Michael Piseno

mpiseno@stanford.edu
https://www.michaelpiseno.com

Research Interests

My research focuses on learning models for human and object motion. I work on whole-body human motion tracking, dexterous manipulation, and generative motion models. I am also interested in human and object pose estimation from video.

Current Positions

Stanford University, PhD Student — 2025 – present
Computer Science Department
Advised by Professor Karen Liu

The AI Policy Forum, Co-Founder — 2025 – present
Stanford HAI-sponsored group working on Science and Technology policy for AI
Advised by Professor Allison Okamura

Education

Stanford University — 2025 – present
PhD in Computer Science
Advised by Professor Karen Liu

Stanford University — 2021 – 2024
MS in Computer Science

Georgia Institute of Technology — 2017 – 2021
BS in Computer Science with Highest Honors
Minor in Mathematics
Minor in Chinese Language

Previous Positions

Hybrid Robotics Lab, UC Berkeley, Research Associate — 2024 - 2025
PI: Professor Koushil Sreenath
Policies for stylized locomotion humanoid robots. Culminated in a technical report.
(more info)

DeepMind, Student Researcher — 2022
PIs: Atil Iscen (DeepMind) and Professor Koushil Sreenath (UC Berkeley)
Training infrastructure for humanoid robot locomotion.

IBM Research, Research Intern 2021
Manager: Dr. Alberto Valdes Garcia
RL for optimizing millimeter-wave communications in 5G cellular networks.

Dropbox, Software Engineer Intern 2020
Manager: Tom Kleinpeter
ML infrastructure for production user-facing products.

Facebook AI Research, Software Engineer Intern 2020
Manager: Professor Dhruv Batra
AI infrastructure for Habitat.

Amazon, Software Engineer Intern 2019
Manager: Michael Lou
Applied research for visual search at Amazon A9.

Georgia Tech Research Institute, Research Intern 2018
Manager: Dr. Jason Zutty
ML engineering for an auto-ML framework.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

3. Tara Sadjadpour*, **Michael Piseno***, Diana Poplacenel, Justin Yu, Abigail O'Niell, Rika Antovona, and Jeannette Bohg. "Topological and Geometric Representations of Deformable Point Clouds". 2025. (Under review)

2. Qingzhou Lu*, Yao Feng*, Baiyu Shi, **Michael Piseno**, Zhenan Bao, and C. Karen Liu. "GentleHumanoid: Learning Upper-body Compliance for Contact-rich Human and Object Interaction". 2025. (Under review)

1. Takara E. Truong, **Michael Piseno**, Zhaoming Xie, and C. Karen Liu. "PDP: Physics-Based Character Animation via Diffusion Policy". In Proceedings of SIGGRAPH Asia, 2024. DOI.

Teaching

Stanford University, Course Assistant 2021
CS 221: Artificial Intelligence: Principles and Techniques
Topics: Machine Learning, Search, Markov Decision Processes, Game Theory, Constraint Satisfaction Problems, Bayesian Networks, Logic.

Georgia Institute of Technology, Teaching Assistant 2019-2021
CS 7643: Deep Learning
Topics: CNNs, RNNs, Transformers, Generative models, Deep RL.

Honors and Awards

Department of Defense National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (NDSEG) 2022
Graduate fellowship award to pursue research on intelligent robotics.

Highest Honors, BS Computer Science, Georgia Institute of Technology 2021
Graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology with a BS in Computer Science with highest honors.

Intel SHPE Undergraduate Scholarship 2020
Scholarship sponsored by Intel awarded through the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE). (more info)

Tapia Conference Scholarship 2020
Awarded a scholarship to cover the cost of attendance to the ACM Richard Tapia Conference.

LSAMP Scholarship 2020
Scholarship awarded primarily to underrepresented students in STEM. Awarded by the LSAMP program through Georgia Tech.

Generation Google Scholarship 2020
Awarded by Google to approximately 30 Computer Science students each year. (more info)

Cisco Enterprise Scholarship 2019
Awarded a Cisco Enterprise Business Group Scholarship through a program in Georgia Tech's College of Computing.

SHPE Undergraduate Scholarship 2019
Awarded to roughly three dozen student for involvement in the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE). (more info)

Professional Activities

Reviewing
ACM SIGGRAPH 2025
Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR) 2026
IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) 2026
IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS) 2026