

Willie McClinton

GRADUATE STUDENT · RESEARCH SCIENTIST

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Education

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, Massachusetts

PH.D. IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE (DEFERRED)

Sep. 2021 - present

- Research Interests: Artificial Intelligence: Reinforcement Learning, Imitation Learning, Deep learning, and Meta-Learning; as well as their applications in Task and Motion Planning, Robotics, and Human Robot-Interaction

University of South Florida

Tampa, Florida

B.S. IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND MINOR IN MATHEMATICS | HONORS COLLEGE

Aug. 2016 - May. 2020

- Summa Cum Laude
- Cumulative GPA: **4.00**

Publications

1. Minakshi, M., Bharti, P., **McClinton, W.**, Mirzakhlov, J., Carney, R., and Chellappan, S. (2020). *Automating the Surveillance of Mosquito Vectors from Trapped Specimens Using Computer Vision Techniques*. In the Proceedings COMPASS '20: ACM SIGCAS Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies.
2. **McClinton, W.**, Garcia, S., Andujar, M. (2019) *An Immersive Brain Painting: The Effects of Brain Painting in a Virtual Reality Environment*. In: Schmorow D., Fidopiastis C. (eds) Augmented Cognition. HCI 2019. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 11580. Springer, Cham
3. **McClinton, W.**, Caprio, D., Laesker, D., Pinto, B., Garcia, S., and Andujar, M. (2019) *P300-Based 3D Brain Painting in Virtual Reality*. In Extended Abstracts of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI EA '19); ACM, New York, NY, USA, Paper LBW1119, 6 pages.
4. Awad, G., Butt, A., Fiscus, J., Joy, D., Delgado, A., **McClinton, W.**, Michel, M., Smeaton, A., Graham, Y., Kraaij, W., Quenot, G., Eskevich, M., Ordelman, R., Jones, G., Huet, B. (2017) *TRECVID 2017: Evaluating Ad-hoc and Instance Video Search, Events Detection, Video Captioning, and Hyperlinking*. TREC Video Retrieval Evaluation (TRECVID), Nov 2017, Gaithersburg, MD, United States. hal-01854790.

Honors & Awards

2020	Fellowship , National GEM Consortisum Fellowship	National
2020	Fellowship , MIT Presidential Lemelson Fellowship (declined)	Cambridge, MA
2020	Fellowship , National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	National
2020	Scholarship , Marshall Scholarship Finalist	National
2020	Scholarship , Knight-Hennessy Scholar Program Finalist	Global
2020	Award , USF King O'Neal Scholar Award	Tampa, FL
2020	Award , USF Dean's List of Scholars	Tampa, FL
2019	Scholarship , Barry Goldwater Scholarship (\$7500)	National
2019	Award , The Leadership Alliance's Summer Research Early Identification Program - Participant	Providence, RI
2019	Award , CRA-W Distributed Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program - Participant (\$7000)	Providence, RI
2019	1st Place , Best Overall Project (Classroom.ai) at KnightHacks	Orlando, FL
2019	Award , Best Hack for Social Good (Emesh.io) at Hack-A-Bull	Tampa, FL
2018	1st Place , Best Poster Presentation at USF REU in Ubiquitous Sensing Poster Competition	Tampa, FL
2018	Inductee , Sigma Xi National Chapter	Tampa, FL
2018	Inductee , Pi Mu Epsilon University of South Florida Chapter	Tampa, FL
2018	Award , Best Hardware Hack (Fix8) at Hack-A-Bull	Tampa, FL
2018	1st Place , Best Oral Presentation in Computer Science Division at Emerging Researchers National (ERN) Conference 2018	Washington, D.C.
2017	1st Place , Best Presentation in Information Technology Division at NIST Summer Undergraduate Colloquium 2017	Gaithersburg, MD

