

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

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Issues of diversity and inequality are deeply important to me – personally and professionally. I grew up in a large and implausibly diverse family. Through adoption and chance, I have siblings who are white, black, and Asian-American, who are gay and straight, and who have several different native languages. Having worked as humanitarian medics in the developing world, my parents found ways for their children to spend time growing up outside the United States. I finished high school in an Amharic language school in Ethiopia before returning to the US for college. I am in an interracial marriage to someone who grew up outside the US. Through these experiences, I understand some of the challenges and benefits of diversity and have come to appreciate how privileged I am.

In my previous work as a leader and professional in free and open source software (FOSS) projects and firms, I sought to highlight and address the lack of diversity – especially gender diversity – in FOSS organizations. On my very first day working on the *Ubuntu Project*, I wrote a “code of conduct” designed, in large part, to increase the diversity of our contributor pool. That document has now been signed by thousands of participants and has been employed in dozens of other FOSS organizations. On the board and advisory boards of several non-profits, I have worked to create and support diverse staffs and memberships.

This commitment to diversity has also shaped my research. In a short working paper with Aaron Shaw, I describe a method to estimate the diversity of participant pools in online communities by characterizing and correcting for self-selection bias in online surveys (we specifically consider diversity in terms of gender, income, and education in the context of Wikipedia). In a published paper with Leah Buechley, I evaluate the effect of a new microcontroller platform designed to increase diversity in hobbyist electronics communities by increasing the participation of women and girls. That paper is part of a larger conversation spanning several disciplines that tries to understand and address under-representation of women in science, technology, and math – an issue I am passionate about. I take pride in the diversity of my group of coauthors.

In my teaching, I take seriously the challenge of teaching to diverse audiences. As I explain in my teaching statement, I have found that my students have an enormous amount to teach me and I strive to learn from and to adapt both the style and content of my teaching material to reflect the diversity of my students. This has included mundane but important steps like learning to lecture more effectively to non-native English speakers as well as to create content and syllabuses that are more diverse in the material they include. In organizing classes, seminars, and lectures, I have found that more diverse programs are able to attract, and communicate more effectively to, broad audiences. By bringing in a wide variety of perspectives, a more diverse program can also support broader, more widely applicable, and more memorable learning.