

Eric Lau

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Education

University of Michigan

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science
Minor in Digital Studies

Ann Arbor, MI
May 2024

Data Visualization, Critical Data Visualization, Rhetoric of Infographics, Rhetoric of Maps, Statistics and Data Analysis, Database Management Systems, How Algorithms See, Programming Paradigms, Programming Languages, Programming Pragmatics, Computer Architecture, Data Structures and Algorithms, Foundations of Computer Science, Web Systems, Artificial Intelligence

Experience

The Michigan Daily

Senior Software Engineer

Ann Arbor, MI
Jan. 2023 – present

- Tracked DTE [power outages](#), [presented](#) to the Michigan Public Service Commission on outage data gaps.
- Led accessibility efforts across the newsroom: taught engineers how to use screen readers, advocated and implemented processes for adding alternative text to images.
- Wrote dozens of pages of educational and referential material on web development and data journalism to aid in knowledge transfer and new member onboarding.

Managing Online Editor

Dec. 2021 – Dec. 2022

- Led a team of 40 engineers, designers, and journalists to publish over 50 special websites, visuals, and stories.
- Built [crossword infrastructure](#) to create and publish daily puzzles. Garnered over 37,000 page views. Used SvelteKit and PlanetScale MySQL.
- Developed [bore](#), a library built on top of D3, for journalists to make stylistically consistent data visualizations.

Data Journalist

Sep. 2020 – Dec. 2021

- Created over 20 data visuals on university [feeder schools](#), city [restaurant closures](#), [survey data](#) and more.
- Collaborated with reporters to write a series of 3 stories on [university salary data](#).
- Developed a [live election tracker](#) for the 2021 Ann Arbor special election. Used Svelte and Python.

DETROITography

Software Engineer

Detroit, MI
May 2023 – present

- Created an application to crowdsource Detroit neighborhood boundaries. Used SvelteKit, OpenLayers and PostgreSQL with PostGIS.

The San Francisco Standard

Data Journalist

San Francisco, CA
Sep. 2022 – Sep. 2023

- Wrote over 20 newsletter stories with data analysis and visualizations localized to California neighborhoods, reaching over 10,000 subscribers.

The Texas Tribune

Data Visuals Fellow

Austin, TX
Jun. 2022 – Aug. 2022

- Produced 24 graphics on [election fundraising](#), [droughts](#), [public schools](#), the [juvenile prison system](#) and more.
- Analyzed polling data, interviewed pollsters, created graphics, and wrote a story on [abortion public opinion](#).
- Improved accessibility in the team's graphics kit by allowing screen readers to read alternative text in visuals.

Engineering Fellow

Jan. 2022 – May 2022

- Converted Django template files to flatpages, reducing code duplication and allowing for easier copy changes.
- Modified a Slack bot to show Salesforce campaign names to help evaluate real-time fundraising performance.
- Implemented several quality-of-life CMS features (e.g., copyable photo IDs, flexible grid dimensions, etc.).

Skills

Data analysis and visualization

Svelte, D3, Leaflet, Observable, Python, Datawrapper, Illustrator, QGIS

Web development

Svelte, React, Next, Django, Flask, SQL, AWS, WordPress

Languages

JavaScript, Python, HTML, CSS, PHP, C, C++

Awards & Honors

Lipsev Journalism Award for Multimedia Reporting (2022), SPJ Region 4 Mark of Excellence Data Visualization (2022), SBUHacks Best UI/UX – Aurora Hack (2020), University Honors (Fall 2020, Winter 2021, Fall 2021)