

**Zahra Ashktorab**  
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## **EDUCATION**

### **University of Maryland, College Park**

PhD. in Information Science; focus in Human Computer Interaction and Social Computing  
4.0/4.0

### **University of Maryland, College Park**

*May 2013*

M.S. in Human Computer Interaction 4.0/4.0

### **University of Maryland, College Park**

*May 2011*

B.S. in Computer Science, B.A. in Individual Studies; Middle East Studies, minor in Arabic  
Cumulative GPA: 3.4/4.0

### **National Institute of Mental Health** (held at Howard University)

*June-August 2006*

- Participant in the Career Opportunities in Research Training and Education Honors program
- Team research project: *Are We There Yet? The Effects of Gender, Race, and Attire on Helping Behavior*

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

### **Data Science for Social Good Fellowship, Computation Institute**

*June-August 2013*

*Eric and Wendy Schmidt Fellow*

- Classified tweets as pertaining to disaster or not (using Machine Learning techniques)
- Extracted Relevant information from tweets during disasters for Red Cross and UN Disaster relief workers
- Presented work at “Data Slam” hosted by University of Chicago
- Presented work at the 19th ACM SIGKDD Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining (KDD) poster session

### **Research Assistant, University of Maryland**

*September 2011 - Present*

*Graduate Research Assistant*

- Cyberbullying detection and prevention research
  - Research on automatic detection of cyberbullying in ask.fm
  - Interface and system design to mitigate behavioral symptoms of cyberbullying
- Global Twitter Election Prediction Project
  - Collecting Twitter Data from states with varying “Freedom Statutes”
  - Sentiment analysis and analyzing edge relationships between influential twitter users
- Designing and testing “Tweetbeats”, a music recommender system

### **National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland**

*May-August 2012*

*Postbaccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award*

- Created software in image processing that reproduced 3D Tumor and Organ Segmentation

### **Latin American Studies Center, University of Maryland**

*September 2010 - Present*

*Webmaster*

- Update and maintain website
- Create forms for online grant applications

**National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution**     *June 2011-August 2011*  
*Summer Intern*

- Created a website that showcased sustainability initiatives in the East Zone Mall of the Smithsonian
- Collected data, pictures, conducted interviews to build a sustainability website

**College of Arts and Humanities, University of Maryland, College Park**

September 2010 –present

*Technology Assistant*

- Aid professors who need technology help in classrooms
- Convert videos to DVDs
- Convert slides into JPEG photos

**The National Center for Biotechnology Information, NIH**

*June-August 2010*

*Summer Intern*

- Parsed files to find duplicates in Amish Genealogy Database 4
- Used Ruby to update information in Amish Genealogy Database 5

**The Undergraduate Technology Apprenticeship Program, UMD**

*January-May 2010*

*Technology Assistant*

- Aided in creating technological tools to help the College of Arts and Humanities
- Created Power Point Presentations for course “Islam in Europe”
- Edited videos for course “Islam in Europe”
- Created representative maps for course “Islam in Europe”

**Department of Clinical Research Informatics, NIH**

*June-August 2009*

*Summer Intern*

- Created “Star Glyph application”: a software application in language Processing that graphically represent medical data
- Presented at NIH Biomedical Computing Interest Group (BCIG): “Bench to Bedside Computing”
- Presented Poster “A General Purpose 2-D Graphics Package for Plotting Biomedical Data”

**Institute for Advanced Computer Studies, UMD**

*June- August 2008*

*Research Assistant*

- Assisted research in Machine Language Translation
- Ran scripts in Perl to translate Arabic Texts

**National Archives, College Park, Maryland**

*January 2008*

*Research Assistant*

- Assisted Yale University PhD students on research regarding the Korean War
- Photographed documents
- Scanned documents

**Noble and Crowe, Public Attorneys, Rockville, Maryland**

*January – June 2007*

*Administrative Assistant*

- Edited legal documents
- Managed outgoing communication
- Answered phone calls

**Howard University Hospital Cancer Center, Washington DC**

*July- August 2004*

*Hospital Intern*

- Organized the files of breast cancer patients
- Helped create “Project Early Awareness” (a fundraising video for breast cancer awareness)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Living the good life? Mortality and hospital utilization patterns in the old order amish. PLoS One. 2012;7(12):e51560. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0051560. Epub 2012 Dec 19.

## **ABSTRACTS**

**Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining (KDD)** *August 2013*

Zahra Ashktorab, Christopher Brown, Manojit Nandi, Aron Culotta: Twitter-Informed Disaster Relief, KDD for Social Good 2013, Chicago, Illinois

**Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)** *May 2013*

Allan Fong, Zahra Ashktorab, Jon Froehlich: Bear-with-me: an embodied prototype to explore tangible two-way exchanges of emotional language. CHI Extended Abstracts 2013: 1011-1016

**National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD** *August 2012*

*Reproducing 3D Tumor and Organ Segmentation from Commercial Workstations*, Clinical Image Processing Service Lab, Radiology National Institutes of Health

**National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD** *August 2009*

*A General Purpose 2-D Graphics Package for Plotting Biomedical Data*, 2009, Biomedical Computing Interest Group, National Institutes of Health

## **AWARDS**

Winner: Future of Information Alliance Seed Grant Competition: *December 2013*

Research Impact Quotient (Research IQ): Designing a Dashboard to Track How Grant Funding Translates into Knowledge

## **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

### **LAMLINK Workshop – Linked Open Data and Digital Humanities**

*Volunteer* *September 2013*

- participated in group discussions about linked open data and digital humanities\_\_
- took notes and brainstormed with computer scientists, archivists, and digital humanitarians about the role of open-linked data in the digital humanities

**Private Tutor in Arabic** *January 2010 -January 2011*

**Community Center, Potomac, Maryland** *September 2009- January 2011*

*Volunteer Instructor*

- Created syllabus for third level Arabic course to improve Arabic proficiency
- Teach children Arabic reading and writing

**Summer Reading Program, Chevy Chase Library, Maryland** *June 2004*

*Volunteer*

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Introduction to Tablets, Holiday Park Senior Center, Silver Spring, MD**

*Instructor* *October-November 2013*

- Taught introductory course and three lab courses on iPad functionality
- Tailored iPad use to senior citizen needs

## **LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY**

**Individual Studies Program**

*January-May 2010*

*Member, Student Advisory Board*

- Organized spring social event
- Attended board meetings
- Planned community building activities

**First Model United Nations Conference in the Sultanate of Oman**

*February 2005*

*Participant*

**Model United Nations Club**

*Delegate; Honorable Mention; Outstanding Delegation Award*

*2004-2007*

**COMPUTER SKILLS**

**Languages:** Python, Java, C, Processing, Ruby, Ocaml, Scheme, PHP, MySQL, Javascript

**Software:** Excel, Word, Windows Movie Maker, Power Point, Photoshop, HTML, Spotfire, Tableau

**LANGUAGE SKILLS**

English and Farsi (fluent); Arabic (advanced)