

Mina Ghashami

Sunnyvale, CA +1 (518) 951 6641 ghashami@amazon.com

Research interests

scalable machine learning data mining recommendation systems deep learning
streaming and online algorithms matrix approximation dimensionality reduction graph
neural networks

Work Experience

- ❑ **Applied Scientist, Alexa Video, Amazon.** Sept 2020-present
working on video recommendation engines on Echo show devices.
Developing machine learning models to create personalized video recommendations for Alexa customers

- ❑ **Staff Research Scientist, Visa Research.** April 2018-Sept 2020

Tech lead for CyberSight project; productionized AI-based data driven engine that provides merchants with actionable insights to improve dropped sales and reduce operating costs. Core components:

- ❖ “Cause Analysis” that detects high impactful causes of drop in merchants’ KPI
- ❖ “Opportunity Prediction” that recommends opportunities to merchants for improving KPI
- ❖ “Approval Prediction” an ensemble learner that predicts approval probability of transactions

Other projects include:

- ❖ “Transaction Predictor”; a graph neural network that predicts next transaction of cardholders and merchants
- ❖ “Group recommender for Restaurants”; a deep neural network trained on individual’s transactions that recommends restaurants to a group of cardholders.
- patent application: Computer-implemented method, system and computer program product for group recommendation, US Patent 3400WO01

- ❑ **PostDoctoral fellow, DIMACS, Rutgers University.** October 2017-March 2018

Advised by Prof. Muthu Muthukrishnan

Worked on multi-armed bandit optimization problems, taught Advanced Algorithms course

- ❑ **Research Assistant, University of Utah**, Salt Lake City, UT. 2012 - 2017

Advised by Jeff M. Phillips

Worked on streaming matrix approximation techniques, taught Matrix Sketching Seminar

- ❑ **Visiting Scholar, Johns Hopkins University**, Baltimore, MD. Fall 2016

Advised by Dr. Raman Arora

Worked on stochastic matrix approximation, and hashing in streaming settings

- ❑ **Research Intern, Microsoft Research Lab**, Bangalore, India. Summer 2014

Advised by Dr. Ravi Kannan

Worked on implementing distributed matrix sketching methods in Hadoop

Education

- ❑ **Ph.D. Computer Science, University of Utah**, Salt Lake City, UT. 2012-2017

Advisor: Dr. Jeff M. Phillips

Ph.D. Thesis: On FrequentDirections, a Streaming Matrix Sketching Algorithm

- ❑ **M.S. Software Engineering, Sharif University of Technology**, Tehran, Iran 2010-2012

Masters Thesis: An infrastructure for data analysis extraction in distributed systems

- ❑ **B.S. Software Engineering, Sharif University of Technology**, Tehran, Iran. 2006-2010

Bachelor Thesis: Implementing an Ajax based content management system using web 2.0

Publications

- ❑ Efficient Frequent Directions Algorithm for Sparse Matrices with Edo Liberty and Jeff M. Phillips. *The 22nd SIGKDD Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining (KDD 2016)*
- ❑ Frequent Directions: Simple and Deterministic Matrix Sketching, with Edo Liberty, Jeff M. Phillips, David P. Woodruff. *The SIAM Journal of Computing (SICOMP 2016)*
- ❑ Streaming Kernel Principal Component Analysis with Danny Perry and Jeff M. Phillips. *The 19th International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Statistics (AISTATS 2016)*
- ❑ Improved Practical Matrix Sketching with Guarantees with Amey Desai, Jeff M. Phillips. *The IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering (TKDE 2016)*

- ❑ Improved Practical Matrix Sketching with Guarantees with Amey Desai and Jeff M. Phillips. *The 22nd European Symposium on Algorithms (ESA 2014)*
- ❑ Continuous Matrix Approximation on Distributed Data with Jeff M. Phillips and Feifei Li. *The 40th International Conference on Very Large Data Bases (VLDB 2014)*
- ❑ Relative Errors for Deterministic Low-Rank Matrix Approximations with Jeff M. Phillips. *The 25th Annual ACM-SIAM Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (SODA 2014)*
- ❑ DLPR, A Distributed Locality Preserving Dimension Reduction Algorithm with H. Mashayekhi and J. Habibi. *The 5th International Conference on Internet and Distributed Computing Systems (IDCS 2012)*

Conference Services

- PC member of AISTATS, NIPS, ICML
- Reviewer for KDD, DAMI Springer, SISC, STACS

Teaching and Mentorship

- **instructor**, Advanced Algorithms (CS 513), Rutgers University.
- **guest lecturer**, Randomized and Big Data Algorithms (CS 600.464), Johns Hopkins University. Taught on matrix decompositions and matrix approximations in streaming settings
- **co-instructor**, Matrix Sketching Seminar (CS 7931/6961), University of Utah.
Taught this 1-credit seminar once a week. Lectures were on different methods and ways of approximating matrices, and proving error guarantees for each method
- **teaching assistant**, Discrete Structures and Algorithms, University of Utah.
Held weekly office hours, held problem solving sessions, wrote problem sets for homeworks and graded quizzes, homeworks, midterm and final exams.
- **teaching assistant**, System Analysis and Design, Object Oriented Design, Sharif University of Technology. Held weekly office hours, designed projects and homeworks, and graded them.

Computer Skills

- ❖ Distributed Data Processing frameworks: Spark, Hadoop, Hive, Pig
- ❖ Machine Learning libraries: Pandas, Scikit-learn, Xgboost, LightGBM
- ❖ Neural Network frameworks: Pytorch, Keras, Tensorflow
- ❖ Programming Languages: Python, Java, C, C++, Matlab, R, SQL
- ❖ Web Development Languages: Flask, PHP, Javascript, Ajax, CSS, Html, APE, JQuery