

# Mikayla Buford

+1(815)-302-6554  
[mibuford@umich.edu](mailto:mibuford@umich.edu)  
[mikaylab.github.io](https://mikaylab.github.io)

## Titles

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Design researcher, creative technologist, integrative designer

## Education

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*Aug 2020 – May 2022*

**University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design**  
MDes in Integrative Design

*Sep 2016 – May 2020*

**University of Wisconsin – Madison**  
B.S. in Computer Science

## Research

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**MDes Thesis**  
*Sep 2021 – May 2022*  
*Ann Arbor, MI*

**Black Feminist Games for Justice: Reimaging Student Experiences through Youth-Led Game Design**

**University of Michigan, STAMPS School of Art and Design**

Designing and implementing a game design workshop series with high school students at the Neutral Zone, a youth-led organization in Ann Arbor, with the aim to teach participants how to work collaboratively using an integrative design process, and confidently discuss and recognize issues of power and discrimination in digital spaces using frameworks from Black feminist thought.

**Research Assistant**  
*Sep 2020 – May 2022*  
*Ann Arbor, MI*

**ORBIT: Web Tool for Collaborative Remote Intercultural Teams**

**University of Michigan, STAMPS School of Art and Design**

Principle Investigator: Dr. Kelly Murdoch-Kitt

Facilitated 4 interviews with secondary educators and analyzed survey data from secondary students to produce prototypes and user flows for a future ORBIT version to support secondary project-based learning. Working on the front-end and back-end development of the existing ORBIT platform.

**Research Intern**  
*May – Aug 2020*  
*Remote*

**Crisis Couture: An Empirical Study on Motivations and Practices of Mask Makers During a Crisis**

**Microsoft Research - Redmond, Urban Innovation**

Mentor: Asta Roseway

Conducted a mixed methods study of 23 mask makers during the first summer of the COVID-19 pandemic on their attitudes and reflections on their mask making processes, their unique innovations, and the meaning of contributing in an impactful manner in local and global communities. We identified 7 themes around technology, self-expression and statement making, making and remixing, sustainable practices, as well as the role of design inspirations on methods and practices for mask makers during a crisis.

**Undergraduate  
Research Scholar**  
*Sep 2019 – May 2020  
Madison, WI*

**Platform Development for Social Capabilities for the Kuri Robot**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Human-Computer Interaction Lab

Principle Investigator: Dr. Bilge Mutlu  
Tested platform development on the Kuri robot using Robot Operating System software (ROS) for continued use. The Kuri robot was an inexpensive social robot that used observational learning to reflect user emotions in real-time.

**Undergraduate  
Research Intern**  
*Jun – Aug 2019  
Cambridge, MA*

**(Don't) Touch My Hair: Exploring Consent Education through Interactive Art**  
MIT Media Lab, Object-Based Media Group

Principle Investigator: Dr. V. Michael Bove  
Designed an Arduino-powered interactive sculpture of a Black woman with an Afro that taught users how to respectfully explore their curiosities about Black hair and learn Black women's sensitivities concerning their hair.

**Undergraduate  
Research Scholar**  
*Sep – May 2017  
Madison, WI*

**Analysis of Patient-Targeted Medical Mobile Apps**

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Library Science and Information Studies

Principle Investigator: Dr. Catherine Arnott Smith

Conducted usability audits of 100 patient-targeted medical applications from the Apple App Store to analyze the similarity in medical language used in the apps compared to medical journals.

## **Professional Experience**

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**UX/UI Design Intern**  
*Jun – Aug 2021  
Hybrid / Chicago, IL*

**Tovala**

**Creative & Digital Product**

Collected data on customer engagement with Chef's Recipes from observing 50+ customer sessions, and conducting 4 customer interviews. Synthesized qualitative and quantitative data into 4 customer personas and 3 journey maps based on the most common customer interactions to present opportunities to increase customer retention and satisfaction.

**UI/UX Designer**  
*Sep 2020 – Apr 2021  
Ann Arbor, MI*

**MCubed Project**

University of Michigan, College of Pharmacy

Investigators: Dr. Mike Dorsch, Dr. Kelly Murdoch-Kitt

Designed various Figma prototypes for an electronic health record (EHR) application to facilitate management of heart failure care. Conducted usability tests with 4 healthcare providers to improve and inform the prototype design.

**Student Web  
Developer**  
*Jun 2018 – May 2020  
Madison, WI*

**Office of Vice Chancellor for Graduate Research and  
Education - Information Technology**

University of Wisconsin - Madison

Developed and maintained web applications used by faculty staff for admissions using C# and SQL.

## **Publications**

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*Jan 2022*

**Mikayla Buford.** 2022. Beyond crisis couture: the creative resilience of mask makers in the pandemic and how we can shape our futures. XRDS 28, 2 (Winter 2021), 46–50.

*Honorable Mention  
June 2021*

**Mikayla Buford, Vaishnavi Nattar Ranganathan, Asta Roseway, and Teddy Seyed.** 2021. **Crisis Couture: A Study on Motivations and Practices of Mask Makers During A Crisis.** Designing Interactive Systems Conference 2021. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 31–47.

## **Presentations**

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*Aug 2019  
Cambridge, MA*

### **MIT Media Lab MIT Summer Research Program Intern Presentation**

(Don't) Touch My Hair: Exploring Consent Education Through Interactive Art

*Apr 2016  
Madison, WI*

### **Undergraduate Research Symposium**

Terminology in Patient-facing Medical Mobile Applications

## **Honors & Awards**

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*Jan 2022*

### **North Campus Deans' MLK Spirit Award**

Honor given to students, staff and faculty who exemplify the vision and mission of Dr. King through their work, service, and/or research.

*2019 – 2020*

### **Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program (McNair Scholars Program)**

The McNair Scholars Program is a federally funded program designed to prepare undergraduate participants for doctoral studies and graduate education through involvement in research and other scholarly activities.

*2016 – 2020*

### **Mercile J. Lee Chancellor's Scholar**

Full Tuition Academic Merit-Based Scholarship at University of Wisconsin - Madison

*Jun 2019 – Aug 2019*

### **2019 Massachusetts Institute of Technology Summer Research Program (MSRP) Alumnus**

## **Teaching**

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*Jun 2020 – Aug 2020  
Remote*

### **MAKE'ayla - MakeCode Livestream Show**

Guest livestreamer on the Microsoft MakeCode Youtube channel to teach viewers how to program microcontrollers and other electronics using the MakeCode Web IDE.

*2018, 2019  
Madison, WI*

### **Instructor – Basic Linux Workshop**

Taught 150+ undergraduate students basic Linux commands for navigation, file manipulation, text editing, and compilation of Java and C programs.

## **Service**

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*Sep 2021 – Mar 2022  
Ann Arbor, MI*

### **STAMPS Dean Search Committee Member**

Served as a graduate representative on the Dean Search Committee to provide input on the job description, interview and evaluate applicants, and provide final recommendations to the Stamp's leadership for the new dean.

*Feb 2020  
Ann Arbor, MI*

### **STAMPS Office of Research DE&I Grant Committee Member**

Served as a graduate representative on the grant committee to review grant proposals to fund joint faculty, student, and staff research that would further the School's diversity, equity, and inclusion mission.

*2017, 2018  
Madison, WI*

### **Expanding Your Horizons, Computer Science Workshop Volunteer**

Facilitated hands-on and online computer science immersion activities for middle school girls for the Expanding Your Horizons 1-day event.