

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 Statuses”
 - 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

National Archives
Research Assistant

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

Scanned documents **Noble and Crowe, Public Attorneys, Rockville, Maryland** *January – June 2007*

Noble and Crowe, Pash *Administrative Assistant*

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

Howard University Hospital Cancer Center, Washington DC July- August 2004

Howard Univ. 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

Member, Student Advisory Board

January-May 2010

- 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)