Lara Karki *Human-Centered Computing Ph.D. Research Intern*

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Ph.D. candidate researching AI's impact on work. Connects technical teams, business units, and end users through applied research, translating research across contexts to align key stakeholder needs and drive product innovation and adoption.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Human-Centered Computing – GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY   2022 - PRESENT
- **Coursework:** Prototyping Interactive Systems, Research Methods, Issues in Human-Centered Computing, Learning & Development, Social Studies of Technology, Future of Work
- **Dissertation:** "The Search for Tech-Related Admin Jobs in Times of Technological Change"

Bachelor of Fine Arts – SCHOOL OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS AT TUFTS UNIVERSITY   2009 - 2011
- **Coursework**: Animation, Painting, Printmaking and Bookmaking, Game Design; Self-Directed Software Development Internship

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Intern - Commercial AI Capabilities – MERCK   SUMMER 2025
- **Business Insights:** Understood business roadmap and AI opportunities to create an internal framework to understand how to look at Human-centered approaches for AI product development across domains, identifying four main areas of opportunity to maximize the value of AI for the organization: adoption, user empowerment, human-AI collaboration and governance. Recommended actionable research agendas prioritized against business impact, and presented to Leadership Teams across Merck divisions (Human Health, Animal Health and R&D).
- **Research Design:** Designed and conducted applied research through ethnographic observation and interviews with 25+ stakeholders including product designers, data scientists, analysts, leadership, and sales management across business units. Identified adoption bottlenecks as a primary business challenge; translated findings into additional targeted research protocols and frameworks.
- **Technology Enablement:** Improved adoption of new Gen AI product to enhance field sales reps' customer engagement by developing research protocols to better understand main pain points and opportunities in current ways of working. Identified through surveys different user segments influencing adoption and scalability, interviewed users from each group to assess the impact of AI on sales reps' work, and proposed design to maximize adoption of the new solutions.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Summarized, extracted and presented key insights from my academic research on human-AI collaboration to a broader internal audience. Delivered several presentations to the AI Leadership Team and internal Responsible AI group of 100+, facilitating cross-functional knowledge sharing.

Research Assistant – DATAWORKS AT GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY   2022 - 2024
- **Emerging Technology & Work:** Contributed to work-based training / reskilling program, focusing on emergent needs for middle-skill data work resulting from AI/ML technologies. Integrated critical perspectives on data ethics and computing literacy into technical skill development. Program's demonstrated value led to institutional adoption, evolving from research initiative to a permanent department within Georgia Tech.
- **Training:** Identified key gap in training program through ethnographic observation and survey research. Designed and implemented curriculum addressing emergent job search challenges, increasing employment outcomes for participants by 50% through targeted skill development interventions, creating novel opportunities for participants' professional development in technology careers, and public release of the curriculum.
- **Problem Solving & Collaboration:** Designed user study to uncover what technical aspects of job search platforms prevented program participants from completing key job search tasks. Formed research teams with program participants as co-researchers, increasing rigor of results by incorporating first-person perspectives and developing processes to circumvent the platform shortcomings.

Principal Software Engineer – PENSKE MEDIA CORPORATION   2018 - 2022
- **Applied Research:** Assessed observed stakeholder misalignment through a survey and interview study with 15+ stakeholders in product, design, and engineering. Identified business need to improve the customer experience of brand stakeholders via more reliable user interface development, the speed of replatforms, and ability to participate in product-related communication.
- **Prototyping & Innovation:** Prototyped a technical solution to user interface quality and communications through an innovative design system architecture leveraging emerging web technologies; prototype was adopted in production across a network of 25+ brands, increasing productivity for migrating acquired brands to internal systems by 60%, enabling engineering to more rapidly address stakeholder requests, and creating more reliable user interfaces.
- **Communication & Change Management:** Implemented change management to foster design system adoption through documentation, training, collaboration tools, and communication channels supporting adoption across 80-person product and engineering department. Collaboration tools created a shared language, enabling key stakeholders to align objectives.

Founder & Technical Consultant – INDEPENDENT PRACTICE   2011 - 2018
- Built and managed independent consulting business, providing development and consulting services to 30+ clients including The Weather Channel, Barnes and Noble, web development agencies, startups, and small businesses
- Developed customized training plans and end-to-end product branding, prototypes, designs, and software builds to meet business needs

Adjunct Instructor - "Prototyping in Code" – PRATT INSTITUTE

2014 - 2016

○ Founding instructor of UI/UX continuing education certificate program, developing two courses teaching programming fundamentals and technical communication to enable communication of ideas through prototyping
○ Taught 12-15 non-technical working professionals per cohort from backgrounds including sales, graphic design, and marketing

Executive Education Facilitator – DECODED

2014 - 2016

○ Facilitated 'Code in a Day' workshops for non-technical executives, improving their technical communication and understanding of modern development concepts
○ Provided individualized support adapting curriculum to executives' specific business contexts and communication needs

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Conference Speaker – INTERNATIONAL

2013 - PRESENT

○ Presented research at academic conferences (e.g., ACM Computer Supported Cooperative Work), communicating findings across disciplines
○ Promoted novel and emerging development approaches with presentations delivered at 19 industry conferences to audiences of 500+ attendees; recorded talks have 40k+ views and invited guest on 5 podcasts

Open Source Contributor – WORDPRESS CORE

2011 - 2022

○ Contributed to WordPress Core open-source project, contributing code, facilitating and organizing team meetings, and presenting at conferences and meetups to support vital community growth

Mentor & Community Organizer – NATIONAL

2011 - PRESENT

○ Co-founded mentorship program pairing senior PhD students with junior PhD students in computing
○ Founded and co-organized ongoing developer meetups and conferences providing vital community support for new developers

SKILLS

Human-Centered AI: AI/ML product design & development, human-AI collaboration, responsible AI, adoption, workforce impacts, work practices integration;

Development: Full-stack web engineering (PHP, Enterprise WordPress, JS, React, HTML/CSS), software architecture (design systems, MVC), software testing and CI/CD, data analysis (Python, pandas, matplotlib);

Research: Applied research methods, ethnography, interviews and surveys, qualitative analysis, mixed-methods, impact evaluation, user research, Dovetail, MAXQDA, UI prototyping and testing;

Languages: English (Native), Nepali (Fluent), Spanish (Advanced Beginner)

AWARDS

Pathbreakers Fellowship – GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
2024

Graduate Research Fellowshop – NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2023

President's Fellowship – GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
2022

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Lara Karki, Kayla Uleah, Carl DiSalvo, Sierra Traynail Ross, Jadin Butler, Selamawit Husen, Emanuel Bryant, Dana Priest, Justin Booker, and Betsy DiSalvo. 2025. 'I get hives when I come on here': Persisting Through Platform-Delivered Microaggressions on LinkedIn. Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 9, 7, Article CSCW232 (November 2025), 36 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3757413

Lara Karki, Dana Priest, James G. Dubose, Zajerria Godfrey, Annabel Rothschild, Ben Rydal Shapiro, and Betsy DiSalvo. 2025. A Window into DataWorks: Developing an Integrated Work-Training Curriculum for Novice Adults. In Proceedings of the 56th ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education V. 1 (SIGCSETS 2025). Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 568–574. https://doi.org/10.1145/3641554.3701826

Carl DiSalvo, Annabel Rothschild, **Lara L. Schenck**, Ben Rydal Shapiro, and Betsy DiSalvo. 2024. When Workers Want to Say No: A View into Critical Consciousness and Workplace Democracy in Data Work. Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 8, CSCW1, Article 156 (April 2024), 24 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3637433.