia Wang, Tong Wu, Huayi Liu, Chris Brown, **Yan Chen**. Generative Co-Learners: Enhancing Cognitive and Social Presence of Students in Asynchronous Learning with Generative AI *ACM GROUP* 2025
21. Xiaohang Tang, Sam Wong, Kevin Pu, Xi Chen, Yalong Yang, **Yan Chen**. VizGroup: An AI-Assisted Event-Driven System for Real-Time Collaborative Programming Learning Analytics. *ACM UIST* 2024.
20. Ashley Zhang, Xiaohang Tang, Steve Oney, **Yan Chen**. CFlow: Supporting Semantic Flow Analysis of Students' Code in Programming Problems at Scale. *ACM Learning @ Scale 2024 L@S '24*. (**Best Paper**)
19. Tianjia Wang, Daniel Vargas Diaz, Chris Brown, **Yan Chen**. Exploring the Role of AI Assistants in Computer Science Education: Methods, Implications, and Instructor Perspectives. *IEEE Symposium on Visual Languages and Human-Centric Computing VL/HCC '23*.
18. Ashley Ge Zhang, **Yan Chen**, Steve Oney. RunEx: Augmenting Regular-Expression Code Search with Runtime Values. *IEEE Symposium on Visual Languages and Human-Centric Computing VL/HCC '23*.
17. Kevin Pu, Jim Yang, Angel Yuan, Minyi Ma, Rui Dong, Xinyu Wang, **Yan Chen**, Tovi Grossman. DiLogics: Creating Web Automation Programs with Diverse Logics. *ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST 2023)*.
16. Ashley Zhang, **Yan Chen**, Steve Oney. VizProg: Identifying Misunderstandings by Visualizing Students' Coding Progress. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2023)*. (**Best Paper Honorable Mention**)
15. Kevin Pu, Rainey Fu, Rui Dong, Xinyu Wang, **Yan Chen**, Tovi Grossman. SemanticOn: Specifying Content-Based Semantic Conditions for Web Automation Programs. *ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST), 2022*. (**Best Paper Honorable Mention**)
14. Karthik Mahadevan, **Yan Chen**, Maya Cakmak, Anthony Tang, Tovi Grossman. Mimic: In-Situ

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- Recording and Re-Use of Demonstrations to Support Robot Teleoperation. *ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST)*, 2022.
13. Rui Dong, Zhicheng Huang, Ian Iong Lam, **Yan Chen**, Xinyu Wang. WebRobot: Web Robotic Process Automation using Interactive Programming-by-Demonstration. In *Proceedings of the ACM SIGPLAN Conference on Programming Language Design and Implementation (PLDI 2022)*.
  12. Jiannan Li, Mauricio Sousa, Chu Li, Jessie Liu, **Yan Chen**, Ravin Balakrishnan, Tovi Grossman. ASTEROIDS: Exploring Swarms of Mini-Telepresence Robots for Physical Skill Demonstration. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2022)*.
  11. **Yan Chen**, Tovi Grossman. Umitation: Retargeting UI Behavior Examples for Website Design. *ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST)*, 2021.
  10. April Yi Wang\*, **Yan Chen\***, John Joon Young Chung, Christopher Brooks, and Steve Oney. PuzzleMe: Leveraging Peer Assessment for In-Class Programming Exercises. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW 2021)*.
  9. **Yan Chen**, Sang Won Lee, and Steve Oney. CoCapture: Effectively Communicating UI Behaviors on Existing Websites by Demonstrating and Remixing. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2021)*, Virtual, USA.
  8. **Yan Chen**, Walter S. Lasecki, and Tao Dong. Towards Supporting Programming Education at Scale via Live Streaming. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW 2020)*.
  7. **Yan Chen**, Jaylin Herskovitz, Walter S. Lasecki, and Steve Oney. A Hybrid Crowd-Machine Workflow for Program Synthesis. *IEEE Symposium on Visual Languages and Human-Centric Computing VL/HCC '20*.
  6. **Yan Chen**, Jaylin Herskovitz, Gabriel Matute, April Wang, Sang Won Lee, Walter S. Lasecki, and Steve Oney. EdCode: Towards Personalized Support at Scale for Remote Assistance in CS Education. *IEEE Symposium on Visual Languages and Human-Centric Computing VL/HCC '20 (Best Short Paper)*.
  5. **Yan Chen**, Maulishree Pandey, Jean Y. Song, Walter S. Lasecki, and Steve Oney. Improving Crowd-Supported GUI Testing with Structural Guidance. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2020)*, Hawaii, USA.
  4. **Yan Chen**, Andres Monroy-Hernandez, Ian Wehrman, Steve Oney, Walter S. Lasecki, Rajan Vaish. Sifter: A Hybrid Workflow for Theme-based Video Curation at Scale. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Interactive Media Experiences (IMX 2020)*, Barcelona, Spain.
  3. **Yan Chen**, Sang Won Lee, Yin Xie, Yiwei Yang, Walter S. Lasecki, Steve Oney. Codeon: On-Demand Software Development Assistance. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2017)*, Denver, USA.
  2. **Yan Chen**, Steve Oney, Walter S. Lasecki. Towards Providing On-Demand Expert Support for Software Developers. In *Proceedings of the International ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI 2016)*, San Jose, USA.
  1. Vishal Patel, Tom Yeh, M Salem, Yangmuzi Zhang, **Yan Chen**, Rama Chellappa, Larry Davis. Screen Fingerprints: a Novel Modality for Active Authentication. *IT Professional* 15, no. 4 (2013):38-42.

