Dakota Hawkins

Contact

e-mail: dyh0110@bu.edu
GitHub: https://github.com/dakota-hawkins

Education

2016 – Present Doctor of Philosophy, **Boston University**, Boston, MA
Bioinformatics | Cynthia A. Bradham Laboratory

2010 – 2015 Bachelor of Science, **Westminster College**, Salt Lake City, UT
cum laude | Majors: Biology and Mathematics

Professional History

2015 – 2016 | Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, WA
Post Baccalaureate Research Assistant
Worked in the Applied Statistics and Computational Modeling group under the Computational and Statistical Analysis division. Research focused on bioinformatic-based projects such as analysis of -omics data and development of new quantitative tools to assist researchers.

2013 – 2015 | Westminster College, Salt Lake City, UT
QUARC Student Statistics Consultant
Helped develop quantitative reasoning on Westminster College Campus. Responsibilities focused on aiding in statistical analysis for local projects, teaching in-class lessons, and devoloping new quantitative literacy courses for Westminster College

Research

May 2017 – Present Cynthia A. Bradham Laboratory at Boston University, Boston, MA
Developing novel algorithms to identify shared cell-types across treatments in scRNAseq data, and to integrate spatial information from fluorescence imaging with high-throughput scRNAseq.

Jan. 2017 – May 2017 Paola Sebastiani Laboratory at Boston University, Boston, MA
Performed eQTL analysis to establish tissue-specific biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease.

Sept. 2016 – Dec. 2016 Stefano Monti Laboratory at Boston University, Boston, MA
Leveraged general linear models to determine cancer-specific immune response in tumor cells.

Jul. 2016 – Sept. 2016 James Galagan Laboratory at Boston University, Boston, MA
Conducted ChIP-Seq and RNA-Seq experiments to help map the transcriptional regulatory network of *E. coli*.

Mar. 2016 – Jul. 2016 Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, WA
Aided in protein-based stable isotope probing experiments by running analysis pipelines to calculate labeling statistics.

Nov. 2015 – Jul. 2016 Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, WA
Provided statistical support to determine differences in -omic make-up of the fecal microbiome between successful and unsuccesful gastric bypass patients.

Jul. 2015 – Feb. 2016 Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, WA
Helped create and implement displays and algorithms to visualize and quantify shotgun proteomic data.

2013 – 2014 Westminster College, Salt Lake City, UT
Developed novel program in Python for automating detection of singing on the nest in field recordings of Northern Mockingbirds.

2012 – 2013 Westminster College, Salt Lake City, UT
Collected field recordings of House Finch songs to compare urban and non-urban song dialects.

Jan. 2012 – Jun. 2012 University of Utah Health Care, Salt Lake City, UT
Aided in genetic analysis running reverse transcription and PCR analysis.

Honors and Awards

2022	Bioinformatics Service Award
2020	1st Place Poster – Bioinformatics Open House, Boston University
2017	2nd Place Poster – IBSB Conference, Berlin Germany
2016	NIH Trainee Fellowship – Boston University
2016	Outstanding Performance Award – Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
2014, 2015	Honorable Mention – Mathematical Competition in Modeling
2013 – 2015	Gore Math/Science Scholarship – Wesminster College
2013, 2014	Gore Math/Science Summer Research Grant – Westminster College
2012	Scholars Summer Research Grant – Westminster College

Publications

2023 *ICAT: A Novel Algorithm to Identify Cell-types in scRNAseq Perturbation Experiments*
Bioinformatics (accepted) https://doi.org/10.1101/2022.05.26.493603
Dakota Y. Hawkins ... Cynthia A. Bradham

2023 *Ethanol exposure perturbs sea urchin development and disrupts developmental timing*
Developmental Biology https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ydbio.2022.11.001
Nahomie Rodríguez-Sastre, Nicholas Shapiro, **Dakota Y. Hawkins** ... Cynthia A. Bradham

2023 *Singing on the nest is a widespread behavior in incubating Northern Mockingbirds and increases probability of nest predation*
Ornithology https://doi.org/10.1093/ornithology/ukad010
Christine M Stracey, ..., **Dakota Y. Hawkins**, Tricia Shepherd