Presentations

[Poster]	Brown University 2019 Summer Research Symposium (Aug. 2019), "Meta-Learning with Multi-Level Hierarchies via Context Variables"	Providence, RI
[Oral]	Leadership Alliance National Symposium 2019 (Jul. 2019), "Meta-Learning with Multi-Level Hierarchies via Context Variables"	Hartford, CT
[Oral]	Human Computer Interaction International 2019 (Jul. 2019), "An Immersive Brain Painting: The Effects of Brain Painting in VR Environment"	Orlando, FL
[Poster]	ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems 2019 (May. 2019), "Effects of 3D Brain Painting in Virtual Reality"	Glasgow, UK
[Poster]	USF Ubiquitous Sensing Poster Competition (Aug. 2018), "Deriving Trends from Meta-Data to Predict Distress in Online Communications"	Tampa, FL
[Oral]	Emerging Researchers National Conference 2018 (Feb. 2018), "TRECVID Multimedia Event Detection evaluation"	Washington, D.C.
[Oral]	NIST Summer Undergraduate Colloquium 2017 (Aug. 2017), "TRECVID Multimedia Event Detection evaluation"	Gaithersburg, MD

Community Engagement

[Demo]	USF Brain Drone Race (Feb. 2019), "Mind & Machine: Students to Compete in USF's First Brain Drone Race"	Tampa, FL
[Panelist]	USF Making Waves 2018 (Sept. 2018), "Partnership, Mentorship, Scholarship: Discussing faculty-student connections"	Tampa, FL
[Demo]	Roboticon (Sept. 2018), "USF Neuro-Machine Interaction Brain Drone Racing Mini-Competition Demo"	Tampa, FL
[Demo]	Orlando iX (Aug. 2018), "USF Neuro-Machine Interaction Brain Drone Racing Simulation Demo"	Winter Park, FL
[Demo]	S.T.E.A.M. FORWARD Camp (Jul. 2018), "Brain Computer Interface Demo for Middle School kids hosted by USF, FPU, and Intel"	Haines City, FL

Research Experience

Google AI Residency Program

Mountain View, California

RESEARCH SCIENTIST

Oct. 2020 - present

- Exploring the use of Hierarchical Learning for offline reinforcement learning, imitation learning, and transfer learning, specifically in robotics settings.

MIT Learning and Intelligent Systems Group (Dr. Leslie Kaelbling)

Cambridge, Massachusetts

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHER

Aug. 2020 - present

- Exploring the use of Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning to learn compositional high-level skills from data that are amenable to task and motion planning.

MIT Computer-Aided Programming Group (Dr. Armando Solar-Lezama)

Cambridge, Massachusetts

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHER

Jan. 2020 - May 2020

- Explored new approaches to combine program synthesis and deep learning in order to improve data efficiency and generalizability in both supervised and reinforcement learning settings.
- Surveyed modern program synthesis and deep learning techniques, for neuro-symbolic programming.

Brown Intelligent Robot Lab (Dr. George Konidaris)

Providence, Rhode Island

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHER

Oct. 2018 - Aug. 2019

- Explored the use of Meta-Learning and Hierarchical Reinforcement Learning, specifically the use of high level options, in constructing procedures by which agents can discover new skills autonomously and transfer them effectively to new tasks.
- Implemented modern and traditional RL algorithms (Dynamic Programming, Monte Carlo, TD-Learning, Sarsa, DDPG, A3C, DQN, etc.) and explored research directions in attempt to improve on the convergence speed of existing meta-learning approaches.

USF Neuro-Machine Interaction Lab (Dr. Marvin Andujar)

Tampa, Florida

SOFTWARE ENGINEER & RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Feb. 2018 - Dec. 2019

- Developed Unity applications to make BCI more available to the general public.
- Classified brain data with high signal-to-noise ratio using machine learning techniques (LDA, MLP, SVM, etc.) in Matlab and Openvibe.

USF Social Computing Lab (Dr. Sriram Chellappan)

Tampa, Florida

SOFTWARE ENGINEER & RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Jan. 2018 - Dec. 2019

- Designed a cross-platform mobile app with React Native and Expo integrating deep learning for detecting mosquito disease-carriers, using Tensorflow and Firebase API
- Developed a platform for social scientist to extract anonymous metadata from users' phones.

USF Ubiquitous Sensing Research Experience for Undergraduate

Tampa, Florida

SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHER

Jun. 2018 - Aug. 2018

- Worked with a team of 4 to build an Android application that detects distress in users from non-textual SMS message data.
- Built a classifier using Scikit-Learn and Tensorflow to identify user distress from features extracted from the metadata.

