

Eric Lau

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Experience

The Washington Post

Graphics Intern

Washington, D.C.
Jun. 2024 – Aug. 2024

The Michigan Daily

Software Engineer

Ann Arbor, MI
Dec. 2023 – Apr. 2024

- Developed a PDF generator to embed crossword puzzles more seamlessly in The Daily's print newspaper.
- Implemented a scheduling feature to allow editors to publish puzzles more consistently at specific times of day.
- Overhauled mobile app rendering by writing new API endpoints with JSON serialized Gutenberg blocks.

Senior Software Engineer

Dec. 2022 – Dec. 2023

- Led various accessibility efforts: taught engineers how to use a screen reader; started tracking images published without alternative text; advocated for and organized processes for publishing with alternative text.
- Tracked DTE [power outages](#), [presented](#) to the Michigan Public Service Commission on outage data gaps.
- Migrated Games from static generation to server rendering, resulting in an instantaneous publishing workflow.

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.
- Advocated successfully for data journalists to use Datawrapper instead of D3 to publish graphics more quickly.
- Built [Games website](#) to play and publish crosswords. Used Svelte and SQL. Garnered over 120,000 page views.
- Developed [sink](#) to easily deploy websites and visuals to AWS S3 and ingest files and data from Google Drive.

Data Journalist

Sep. 2020 – Dec. 2021

- Wrote a series of 3 stories on [university salary data](#) in collaboration with other beat reporters.
- Developed a [live election tracker](#) for the 2021 Ann Arbor special election. Used Svelte, D3 and Python.
- Created over 20 data visuals on university [feeder schools](#), city [restaurant closures](#), [survey data](#) and more.

DETROITography

Software Engineer

Detroit, MI
May 2023 – present

- Created a [website](#) to crowdsource Detroit neighborhood boundaries using SvelteKit, OpenLayers and PostGIS.
- Launched and customized a [CKAN instance](#) for Detroit, serving over 1,000 datasets from 70 organizations.
- Set up an [Open SDG instance](#) to manage and publish UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for Detroit.

The San Francisco Standard

Data Journalist

San Francisco, CA
Sep. 2022 – Sep. 2023

- Wrote 25 automated data newsletter stories localized to California neighborhoods, reaching 10,000 subscribers.

The Texas Tribune

Data Visuals Fellow

Austin, TX
Jun. 2022 – Aug. 2022

- Wrote about [public opinion on abortion](#), analyzed polling data, interviewed pollsters and created graphics.
- Produced 24 graphics on [election fundraising](#), [droughts](#), [public schools](#), the [juvenile prison system](#) and more.

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.).

Education

University of Michigan (Computer Science, Digital Studies, 2024)

Ann Arbor, MI

Skills

Data analysis and visualization

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

Web development

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

Mobile development

React Native, Expo, SwiftUI

Awards & Honors

Lipsey Multimedia Reporting Journalism Award (2022), SPJ Region 4 Mark of Excellence Data Visualization (2022)