

Laerdon Kim

<https://laerdon.github.io/>
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Education

Cornell University

Mathematics and Computer Science. GPA: 4.13/4.0

Aug 2024 – Expected May 2027

Ithaca, NY

Phillips Academy Andover

GPA: 5.75/6.0. Dean's List.

Sep 2020 – Jun 2024

Andover, MA

Harold J. Sheridan Award for Athletics. Martin Luther King Jr. Award.

Research Experience

Researcher

Cornell University, Zissou Lab

Sep 2024 – Present

Ithaca, NY

- Developing models for forecasting online conversational dynamics and toxicity escalation, using “pivotal moments” as supervisory signals.
- Solo-authored NAACL 2025 CLPsych Workshop paper; built evaluation pipeline for LLM span identification of self-states in mental health data. System ranked 3rd/14. Automated training workflows with Bash scripting on Linux HPC clusters.
- Designed PIVDelay, a novel fine-tuning technique reducing false positives by 13% in toxicity forecasting. Presented results at the BURE Symposium.

Researcher

Cornell University, CornellNLP

Sep 2024 – Present

Ithaca, NY

- Co-authored EMNLP 2025 Main paper exposing a limitations of state-of-the-art lexical semantic change detection methods and proposing a new evaluation metric based on performance “in the wild.”
- Designed clustering-based evaluation methods for semantic change, reducing error rates in discovery tasks.
- Conducted paper replication study on false positive suppression method proposed by Liu et al., 2021.

Visiting Researcher

Illinois Institute of Technology

Jun 2024 – Aug 2024

Chicago, IL

- Implemented custom CUDA fused attention and LayerNorm kernels for diffusion models, achieving 1.2× inference speedup.
- Explored z-score and absolute-value threshold outlier masking on LLaMA 2, lowering perplexity by 6% and memory use by 13%.
- Re-implemented SmoothQuant and LLM-AWQ on OPT-8B for text completion inference.

Other Experience

Academic Team Lead

Association of Computer Science Undergraduates

Sep 2024 – Present

Ithaca, NY

- Lead Cornell CS Reading Group (~10 students), covering ML theory papers and fostering research-oriented discussion.
- Organize academic events for hundreds of undergraduates in the CS community.

Maintainer Sep 2024 – Present
ConvoKit (Open-source NLP Package)

- Built modular wrapper for HuggingFace/custom models; modernized backend forecasting with Docker; wrote 6 demo notebooks.
- Engineered CI/CD pipelines, added 4 datasets, reviewed and merged PRs.

Outreach Intern Jul 2023 – Sep 2023
Office of State Senator Robert Martwick Chicago, IL

- Led census-based canvass across 87 neighborhoods.
- Used Python, NGPVan, and VoteBuilder to expand access to social services for 135k constituents.

Software Engineering Intern May 2023 – Aug 2023
Innocuous AI Remote

- Developed startup website and branded landing page in React/Node.js, reducing latency by 40% with bundled assets.
- Designed custom visual assets in Figma and Photoshop for VC presentations.

Publications & Presentations

Khonzoda Umarova, Lillian Lee, Laerdon Kim. *Current Semantic-change Quantification Methods Struggle with Discovery in the Wild*. EMNLP 2025 Main.

Laerdon Kim. *A Baseline for Self-state Identification and Classification in Mental Health Data: CLPsych 2025 Task*. NAACL CLPsych Workshop. PI: Cristian Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil. arXiv:2504.14066

Laerdon Kim, Jenny Jin, Ajahla Jefferson, Tina Zeng, Brian Chica-Herrera. “Social Mobility in the Mission Hill/Roxbury Area.” Opportunity Insights Lab, Harvard University, May 2024.

Laerdon Kim. “Altruism and Our Kinship Crisis.” TEDx Presentation, Andover, MA, Apr 2024.

Honors

University of Oxford Human-AI Interaction Lab Cosmos Grantee 2025
Cosmos Institute \$4,500 awarded

Bowers-CIS Undergraduate Research Experience Fellow 2025
Cornell University \$7,000 awarded

Milstein Scholar in Technology and Humanity 2024
Cornell University

1st Place, MIT AI+Education Hackathon 2024
MIT

National Latin Exam, Summa Cum Laude 2022
American Classical League

Skills

Languages: Python (proficient), Java (proficient), Swift (proficient), C++ (intermediate), HTML/JS/TS/CSS (proficient)

Tools: PyTorch, TensorFlow, CUDA, Supabase, AWS, SQL, PostgreSQL, React, Vue, Tailwind, Flask, Docker, Kubernetes, Git, Linux

Familiar with common ML libraries: scikit-learn, pandas, numpy, seaborn, huggingface transformers