A Rainbow of Gophers

Building A More Diverse Community
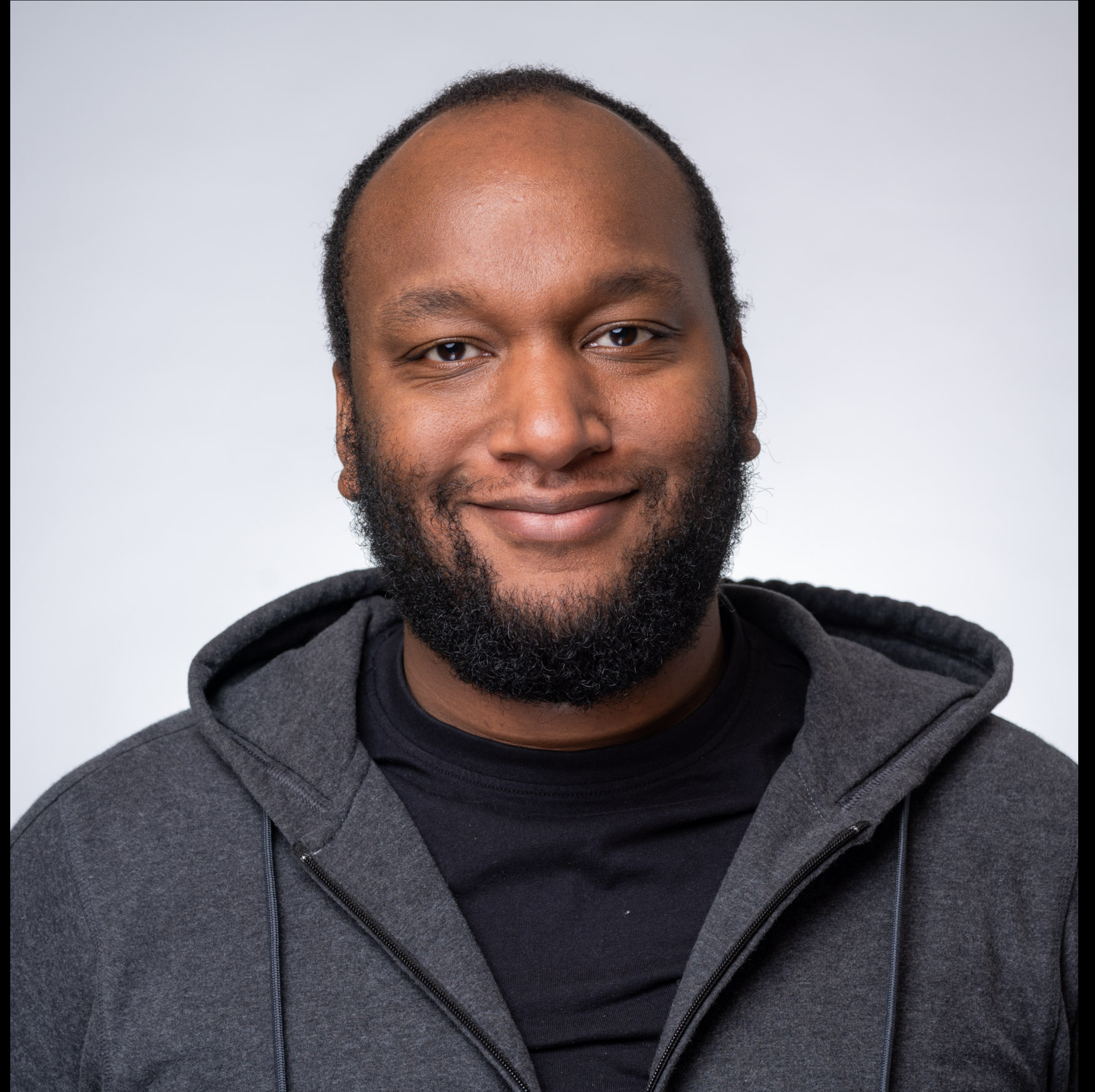
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Who Am I?

- Senior Engineer @ Wunderkind

- Writing Go for 7 years

- Software Engineering for 9 years

- @skriptble on the internet

- Writer

Outline

Outline
Introduction

- What Is This Talk About?

- Why Gophercon?

- Context

Outline
Setting The Stage

- Definitions

- Background

- The Reach of Diversity

Outline
Building Blocks

- Building Block #1: Impact vs Intent

- Building Block #2: Identity Development

- Building Block #3: Continually Curious

- Conclusion & Summary

What Is This Talk About?

Diversity

Inclusion

Build
Better
Software

Why Gophercon?

Building Blocks

For Who?

Context

Context

- Based on:

  - Lived Experience

  - Conversations with friends, family, coworkers, and community members

  - Research

- Shaped by "Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In The Cafeteria?"

- Examples use race, but knowledge applies widely

Setting The Stage

Definitions

Diversity

Possessing a variety of backgrounds and ideas.

Inclusion

Actions, behaviors, and norms enabling diversity

Marginalized

Groups who historically have less systemic power

Systemic Oppression

Oppression caused by a system of power

Examples: Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism

Systemic
vs
Systematic

Unintentional vs Intentional

Racism
Sexism
Heterosexism
Ableism

Systems of perceived advantage based on traits

Background

Background

- Member of 2 marginalized groups: one visible and one non-visible

- Studied this topic, starting in college and throughout my career

- Countless hours of deep discussion

- Theories and hypotheses, implemented and observed

The Reach of Diversity

Powered By Inclusion

Groups != Individuals

Perceived != Actual

Building Block #1: Impact vs Intent

When you don't know where to start,
start here.

Intent

What did you want to happen?

Impact

What actually happened?

Intent > 0

Impact >= Intent > 0

Intent > 0 && Impact < 0

Example
The School Dance

- Adapted from "Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In The Cafeteria?"

- Black Student

- White Teacher

- White Student

- Black Kids Table

Impact is defined by those impacted

Aim for better.

Mini Blocks
Impact vs Intent

- Having a negative impact doesn't make you a bad person

- When you have a negative impact: apologize, learn, and move on

- Don't be defensive

- Validate when you can, disengage when you can't

Building Block #2: Identity Development

Stages

Stages

- Unaware

- Becoming Aware

- Seeking Groups

- Guardrails

Unaware

Becoming Aware

Seeking Groups

Guardrails

Lifelong Process

Cyclical

Bidirectional

Example: Gophers

Understanding

Building Block #3: Continually Curious

Generalizing

Building Better Software

Example

"X is always red"

"No, you're wrong, X is always blue"

Rephrase:
"In my experience, X is always blue. Can you help me understand why X should always be red?"

To preface or to not preface

(Accidental) Gaslighting

Conclusion

Conclusion

- Diversity and inclusion help us build better communities and better software

- Focus on aligning your impact with your intent, when it doesn't apologize and avoid causing further negative impact

- Understand that people are in various phases of identity development and that shapes their view and interactions with others

- Staying continually curious helps avoid accidentally invalidating others and is a base component of building inclusive communities

Thank you for watching!