

Lara Karki

Human-Centered Computing Ph.D. Research Intern

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PhD candidate in Human-Centered Computing with proven ability to conduct applied research in industry settings, driving innovations in product, process, and adoption. Combines technical expertise (software engineering and AI/ML applications) with social science research methods to solve complex sociotechnical business problems, translating research and technical concepts into executive-level strategic recommendations.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Human-Centered Computing – GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY 2022 - PRESENT

- **Coursework:** Research Methods, Issues in Human-Centered Computing, Learning & Development, Social Studies of Technology, Prototyping Interactive Systems, Future of Work
- **Research:** Future of Work, Workforce Development, Human-Centered AI, Reskilling/Upskilling, AI Impact on Work

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 Internship in Open Source Web Development

WORK EXPERIENCE

Intern - Commercial AI Capabilities – MERCK SUMMER 2025

- Delivered branded framework for conceptualizing human-centered approaches to AI product development across four domains (adoption, user empowerment, human-AI collaboration, governance), with actionable research agendas prioritized according to business impact; presented to department leadership and socialized across leaders in Animal Health and R&D
- Conducted ethnographic observation and interviews with 25+ stakeholders including product designers, data scientists, analysts, leadership, and sales management across business units, identifying adoption bottlenecks as a primary business challenge; translated findings into targeted research protocols and frameworks
- Developed and integrated three research protocols into existing product initiatives: interview study assessing AI's impact on sales representative workflows; survey identifying target user segments for proof-of-concept product scaling; and validation survey to assess adoption barriers
- Translated academic research on human-AI collaboration for a general audience, presenting to 150+ employees in Responsible AI interest group, facilitating cross-functional knowledge sharing

Research Assistant – GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY 2022 - 2024

- Conducted applied research on emergent data work roles created by AI/ML technologies, developing integrated training and work-based learning program addressing skill gaps in technology-driven career transitions
- Designed and implemented curriculum addressing emergent job search challenges and program gaps, increasing employment outcomes for participants by 50% through targeted skill development interventions
- Formed research teams with program participants as co-researchers, increasing rigor of results by incorporating participants' first-person perspectives

Principal Software Engineer – PENSKE MEDIA CORPORATION 2018 - 2022

- Conducted applied research study with 15+ stakeholders across product, design, and engineering to assess how emerging web technologies align with business challenges; translated findings into framework and recommendations for C-suite, securing CEO buy-in for platform innovation initiative and developing proof-of-concept prototypes
- Initiated approach to a re-usable component system and platform architecture; increased productivity for re-platforming brand acquisitions by 60% and enabled engineering team to more rapidly address brand requests
- Developed change management approach including documentation, training, collaboration tools, and communication channels supporting adoption across 80-person product and engineering department; aligned objectives between engineering, design, product, and brand stakeholders

Independent Consultant – LARA SCHENCK, LLC 2011 - 2018

- Serviced a range of clients including The Weather Channel, Barnes and Noble, web development agencies, startups, and small businesses
- Developed customized training plans and end-to-end product designs and builds
- Implemented front-end component systems and design language to enable cross-functional design-development collaboration

Adjunct Instructor - "Prototyping in Code" – PRATT INSTITUTE 2014 - 2016

- Founding instructor of the UI/UX continuing education certificate program
- Developed curricula for two sequential classes to in programming fundamentals and application of programming to UI prototyping and technical communication
- Taught classes of 12-15 non-technical, working professionals from areas including sales, graphic design, and marketing

Executive Education Facilitator – DECODED 2014 - 2016

- Facilitated "Code in a Day" workshop targeting non-technical executives, with outcomes of improved technical

- communication and fundamental understanding of modern development concepts
- Provided individualized support to executives to ensure effectiveness of curriculum
- Translated technical concepts to everyday business use cases and communication needs, enabling understanding applicable to business problems

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & OUTREACH

- Conference Speaker & Thought Leader** – INTERNATIONAL 2013 - PRESENT
- Developed conference talk to highlight emerging technologies in UI development and best practices, shaping the industry's disposition towards front-end development
 - Delivered presentation at 13 conferences internationally between 2017-2019 to crowds between 25-500+ people; recordings with 40k+ views
 - Presented research in academic conferences and industry communities, communicating research findings to academics in a variety of disciplines
- Technical Advisor & Developer** – SMALL NON-PROFITS 2018 - 2024
- Advised non-profit leadership on technical decision making for web platforms
 - Developed websites with the goal of reducing maintenance efforts as much as possible
 - Educated employees on website maintenance and usage
- CS Classroom Volunteer** – MICROSOFT TEALS 2021 - 2022
- Provide instructor support twice per week for Intro to Computer Science at a public school in an underserved neighborhood of Pittsburgh.
- Open Source Contributor** – WORDPRESS CORE 2011 - 2022
- Facilitated weekly Core CSS team meetings to oversee and contribute code to long-term projects improving the maintainability of the WordPress Core CSS code-base.
 - Contributed code updates to WordPress Core
 - Presented at meetups and conferences vital to maintaining and growing the open-source community
 - Contributed to conference planning and led volunteers for WordCamp Los Angeles
- Mentorship & Community Organizing** – NATIONAL 2011 - PRESENT
- Co-founded mentorship program pairing senior PhD students with junior PhD students in GA Tech College of Computing (present)
 - Founded ongoing developer meetups in New York (CodePen meetup) and Los Angeles (CSS.la)
 - Co-organized and developed educational workshops for institutionally sponsored meetups (GirlDevelopIt, Write Speak Code, Global Diversity CFP Day, LearnTeachCode)

SKILLS

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

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 Fellowship** – 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>.