

## Diversity Statement

As a woman in computing who is privileged in many ways, I have seen both how DEI initiatives and outreach have benefitted me personally and ways they need to change to support people whose experiences differ from mine. These experiences have made me more intentional in my approach to diversity in the classroom, in research, and in service.

### Diversity in the Classroom

In the classroom, I strive to create an environment in which all students feel comfortable learning and engaging in discussion. To create this type of environment, I aim to build students' confidence in their own abilities by providing low-stakes opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge or practice using a new concept, build in anonymous means of communication for students who may feel uncomfortable voicing concerns otherwise, and highlight the positives in every submitted assignment.

I also aim to be proactive in anticipating potential barriers to full participation in the classroom and mitigating those barriers before students need to out themselves to me. Making course materials accessible before receiving any specific accommodation requests is one of these strategies. Ensuring documents are screen reader accessible, videos contain closed captions and audio descriptions where needed, and graphics use accessible color schemes and alt text shifts the onus off the students who require these accommodations.

I also use accessibility to shift the perspectives of students who may not have thought much about it before. To proactively make course materials accessible, student-produced course materials (e.g., slideshow presentations) should also be accessible. When needed, I provide explicit guidance on how to create accessible materials, why it is important to make materials accessible, and what the expectations are for submitted materials.

### Diversity in Research

My motivation for conducting research is to learn how to create technologies that better serve people. This requires working directly with members of underrepresented populations as participants and research team members and intentional effort to make research products accessible.

To maximize the impact of my research on unmet user needs, I work directly with participants who are often overlooked in the development of new technologies. Doing research with any community of people requires relationship building and trust, which I approach by being transparent with participants about my goals, inviting criticism, and listening actively. I also work collaboratively with community partners to ensure participants get something out of the process, whether that is compensation for time, a sense of agency in the design process, or a report back with results or updates on the research.

Another way to incorporate the perspectives of underrepresented populations in research is through support for their direct involvement as research team members. During my time in graduate school, I have tried to emulate the mentorship I received as an undergraduate as I have mentored 23 undergraduate research assistants, more than half of whom are women or nonbinary. One of my proudest moments as a mentor was months after a student graduated when she wrote me a letter about how much confidence her research experience had given her and how the experience had helped her get a job she was excited about. In my future work as a mentor, I will aim to introduce research

concepts in an accessible manner and support students from a broad range of backgrounds in learning how they can conduct research that positively impacts their communities.

For research to positively impact communities, it must produce tangible, accessible results. I try to write papers so people from a wide range of professional backgrounds can easily read it and make brief summaries of published work freely available. I pay out of pocket for an Adobe subscription so I can ensure PDFs are screen reader accessible. My advisor and I have worked to make the system developed through our research publicly available and as low-cost as possible. The software is available for free, we provide voice agents to professionals who work with children for free, and we provide instructions on how to make the voice agent as cheaply as possible. I plan to carry this approach to research with real-world broader impacts forward in my future research efforts.

### Diversity in Service

I aim to organize diversity and outreach events at all levels of education, taking a mindful approach to provide individualized support. I have organized and participated in outreach events for grade school students, led groups supporting undergraduate women in computing, and helped organize events for graduate students with disabilities. While I would love to see these efforts result in more students from underrepresented groups pursuing careers in computing, I believe the primary benefits of these efforts are in fostering a sense of empowerment in students regardless of their future career choices.

My work with children has led me to develop a philosophy of encouraging the natural curiosity of students of all ages without pushing an explicit message to pursue a career in STEM. Learning about computing can benefit all students, but students can tell when outreach experiences prioritize a specific agenda. In teaching coding camps, leading workshops, and volunteering at museum STEM nights, I have found the STEM experiences that children are the most excited about are the ones in which they were able to exercise creative control and teach their peers and adults about a topic they are interested in.

My undergraduate class at Earlham was the first in its recent history to have enough women majoring in computer science for us to qualify to form an ACM-W chapter. I served as our chapter's first vice chair and later served as chair. We built relationships with other women in STEM fields on campus and helped establish a physical space on campus where women could gather and provide each other with support. We also pushed faculty in our department to broaden their measures of diversity efforts to be more intersectional. The department was already working to increase women's participation, but we convinced faculty to prioritize support for international students and students from underrepresented racial or ethnic backgrounds because that in turn supports women who are members of those groups.

In Spring 2023, I worked with the Graduate Student Action Network and the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students to organize a virtual town hall on disability justice. We hosted a panel of current or recent graduate student self-advocates with a range of disabilities and graduate school experiences. Each panelist led a breakout room discussion in which attendees could share their experiences, lend each other support, and learn from others' experiences. Panelists and attendees described how important it was to them to have a space both to meet with others with similar experiences and to learn from how their own experience of graduate school differed from the experience of others. Moving forward in my career, I want to continue to work to create more spaces like the virtual town hall where students can find people they relate to and can learn from.