Nathan LaPierre

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EDUCATION

PhD in Computer Science, 2016 - 2021/2022 (Projected)
University of California, Los Angeles

M.S. in Computer Science, 3.74 GPA, March 2019
University of California, Los Angeles

B.S. in Applied Computer Science, 3.86 GPA (*magna cum laude*), December 2015
George Mason University

PUBLICATIONS

N. LaPierre*, K. Collins*, J. Rotman, and E. Eskin, "Identifying Causal Variants by Fine Mapping Across Multiple Studies," in RECOMB 2020 (accepted).

N. LaPierre, M. Alser, E. Eskin, D. Koslicki*, and S. Mangul*, "Metalign: Efficient alignment-based metagenomic profiling via containment min hash," *under review*.

N. LaPierre, R. Egan, W. Wang, and Z. Wang, "De novo Nanopore read quality improvement using deep learning," *BMC Bioinformatics*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. e552, Dec. 2019.

N. LaPierre, C. Ju, G. Zhou, and W. Wang, "MetaPheno: A Critical Evaluation of Deep Learning and Machine Learning in Metagenome-Based Disease Prediction," *Methods*, vol. 166, pp. 74-82, Aug. 2019.

N. LaPierre*, S. Mangul*, M. Alser, I. Mandric, N.C. Wu, D. Koslicki, and E. Eskin, "MiCoP: Microbial Community Profiling method capable of detecting low abundance viral and fungal organisms in metagenomic samples," *BMC Genomics*, vol. 20, no. 5, pp. e423, June 2019.

M. A. Rahman, **N. LaPierre**, H. Rangwala, and D. Barbara, "Metagenome sequence clustering with hash-based canopies," *Journal of bioinformatics and computational biology*, vol. 15, no. 6, pp.1740006, Oct. 2017.

M. A. Rahman, **N. LaPierre**, and H. Rangwala, "Phenotype Prediction from Metagenomic Data Using Clustering and Assembly with Multiple Instance Learning (CAMIL)," *IEEE/ACM transactions on computational biology and bioinformatics*, Oct. 2017.

N. LaPierre, M. A. Rahman, and H. Rangwala, "CAMIL: Clustering and Assembly with Multiple Instance Learning for Phenotype Prediction," in *IEEE International Conference on Bioinformatics and Biomedicine*, Shenzhen, China, 2016.

N. LaPierre and H. Rangwala, "Predicting Clinical Phenotype using OTU-based Metagenome Representation," in *IEEE International Conference on Data Mining Workshop on Biological Data Mining and its Applications in Healthcare*, Atlantic City, New Jersey, 2015, pp. 156-163.

(* Authors contributed equally)

PRESENTATIONS

"MiniScrub: de novo long read scrubbing using approximate alignment and deep learning" in Amazon Web Services - UCLA Computational Medicine Symposium, February 1, 2019

"MiniScrub: de novo long read scrubbing using approximate alignment and deep learning" in American Society for Human Genetics Annual Meeting, October 19, 2018

"MiCoP: Microbial Community Profiling method capable of detecting low abundance viral and fungal organisms in metagenomic samples" in American Society for Human Genetics Annual Meeting, October 20, 2017

"CAMIL: Clustering and Assembly with Multiple Instance Learning for Phenotype Prediction" in IEEE International Conference on Bioinformatics and Biomedicine, December 16, 2016

- Won a conference travel grant sponsored by NSF

"Predicting Clinical Phenotype using OTU-based Metagenome Representation" in IEEE International Conference on Data Mining workshop on Biological Data Mining and its Applications in Healthcare, November 14, 2015

- Won a travel grant from the Undergraduate Student Travel Fund of the Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research at GMU

"Developing a Computational Pipeline for Metagenomic State Classification with Feature Engineering" in Volgenau School of Engineering Undergraduate Research Celebration, April 2015

- Won Outstanding Undergraduate Research Project Award for poster

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

PhD Student
University of California, Los Angeles September 2016 - Present

- Working with Professor Wei Wang and Professor Eleazar Eskin
- Developing method for identifying causal variants (statistical fine mapping) by leveraging information from multiple studies using a Bayesian approach
- Developed a method, that uses deep learning to improve long sequencing read quality, in collaboration with scientists from the Joint Genome Institute
- Developed a method, accepted at BMC Genomics, that performs accurate abundance profiling of viruses and fungi in metagenomic samples

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) / Student Researcher
George Mason University January - August 2016 (June-August as GRA)

- Worked with Professor Huzefa Rangwala
- Developed CAMIL, a pipeline that uses multiple instance learning techniques based on whole metagenome shotgun sequence reads to predict whether or not a patient has a disease.
- CAMIL paper accepted into IEEE BIBM 2016 (19% acceptance rate).
- Second author of paper on using canopy clustering and locality sensitive hashing to reduce clustering time for biological datasets.

