

KASRA LEKAN

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EDUCATION

University of Virginia (UVA), Full-time student

B.A. 2023, MCS 2024

B.A. Computer Science & Financial Economics; Master of Computer Science

- 4.0 GPA; Judith T. and Eli W. Tullis Jefferson Scholar, Echols Scholar
- *Coursework:* Natural Language Processing, Machine Learning, Calculus, Linear Algebra, Digital Signals Processing, Algorithms, Generative AI, Cyber-Physical Systems, Software Analysis, Reinforcement Learning, Big Data Systems (Apache Spark, Ray, Dask)

St. Anne's College - University of Oxford, Visiting (Exchange) Student

September 2022 – December 2022

WORK EXPERIENCE

CAHR Learning Lab (UC Berkeley), NLP Researcher & Full-stack Developer

May 2021 – Present

- Spearhead cross-campus development of NLP course-recommendation system (askoski.berkeley.edu)
- Direct back-end development (Python, SQL, Airflow, AngularJS) and sprint planning for 14 engineer team
- (NEURIPS 2023 GAIED, AI4ED-AAAI 2024) Designed a NLP feature: conversational recommendations for major selection advice

Information and Language Processing Lab (UVA), NLP Researcher

Jan 2024 – May 2024

- Led mechanistic interpretability research with Distill-GPT-2 (42m param.) and LLM evaluation with GPT-4
- Generated PyTorch model code based on several papers without reproduction repositories
- Tuned ~10 hyperparameters to optimize the model training objective and final interpretability results

Bain & Co., Associate Consultant Intern

June 2023 – August 2023

- Diligenced 4 B2B SaaS companies, interviewing 50+ industry experts, and modelling multi-geo. markets
- Leveraged SOTA AI models to improve efficiency of standard tasks, e.g. data classification, text summarization
- Automated several common tasks which saved the team ~5 hours per week of working time

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

UVA Honor Committee, Statistical Transparency Analyst & School Representative

August 2020 – May 2024

- Analyzed 10 years of Honor Code offenses data using SQL, Python (transparency.honor.virginia.edu/)
- Craft Honor policies related to the use of Generative AI (e.g. ChatGPT, Claude) and “AI detectors”
- Represent the interests of the Engineering school and plan events to build community engagement

McIntire Investment Institute, Financial Analyst & Portfolio Manager

August 2020 – May 2024

- Manage the portfolio for a student-run long/short equity investment organization with ~\$1,000,000 AUM
- Conduct coverage analyses on portfolio companies and evaluate exits from positions
- Developed an investing thesis, valuation model, and pitch for more than 8 potential companies to long/short

TEDxYouth @ Bommer Canyon, Council Director

July 2017 – May 2022

- Directed a team of 20 to organize the first TEDSocial event organized by a TEDxYouth worldwide
- Curated over 10 community-building events serving between 40 & 700 people, coached TED event speakers
- Negotiated contracts & built relationships with businesses to secure event spaces & sponsorships

PUBLICATIONS, HONORS, & INTERESTS

Publications: AAAI 2024 Workshop on AI for Education Paper, NEURIPS 2023 Generative AI in Education (GAIED) Workshop Paper

Honors: Double Hoo Research Award, Berkeley Education Data Science and Learning Engineering Fellowship

Interests: Latin Dance, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Sci-Fi, Distance Running, Theatre, Trumpet (Jazz)