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Diversity Statement

In addressing the concept of diversity, I recognize that my privilege as a white woman has played a significant role in the opportunities and education I have been able to pursue and is the lens I must be aware of as I view the world around me.

In my perception, diversity is not a word that sits at rest, it is a jumping off point, a springboard towards considering the prolific variety of human life. An active consideration of diversity takes into account the immense multiplicity of lived experiences, bringing an awareness, appreciation, and respect for all individuals and groups. In considering diversity, I find a call to act with intentionality - creating, supporting, or calling for inclusive and equitable opportunities and experiences wherever possible; fighting for change in areas where diversity has often been scarce and dismantling systems of oppression and exclusion that have stood too long throughout academia.

As a human-centered designer and researcher, I have participated in and organized **many** projects that support university outreach and collaboration with a wide range of campus stakeholders and community groups. For each project it is key to build and maintain a diverse core team, incorporating community members and stakeholders throughout the process. Every individual is the expert of their own lived experience, making them essential contributors to the research, design development, and iteration of any new product, service, or experience. I practice participatory design methods wherever possible, as co-creation allows for essential insights and perspectives to be surfaced by a dedicated and diverse team. In a campus setting, I have worked on projects specifically focused on developing campus experiences to support the neurodiversity of the student population and to welcome and engage under-represented students in STEM majors. Acknowledging the embodied experience of individuals plays an integral role in my work and inspires a drive to continue honing my own education on de-centering and intersectionality - so that I may facilitate change through physical and digital experience design.

As an educator I have engaged with diverse and vulnerable populations of students and project stakeholders. Within the classroom I encourage and support students from all walks of life, acknowledging and respecting their unique lived experiences while identifying cases where students may need extra support or mentorship to thrive. I strive to lower the barrier of entry, create a welcoming community, and to connect students with resources that incorporate a diverse representation of designers and experts. Really listening to the students I mentor and guide through the creation of their own projects is my first priority in supporting their education - taking the time to try and understand their perspective and experience allows me to make a connection and address their needs as individuals. As my teaching career progresses, I hope to research classroom dynamics in order to develop exercises that create a sense of community and connection among students and develop instructional interventions that help students identify their own privilege while encouraging empathy and understanding of diversity in the human-centered design process.