Eric Lau

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Experience

The Washington Post   Washington, D.C.
Graphics Reporter   *Aug. 2024 – present*
Graphics Intern   *Jun. 2024 – Aug. 2024*
  - Covered the 2024 general election through a visual lens.

The Michigan Daily   Ann Arbor, MI
Software Engineer   *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 the Games website to play and publish crosswords. Used Svelte and SQL. Garnered over 130,000 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   Detroit, MI
Software Engineer   *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 700 datasets from 80 organizations.

The San Francisco Standard   San Francisco, CA
Data Journalist   *Sep. 2022 – Sep. 2023*
  - Wrote 25 automated data newsletter stories localized to California neighborhoods, reaching 10,000 subscribers.

The Texas Tribune   Austin, TX
Data Visuals Fellow   *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)