Predicting Clinical Phenotype using OTU-based Metagenome Representation
George Mason University January 2015 - November 2015

- Worked with Professor Huzefa Rangwala

- Developed a computational pipeline that uses clustering and classification methods to quickly and accurately predict whether a patient has a disease based on a case/control metagenomic dataset
- Paper accepted for publication, and poster presentation won Outstanding Undergraduate Project Award (see publications and presentations sections)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Graduate Student Researcher Summer 2017
DOE Joint Genome Institute / Lawrence Berkelely National Lab

- Developed a method that uses a Convolutional Neural Network (Deep learning method) to improve Oxford Nanopore long read quality *de novo*
- Method improves both read accuracy and downstream *de novo* assembly
- Helped pioneer use of deep learning within the lab

Security Engineering Intern Summers 2013-2015
Sony Corporation of America

- Wrote secure and scalable software and worked with Big Data in order to help analyze, detect, and prevent attacks on Sony's networks
- Used Python, Javascript (Node, Express, Meteor), MongoDB, X/HTML, CSS
- Developed a workplace communications system using Meteor.js; solo project
- Assisted in the development of a web application based on a searchable database system using Node.js, Express.js, and MongoDB
- Assisted in the development of a network forensics system; wrote backend python scripts and XML web layouts

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant Fall 2014 - Spring 2015
CS 306 - Computer Law and Ethics, Computer Science Department, George Mason University

- Received Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Assistant Award
- Assisted students with legal research, writing, and oral communication
- Responsible for grading student assignments worth 25% of their grade; one of the only Undergraduate Teaching Assistants entrusted with this responsibility

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS

Selected Honors

- *Honorable Mention in NSF Graduate Research Fellowship*, 2015-16
- *Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award*, given to overall best undergraduate student in Computer Science at George Mason University, May 2016
- *Outstanding Academic Achievement Award*, given for outstanding performance in Computer Science, May 2016
- *Outstanding Undergraduate Research Project* for presentation of my research project at Volgenau School of Engineering Undergraduate Research Symposium, April 2015
- *Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Assistant* for two semesters of excellence as a teaching assistant, April 2015
- *Dean's List* every semester

Fellowships and Merit-Based Scholarships

- *ModEling and uNdersTanding human behaviOR (MENTOR) NSF Training Grant*, 2018-19 academic year at UCLA
- *NIH T32 Doctoral Training Fellowship*, 2016-18 academic years at UCLA
- *Bersoff Endowed Scholarship*, Outstanding Academic Achievement, Awarded twice in 2015 and 2014
- *SWIFT Scholarship*, Outstanding Academic Achievement, Awarded in 2015

Honors Societies and Organizations

- *Honors College* at George Mason University
- *Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society*
- *Golden Key International Honour Society*

Technical Competitions

- *Top 5 at VTHacks*, a software development competition at Virginia Tech with over 45 teams, April 2014
- *2nd Place in the Technical Innovation Challenge*, a week-long competition at George Mason University to design a viable software product, jointly refereed by Computer Science and Business Departments, October 2014

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Executive Curriculum Planner and Mentor, Community Programming Initiative
George Mason University Honors College and SRCT 2014 - 2015

- Volunteer effort to teach basic programming to local 5th-8th grade students
- Planned and developed parts of the curriculum for the sessions, such as designing games and hints to help the students create them
- Mentored the elementary and middle school students during the sessions

COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

Languages / Scripting: Python, R, C, Matlab/Octave, bash
Deep Learning Frameworks: Keras, TensorFlow, PyTorch
Other Technologies: Git, Docker, LaTeX
Operating Systems: Linux, Windows, macOS
Experience with:

- Machine Learning Algorithms: Deep Learning, Linear Regression, Logistic Regression, SVMs, Random Forests, etc
- Machine Learning Applications: Clustering, Classification, Bioinformatics
- Bioinformatics methods experience: statistical fine mapping, alignment, assembly, read error correction, metagenomics, abundance profiling
- SGE and Slurm grid/cluster computing systems

MEMBERSHIPS AND LEADERSHIP

Student-Run Computing and Technology (SRCT) 2013 - 2016

- Student organization at George Mason University that works on software projects and competitions to benefit the university and broader local community
- Secretary and Member of Executive Board, Fall 2015 Semester