TEACHING  
EXPERIENCE

Virginia Tech (as the primary instructor)

- Social Computing and Computer-Supported Cooperative Work (Graduate level, Fall 2024)
- Creative Computing Studio (Senior level, Spring 2024)
- Advanced Topics in HCI (Graduate level, Fall 2023)

University of Michigan (as a teaching assistant)

- Introduction to Programming (with Anthony Whyte), (Fall 2019)
- User Interface Development (with Walter Lasecki), (Winter 2019)
- User Interface Development (with Mark Guzdial), (Fall 2018)
- User Interface Development (with Mark Ackerman), (Fall 2017)
- Introduction to Programming (with Steve Oney and Paul Resnick), (Fall 2016)
- Data Visualization (with Eytan Adar), (Fall 2015)

STUDENTS  
(Co)ADVISED

Current

- **Panayu Keelawat** (2024 Fall -), PhD student at VT.
- **Adeline Li** (2024 Fall -), PhD student at VT.
- **Xiaohang Tang** (2023 Fall -), PhD student at VT.
- **Kevin Pu** (2021 Fall -), PhD student at U. of Toronto (w. Tovi Grossman at UofToronto).
- **David Barron** (2024 Fall -), MS at VT.
- **Griffin Ogura** (2024 Fall -), MS at VT.
- **Bogdan Perlroth** (2024 Summer -), Undergrad at VT.
- **Marcus Huynh** (2024 Summer -), Undergrad at VT.
- **Tejas Navadan** (2023 Fall -), Undergrad at VT.
- **Raman Khatri** (2023 Fall -), Undergrad at VT.
- **Jacob Martinage** (2023 Fall -), Undergrad at VT.
- **Xi Chen** (2023 Summer -), Undergrad at VT.
- **Zicheng He** (2024 Summer -), Undergrad at UVA.
- **Sam Wong** (2023 Summer -), MS at U. of Washington.

Alumni

- **Tong Wu** (2023 Fall - 2024 Fall), Grad student at VT.
- **Rexime Abulikemu** (2023 Fall - 2024 Fall), Grad student at VT.
- **Zhixuan Chen** (2024 Summer), Grad student at U. of Michigan.
- **Daniel Vargas Diaz** (2023 Spring - 2024 Spring), MS at VT.
- **Tianjia Wang** (2023 Spring - 2024 Spring), PhD student at VT (w. Chris Brown at VT)
- **Huayi Liu** (2023 Summer - 2024 Spring), Undergrad at VT. Now: MS at NUS

## THESIS COMMITTEE

Virginia Tech

- Chenyu Mao, Spring 2025
- Andy Luu, Fall 2024
- Ramaraja Ramanujan, Spring 2024
- Yi Lu, Spring 2024
- Lemara Faith Williams, Spring 2024
- Daniel Vargas Diaz, Spring 2024

## INVITED TALKS

T5. *Hybrid Intelligence for Programming Support*

- Microsoft PROSE Research Team (September 2021)

T4. *On-demand Collaboration in Programming*

- University of Toronto (June 2020)

T3. *Support Programming Learning via Livestream*

- Google Flutter Team (August 2019)

T2. *Improving Crowd-Supported GUI Testing with Structural Guidance*

- Snapchat Research Team (April 2018)

T1. *CodeOn: On-demand Expert Support for Software Development*

- Tsinghua University (June 2015)

GRANT

**G5** (awarded) VT TLOS Learning Innovation Grant 2024 (PI), Total: \$5k, personal share: \$5k.  
**G4** (awarded) VT 4VA 2025 (Co-PI), Total: \$10k. (w. PI, Jake Grohs at VT)  
**G3** (awarded) VT Instructional Grant 2024 (Co-PI), Total: \$10k. (w. PI, Sang Won Lee at VT)  
**G2** (awarded) VT TLOS Learning Innovation Grant 2023 (PI), Total: \$5k, personal share: \$5k.  
**G1** (awarded) 4VA 2023 (PI), Total: \$30k, personal share: \$30k. (w. Co-PI, Thomas Latoza at GMU)

REVIEW SERVICE

NSF Proposal Review Panelist (x1)  
 PC: CHI (23, 24), UIST (22, 25), CSCW (23, 24), VLHCC 21, L@S (24)  
 Reviewer: CHI, UIST, CSCW, L@S, VLHCC, TiiS, HCOMP

SERVICE

- S3. Faculty Meet ups: C-Tech<sup>2</sup>-BEE VT-TechGirls (2024)
- S2. Led “POSSE Workshop: Introduction to Web Programming” (Workshop) @ POSSE Foundation, 2018, Ann Arbor, MI, United States
- S1. Michigan Interactive and Social Computing Research Group (MISC) student coordinator (’19)

HONORS  
& AWARDS

- H8. Best paper, L@S’24.
- H7. Best paper honorable mention award, CHI’23.
- H6. Best paper honorable mention award, UIST’22.
- H5. University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School Research Grant (’19)
- H4. Best short paper award, VL/HCC’20.
- H3. Special Recognition Received for Excellent Review CHI’19.
- H2. University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School Student Travel Grant (’16, ’17, ’20)
- H1. University of Michigan School of Information Student Travel Grant (’16, ’17, ’20)

PRESS

- P4. Technology grant program fosters teaching innovation, VT News (2024)  
 (web article: <http://bit.ly/3NVeakk>)
- P3. Best practice guidance for live streaming programming, Google (2019)  
 (youtube: <https://bit.ly/36W0Pkg>)
- P2. Best practices for hosting a live streaming coding session, Google (2019)  
 (medium: <https://bit.ly/2SfEavb>)
- P1. Codeon is the intelligent assistant for software developers, UMich CSE News (2017)  
 (web article: <https://bit.ly/3bMGd2l>)