2022 *Voltage-gated sodium channel activity mediates sea urchin larval skeletal patterning through spatial regulation of Wnt5 expression*
BioArxiv https://doi.org/10.1093/ornithology/ukad010
Christopher F. Thomas, **Dakota Y. Hawkins** ... Cynthia A. Bradham

Selected Posters and Presentations

2021 *Optimizing Feature Selection in High-Dimensional RNA-seq Data*
Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students
Award winning research presented by student mentee, Zoey Baringa

2021 *A Pipeline for Constructing a 3D Coordinate Map of PMCs in Developing Embryos*
Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students
Research presented by student mentee, Madeline Hughes

2020 *ICAT: A Novel Method for Identifying Cell-types across Treatments in Single-cell RNA Sequencing Data*
Bioinformatics Open House
Unveiled new algorithm to accurately identify cell-types across biological conditions.

2019 *Subpopulation Discovery During Patterning-Induced Developmental Diversification in Sea Urchin Embryos via Single-Cell RNA-Seq*
Society for Developmental Biology
Presented work showcasing subpopulation disruption during perturbation experiments.

2018 *Automated Identification of Primary Mesenchyme Cells in Confocal Images*
International Conference for the Developmental Biology of the Sea Urchin XXV
Presented a computer vision algorithm to identify 3 Dimensional cell boundaries.

2017 *Subpopulation Discovery During Patterning-Induced Developmental Diversification in Sea Urchin Embryos via Single-Cell RNA-Seq*
The International Workshop on Bioinformatics and Systems Biology
Presented work identifying novel subpopulations of Primary Mesenchyme Cells during sea urchin development.

2014 *Detecting Singing on the Nest*
Westminster College Undergraduate Research Conference
Presented undergraduate work to automatically isolate bird songs in field recordings.

2014 *An Interdisciplinary Quantitative Analysis and Research Cooperate (QUARC) at Westminster College*
Electronic Conference on Teaching Statistics
Helped present current activities and goals of QUARC to promote quantitative reasoning at Westminster College.

2014 *O Captain! My Captain!*
Mathematical Association of America, Intermountain Section
Presented methods to determine the best college sports coach over the past century.

2014 *Introducing QUARC*
Westminster College - Tutorpalooza
Presented activities and goals of QUARC to fellow tutors and aids on Westminster campus.

2013 *Frequency Characteristics of Urban House Finch Songs*
Ecological Society of America
Presented undergraduate research on house finch dialects in urban areas within Salt Lake.

2013 *Frequency Characteristics of Urban House Finch Songs*
Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research
Presented undergraduate research on house finch dialects in urban areas within Salt Lake.

Mentorship and Service

2017 – Present Bradham Lab
Mentored undergraduate researchers in biomedical computer vision projects. Projects ranged from scemantic segmentation of cell-types in 3D images to constructing embryonic coordinate axes for developing sea urchin embryos.

2017 – 2022 BRITE
Mentored Summer undergraduate researchers for the Bioinformatics Research and Interdisciplinary Training Experience (BRITE) REU. Mentorship involved leading and creating workshops, overseeing summer research projects, and introducing students to academic research.

2017 – 2021 BU Bioinformatics Student Association
Helped organize social and recruiting events for the BU Bioinformatics program. Responsibilities also included establishing support networks for PhD students, organizing meetings with faculty to address student concerns, and organizing student advocate groups.

2017 – 2021 First-year PhD Workshops
Organized and created computation workshops to quickly introduce first-year PhD students to common computational tools for bioinformatic research.

2018, 2019 BU Student Organized Symposium
Helped organize the annual symposium hosted by the BU Bioinformatics program. Responsibilities included contacting and coordinating with leading researchers to talk at the symposium, leading day-of logistics, and advertising the event to the broader scientific community in Boston.

Programming Languages

Python: Used for data analysis, machine learning, and package development.
https://github.com/BradhamLab/icat

R: Used for -omics data analysis and visualization.
https://github.com/BradhamLab/scPipe

Snakemake: Used to generate stable and modular pipeline workflows.
https://github.com/BradhamLab/indrops-star

C++: Extended existing Louvain library for semi-supervised clustering.
https://github.com/BradhamLab/sslouvain