

Kristi Esta

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Github: <https://github.com/kke005012/AI-ML-PostGrad>

SUMMARY

Experienced Software and Data Engineering Leader transitioning into AI/ML. Over 20 years of experience in building scalable data solutions and leading cross-functional teams. Currently pursuing advanced training in machine learning and deep learning through the University of Texas at Austin. Strong focus on interpretability, fairness, and impact-driven modeling.

RELEVANT PROJECTS

Visa Approval Prediction (2025)

University of Texas - AI/ML Capstone

- Predicted visa approval outcomes using classification models (Random Forest, XGBoost, Logistic Regression).
- Performed EDA, preprocessing, oversampling/undersampling, and hyperparameter tuning.
- Delivered actionable insights for optimizing approval processes.
- Emphasized fairness, precision-recall balance, and business interpretability.

ReneWind Forecasting (2025)

Neural Network Modeling Project

- Developed and compared neural network architectures (baseline vs tuned models) for wind energy forecasting.
- Applied normalization, label encoding, and loss/accuracy visualizations.
- Highlighted model performance trade-offs and metrics-driven decision support.

AI/ML Coursework Portfolio (Ongoing)

UT Austin Postgraduate Program in AI/ML

- Topics: Supervised & unsupervised learning, data science, deep learning, model tuning, ensemble methods, Gen AI, fairness & explainability.
- Tools: Python, Scikit-learn, TensorFlow, Keras, pandas, Matplotlib, seaborn.
- Business application focus with hands-on labs and real-world datasets.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

USAA — San Antonio, TX

Data Engineer

Dec 2014 – Feb 2024

- Designed, built, and maintained large-scale data pipelines for bank business unit.
- Supported data science initiatives with robust ETL frameworks and real-time data ingestion.
- Collaborated with data scientists and analysts to operationalize predictive models.

Software Engineer

May 2006 – Dec 2014

- Led backend development and system integrations for financial systems.
- Implemented scalable APIs and collaborated across agile teams.
- Early contributions to enterprise data modernization efforts.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Post Graduate Program in Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning

University of Texas at Austin, *Expected Sept 2025*

B.S. in Computer Science

University of Louisiana at Monroe, Graduated 12/2005

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Languages & Tools:** Python, SQL, Spark, Scikit-learn, TensorFlow, Keras, pandas, NumPy, Git
- **ML Techniques:** Classification, regression, ensemble methods, neural networks, model tuning
- **Other:** Data pipelines, ETL, API development, cloud data platforms (AWS, GCP preferred)

INTERESTS

Machine Learning for Social Good, Renewable Energy Forecasting, Ethical AI, Visualization