

As a researcher who grew up from the countryside of China, I deeply understand the importance of providing equal opportunity, especially the opportunity of being educated, to everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity and gender. I fortunately came from a family that treats every child equally, where both me and my older sister got the chance of receiving higher education. Especially my sister, she is the one of few female students that can complete the university study in my hometown. However, I also notices that inequalities exist in many aspects of education. For example, most of my female classmates stop their education after graduating from the middle school. Even for me, I got chances to frequently use computers only after I started my undergraduate study. These inequalities of resources distribution between genders and regions, deprive the right of females and minorities of being educated. I plan to reduce these inequalities in my future research activities.

Experiences. While I was an undergraduate student, I served as the vice-president of the Volunteers Department of Computer Science at Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China. My work is to organize students from the School of Computer Science to accompany lonely old people who need more solicitude, to teach young students the knowledge of computer science and to provide non-profit public services. The most impressive activity I organized is a charity performance at Guanggu Square (Wuhan, China), to raise donations for an alumni who had a severe accident. During the performance, many warm-hearted citizens generously contributed to the donation and joined us to pray for the patient. These experiences make me realize that a large number of people in the world require various supports and solicitude from others, and meanwhile, many people are eager to provide such assistance but cannot find proper ways. We need to develop platforms and channels to bridge the gap in order to achieve a more equal, diverse society.

During my Ph.D. and postdoctoral studies, I luckily had several chances to work with students and researchers with different races, ethnicities and genders, which makes me understand the importance of the diversity to my research. I have worked with several excellent female researchers on various topics of system security. Shweta Shinde is Ph.D. student who gave me a lot of help on my work of data-oriented programming. Silin Lee is an undergraduate student from NUS, which I advised on the project of trace generation and visualization. I was also fortunate to work with Prof. Dawn Song during the Cyber Grand Challenge, to help her team build data-oriented attacks. All of these female researchers demonstrated their distinctive insights of security research, and have developed solid techniques to improve the system security.

I am lucky to collaborate with researchers from all over the world, including Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Romania, Korea, India, China and US. These researchers have different religious affiliations, including Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity or folk religions. Although we are from different backgrounds, our collaboration does not encounter any difficulty. Instead, everyone presents their ideas for brainstorming, shares their thoughts from different angles and contributes actively to the project. Aside from research, we also discuss our unique traditions and share featured food with others, which largely broadens my vision and affects my ways of thinking and acting. Thanks to these good experiences, I believe that I can work with researchers from diverse races, ethnicities and genders, especially those of minorities, and make them be future researchers and engineers for diverse academic and industry environments.

Future Plans. As a faculty member, I would like to improve the diversity of academia, especially in the area of system and software security. First, I am willing to provide more education opportunities to female and minority students. This is not as simple as preferring these students during admission, but more importantly, allocating more efforts to understand the differences or difficulties of their styles of working, philosophies of thinking and principles of acting. Second, I would like to create a bridge to connect my students to various external resources in order to assist their research and life, including but not limited to the Woman Techmakers Scholar Program, Blacks at Microsoft, and Hispanic College Fund. Third, I will teach my students about the status of diversity in the campus and over the world, to make them understand the importance and necessity of constructing a diverse society. Last but not least, I would like to communicate with senior faculty members to learn better ways on improving the diversity of the campus.