

Diversity Statement

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My commitment to diversity is to intentionally foster an inclusive environment for all academics, both students and faculty, and to intentionally address systemic inequities in representation. I believe that academic institutions have a moral obligation to serve as leaders for the broader society. Part of this obligation is an intentional, internalized commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity (DEI). It is imperative that both our research efforts, as well as our teaching impact, foster an environment in which participants of all backgrounds can succeed and thrive. Indeed, I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of an inclusive teaching and mentoring environment, and I have contributed to fostering inclusive environments within academia.

Inclusivity in teaching. I was introduced to programming relatively late, in college, and I initially did not intend to major in computer science. My introductory programming class at Harvey Mudd College was intentionally designed to be accessible for all backgrounds; in particular, our instructors made sure to develop a curriculum that did not require prior experience, and to intentionally nurture and make space for all perspectives within discussions. I did my best to repeat those lessons while serving as a teaching assistant at UCSD, and hopefully it resulted in an inclusive environment; I was described anonymously by my students as “very nice”, “patient”, and “easily approachable”.

Intentional diversity in academia. I am a privileged white cis male, and I am passionate about reducing the impact of my privilege, as well as encouraging and developing underrepresented groups within academia. Both of PhD advisers participate in the NSF STARS and UCSD ENLACE mentoring programs. During one summer at UCSD, we participated in both programs and hosted students from Howard (a HBCU) and Mexico. When my mentee did not arrive, I did my best to support Chris, our hosted student from Howard, as a supportive coworker within the same lab. As part of this, I organized the other lab members to come attend Chris’ final presentation for STARS. It’s important to intentionally build inclusive communities and I hope that Chris felt welcome as a result. Outside of my research lab at UCSD, I also helped develop an inclusive and diverse community through union organizing.

Diversity within union leadership. I got involved with our student-worker union at UCSD because it did not adequately represent the needs of many grad students. In particular, the leadership was vacant and consisted of just a single staff organizer, who was not a member of UCSD and did not come from a STEM background. My focus was to engage with other students and develop a diverse group of local student leaders. This took *intentional* care to cultivate a inclusive community, even in the face of political disagreements. I started with three other elected leaders, from Literature, Computer Science, and Linguistics, and together we filled out to 14 elected leaders^{*}, from a broad variety of departments, and a broad variety of backgrounds[†]. I am proud to have met and organized with these excellent student leaders.

Future DEI efforts. I am similarly excited to contribute as faculty to a culture of DEI within the academic community. As a researcher, DEI is increasingly becoming an intentional priority within the broader SIGPLAN community. I am excited to participate in these efforts, as well as broaden their current implementation, to build a more diverse and inclusive programming languages community. As a faculty member, I will continue my mentorship efforts. I will intentionally develop and support students from underrepresented backgrounds, serve as a host in research development efforts such as STARS and ENLACE, and develop other faculty when the time comes. It is imperative that we build an equitable society and I am excited to contribute from within academia.

^{*}It has since shrunk to 8 due to a change in the bylaws.

[†]<https://uaw2865.org/about-our-union/leadership/#sandiego>