

Lara Karki

Human-Centered Computing Ph.D. Research Intern

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Ph.D. candidate researching AI's impact on work, with proven ability to conduct applied research driving product innovation and adoption in industry settings. Translates complex technical and research concepts into actionable strategies.

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 Software Development Internship

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: interviews assessing AI's impact on sales representative work; survey identifying user segments for proof-of-concept scaling; and validation survey to assess adoption barriers
- Translated academic research on human-AI collaboration for a general audience, presenting to 100+ 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 participants as co-researchers, increasing rigor by incorporating first-person perspectives

Principal Software Engineer – PENSKE MEDIA CORPORATION 2018 – 2022

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

Founder & Technical Consultant – LARA SCHENCK, LLC 2011 – 2018

- Built and managed independent consulting business, serviced 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 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 diverse 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., CSCW, SIGCSE, ICER), communicating findings across disciplines
- Promoted novel and emerging development approaches with presentations delivered at 13 industry conferences (e.g., JSConf, CSSConf, StrangeLoop, Abstractions) to audiences of 25-500+ attendees; recorded talks have 40k+ views

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

Mentorship & Community Organizing – 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 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>.