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Gaithersburg, Maryland

SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOW

May. 2017 - Aug. 2017

- Parsed through and edited large video databases composed of videos from both the YFCC100M and HAVIC datasets with SQL to synthesize datasets for the TRECVID Multimedia Event Detection Evaluation.
- Reduced scoring time by implementing parallelization in the new Ruby/Rake evaluation.
- Collaborated with small team of 3 to manage past systems from previous Multimedia Event Detection Evaluations.

USF Intelligent Systems Lab (Dr. Lawrence Hall)

Tampa, Florida

RESEARCHER FOR <DETECTING BRAIN TUMORS IN CT SCANS USING DEEP LEARNING>

Dec. 2016 - May. 2018

- Gathered, formatted, and augmented CT brain scan segmentations using ImageJ and Matlab to create training, testing, and validation datasets
- Constructed Deep Convolutional Generative Adversarial Networks (DCGANs) to synthesize more training examples from sparse data

USF Computational Biophysics Lab (Dr. Sameer Varma)

Tampa, Florida

RESEARCHER FOR <QUANTIFY INTRINSIC MOLECULAR MOTION USING SUPPORT VECTOR MACHINES>

Nov. 2016 - May. 2017

- Created command line applications utilizing GROMACS API in C to parse molecular simulations and quantify their intrinsic motion using Support Vector Machines.

Leadership Activity

Americorps: Family Services of Rhode Island - Attendance Improvement Matters

Providence, Rhode Island

VOLUNTEER

Oct. 2020 - present

- Mentored K-5th grade students in reading, math, and science, while focusing on maintaining attendance in school and virtually.
- Help run Walking School Bus at Harry Kizirian Elementary School, where we walk the kids to and from school from their houses.
- Help instructors work with the technology required for virtual schooling.

Society of Competitive Programmers

Tampa, Florida

CO-FOUNDER & VICE-PRESIDENT & AMBASSADOR

Jan. 2018 - Dec. 2019

- Created a student organization that helps to foster hackathon culture at USF and supports students in their hackathon trips around the nation.
- Reached over 100 active members in a period of 7 months and helped dozens of students experience their first hackathons.
- Worked with small team of 10 officers to manage the organization's events, budget, travel grants, and outreach.
- Achieved over 20K in funding for competition and conference travel through commercial sponsorship.

Metropolitan Ministries

Tampa, Florida

VOLUNTEER

May 2018, Jun. 2020 - Sep. 2020

- Mentored students on First Robotics team and helped them with 3D printers, app development, as well as, technical and career questions.
- Brought donated electronics (Arduinos, Amazon Alexa, servo motors, etc.) in order to spark interest in other technologies.
- Informed instructors about emerging computer science resources, including online tutorials and texts, in order to give them more tools to educate students and stay educated themselves.

Community Projects

HackNigeria

Hackathon

COMMUNITY PROJECT

Nov. 2019

- Creating a virtual hackathon in collaboration with Nigerian data science company Vilsquare, Meluibe Foundation, and USF Society of Competitive Programmers to promote the development of technological solutions for local community problems in Nigeria.
- Ambassadors the connection between the organizations and helped with logistics, funding, and hosting for the event.

Mosquito Tag

Provisional Patent

RESEARCH PROJECT

Dec. 2018

- Developed a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) model for server-side species and genus identification of mosquito.
- Created a mobile application to run the CNN model on the server that communicates with the app and developed an embedded classifier for mosquito vs non-mosquito classification using Tensorflow-Lite.
- A **provisional patent** has also been filed by Univ. of South Florida titled "A Deep Learning System for Automatic Tagging and Uploading of Mosquito Genus, Species and Anatomy from Smart-phone Images" (USF Ref. No. 18B171PR Chellappan).

HackerBoard

Website

PERSONAL PROJECT

Jul. 2018

- Built a web-based ranking system to showcase the best collegiate hackathon-goers, using HTML, Javascript, and Python (<https://hackathonleaderboard.github.io>).
- Created a Python web crawler using their Standard Internet Protocols and Support Library to extract hackathon winners from Devpost.