

I believe diverse environments lead to stronger research that supports broader communities. However, efforts to improve diversity must be conducted along several axes: we cannot bring students from underrepresented backgrounds into academic settings unless they will be supported. My prior experience and future goals in improving DEI focus on four primary directions:

Lowering Barriers to Access Lack of access to information and opportunities can preclude qualified people from STEM and academia. In 2020, I co-organized a [graduate application support program at Carnegie Mellon](#), which matches graduate program applicants with current student mentors. This program aims to equalize the informal mentoring that happens frequently but is traditionally less accessible to applicants from underrepresented backgrounds. In 2021, as the primary coordinator for my department, I implemented changes based on feedback surveys I sent to prior participants, including organizing an information session with current faculty. I also personally mentored 3-4 applicants each year. Furthermore, when co-organizing the [ACL 2021 Workshop on NLP for Positive Impact](#), I advocated to secure sponsorship funds and personally orchestrated registration fee waivers for all attendees who requested them. As a faculty member, I aim to improve access to information and work to reduce fees for applications and research opportunities.

Developing Inclusive Environments Lowering access barriers and increasing representation is only beneficial if individuals receive support and have positive experiences. I saw the advantages of community building when I worked as a software developer before graduate school. At first, I was one of two women out of 25 developers. I then aided the company in recruiting six new female developers by planning social activities for female interns and meeting 1:1 with job candidates. As a graduate student, I have been a member of the [Dean's PhD Advisory Committee](#) for antiracism (2020-1) and the [Graduate Student Assembly](#) (2019-20), where I organized town halls, researched university policies, and made recommendations to the Dean and department chairs to improve students' experiences. Furthermore, as much support for students stems from faculty, I initiated a student committee for faculty hiring in my department, and I served as 1 of 2 student members on a committee to improve advisor matching. In the future, I aim to ensure that students, faculty, and staff feel welcomed and have avenues to voice concerns and receive support.

Direct Outreach Direct outreach to underrepresented communities is essential for conducting ethical research and recruiting diverse students and faculty. In high school, I volunteer-tutored inner city elementary school students, and in college, I volunteer-tutored inmates at local correctional facilities and interned at a non-profit work rehabilitation program for recovering substance abusers and ex-offenders. More recently, as a PhD student, I have mentored junior students from underrepresented backgrounds and supported university initiatives, e.g., I co-ran a Carnegie Mellon [Tech Nights](#) session to teach computer science to middle school students, and I advised research projects for high school students in the [TREES](#) program at the University of Pennsylvania. As a faculty member, I intend to provide research opportunities to high school, undergraduate, and graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds by developing paid summer research programs and participating in existing initiatives, which I believe is as important as creating new ones.

Critically Viewing Research Agendas Finally, I believe the research we conduct has the biggest potential for impacting equity not only in STEM and academia, but in broader society, and much of my research focuses on combating bias and promoting social good. I have engaged others in critically examining potential harms of research and developing projects for social good as an organizer for the Workshop on NLP for Positive Impact and also by founding a reading group on race and NLP in my department. I intend to continue these initiatives by developing workshops, courses, and tutorials on ethics and social good in NLP and pursuing these goals in my research.