I pursue academic spaces where background is valued and opportunity is shared. My positionality as a woman from a single-parent family in a small town in South Korea developed my awareness about how invisible rules in society decide who belongs and whose knowledge counts [4]. In my research, teaching, and policy work, democratizing knowledge and access has been a central concern. I firmly believe that different perspectives and backgrounds boost creativity and researchers' intellectual and emotional capacity to engage society.

1   Fostering a Sense of Belonging

Students thrive when they feel like they belong to the community [1], which can be difficult for those whose backgrounds are not well represented among their peers [7]. As someone who obtained her undergraduate and master's degrees in South Korea, I understand challenges faced by international students and students of color, such as more prevalent imposter syndromes [2]. During my Ph.D. and postdoc years, I have made an effort to create a stable and safe space for my mentees. I have **mentored 20+ students** across law, computer science, business, design, and information science; the strong majority of them were from underrepresented backgrounds. For some, it was mainly producing research outcomes, but for others, mentorship ran deeper, helping them navigate sexual harassment on campus or exploring options for financial security.

I could establish a **structured mentorship through diversity initiatives**, where students connect with professionals from early in their careers. These networks create scaffolded support that extends far beyond graduation. As Co-Chair of the Minority Law Student Association, I developed academic support resources and managed peer mentor programs. As Vice President of the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association, I organized career networking events with judges, prosecutors, and attorneys throughout the Washington state. I also served on boards for the Korean Bar Association of Washington and the Korean American Scientists and Engineers Association, developing scholarship programs and networking opportunities. Currently, I contribute to collaboration between privacy scholars and practitioners in the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Women in Technology.

$\rightarrow$ **As faculty, I will** take leadership roles in **organizations supporting women and people of color in technology, STS, and law**, providing mentorship, fundraising for scholarships, and staying informed about educational disparities that marginalized students face. Following the model of the **Community Data Science Collective** [1], I would like to join forces with other faculty members to create collaborative initiatives in AI ethics and policy that share resources and support students across institutional boundaries. I will advocate for institutional policies that acknowledge caregiving responsibilities, immigration status, and disability accommodations both on campus and at conferences. I am committed to being an approachable and supportive advisor to student organizations, including those that support **non-traditional, DACA, and undocumented students**.

2   Becoming The Right Person at the Right Moment

I was able to pursue policymaking and higher education because at pivotal moments, I encountered fabulously generous people willing to share their wisdom and point me in the right directions. I have worked to become that right person for people facing barriers to education and career opportunities. After entering law school through a Fulbright scholarship, I published a series of Korean blog posts on graduate schools and scholarships — knowledge previously limited to students at elite institutions. These posts led to **counseling 50+ students** for their application writing and interviews. I also volunteered to help out applications of **two Iranian graduate students during the political turmoils in 2023**. It has been great pleasure to observe achievements of these students, including those who got admitted to Ph.D. programs in Princeton University, Carnegie Mellon, University of Michigan, University of Washington, and London School of Economics.

In my policy work, I led initiatives including **South Korea's world-first Artists' Welfare Law**, providing afford-

---

[1]https://blog.communitydata.science

able housing, occupational injury insurance, and childcare access [12]. I also established a **state-funded digital art education program for people with disabilities**, launching ten specialized programs nationwide with adapted facilities and qualified teachers. At the United Nations, I contributed to an accessible remote education system for K-12 students in rural areas of India during COVID-19 shutdown, coordinating student volunteers and local radio networks. These experiences taught me that talent is universal, but opportunity is not; we all should work relentlessly to bridge that gap.

→ **As faculty, I will** make transparent information about applications and lab expectations through pre-application office hours and Q&A sessions. I plan to create YouTube or podcast content on academic life in AI ethics and policy for those considering this field, helping K-12 and undergraduate students envision pathways they might not know exist. I will establish a formal mentorship program **connecting undergraduate students with research opportunities**, including hosting a National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates (NSF REU) site. I am passionate about **building an AI Ethics Academy for Youth**, following examples like the University of Washington's Dream Project or Princeton University's Materials Academy, which support middle and high school students through campus visits and post-secondary planning with near-peer mentorship.

3   Beyond Surface-Level Diversity in Academic Society

Imposter syndrome does not end in graduate studies. Faculty members from underrepresented backgrounds suffer from stigmatization and emotional burden to assimilate into **middle-class homogeneity in academia** [8]. Tenure-track professors in the US are up to 25 times more likely to have parents with Ph.D. degrees than the general population, growing up in neighborhoods 24% wealthier than average [10]. Female academics are known to take less credits for their scientific contributions [11] and self-impose higher writing standards, resulting in fewer publications [5]. Women and non-binary researchers impose stronger ethical standards on themselves when adopting AI technologies in research workflows [9].

Scholars from marginalized groups often occupy the margins. In my qualitative research on public defenders [6], I discovered that while white males comprise the strong majority of law faculty [3], criminal defense clinics in major law schools are predominantly led by Black female professors. When I asked why, they explained: "*Many Black people have firsthand experience observing unjust incarceration of our direct family members. We naturally develop a desire for criminal justice. In addition, many people don't know the large portion of public defenders' jobs is social work like putting clients in drug rehab programs. This aspect seems to resonate more with women attorneys than men.*" While these worthy missions deserve recognition, the concentration of underrepresented groups in **labor-intensive, service-oriented roles** signals segregation within academic hierarchies.

→ **As faculty, I will** dedicate myself to ensuring representation across career stages in academia with strong commitments to **reflexivity, intersectionality, and access**. When organizing conferences, I will promote inclusivity through targeted outreach to marginalized groups, mentoring sessions for underrepresented attendees, fundraising efforts to waive registration fees and cover travel costs, showcasing diverse research, and establishing visa-friendly deadlines. I am particularly passionate about contributing to **the newly-formed ACM Critical Computing Conference**, which aligns with my commitment to unifying disparate conversations across critical theories and computing research as well as empowering scholars from the underrepresented parts of the globe. In addition, I will contribute to programs like the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD), **documenting my experience as a junior faculty member** navigating funding applications, student mentorships, syllabus development, and research collaborations. By making my own journey transparent, from missteps to breakthroughs, I aim to transform this "hidden curriculum" into public knowledge [4].

References

[1] Mi Young Ahn and Howard H Davis. Students' sense of belonging and their socio-economic status in higher education: a quantitative approach. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 28(1):136–149, 2023.

[2] Dena M Bravata, Sharon A Watts, Autumn L Keefer, Divya K Madhusudhan, Katie T Taylor, Dani M Clark, Ross S Nelson, Kevin O Cokley, and Heather K Hagg. Prevalence, predictors, and treatment of impostor syndrome: a systematic review. *Journal of general internal medicine*, 35(4):1252–1275, 2020.

[3] Meera E Deo. *Unequal profession: Race and gender in legal academia.* Stanford University Press, 2020.

[4] Jahani Hariharan. I felt lost in a new academic culture. Then I learned about the hidden curriculum. *Science*, 2019.

[5] Erin Hengel. Publishing while female: Are women held to higher standards? evidence from peer review. *The Economic Journal*, 132(648):2951–2991, 2022.

[6] Princeton Polaris Lab. AI for Public Defenders, 2025.

[7] Katie Langin. In academia, lower socioeconomic status hinders sense of belonging. *Science*, 2022.

[8] Elizabeth M Lee. "where people like me don't belong": Faculty members from low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds. *Sociology of Education*, 90(3):197–212, 2017.

[9] Zhehui Liao, Maria Antoniak, Inyoung Cheong, Evie Yu-Yen Cheng, Ai-Heng Lee, Kyle Lo, Joseph Chee Chang, and Amy X. Zhang. Llms as research tools: A large scale survey of researchers' usage and perceptions, 2024. *under the submission to COLM 2025*.

[10] Allison C Morgan, Nicholas LaBerge, Daniel B Larremore, Mirta Galesic, Jennie E Brand, and Aaron Clauset. Socioeconomic roots of academic faculty. *Nature human behaviour*, 6(12):1625–1633, 2022.

[11] Matthew B Ross, Britta M Glennon, Raviv Murciano-Goroff, Enrico G Berkes, Bruce A Weinberg, and Julia I Lane. Women are credited less in science than men. *Nature*, 608(7921):135–145, 2022.

[12] UNESCO. Enactment of act on the protection of status and rights of artists, and relevant system, 2022.