

# Diversity Statement

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Research and practice have shown that diversity improves ideation, thus improving the software we produce and its impact on society. There is a widespread push to increase diversity and improve inclusion in industry. However, before diverse populations can make it into industry they are often expected to have an academic degree. I believe it is our responsibility as educators and administrators to actively and passionately recruit, engage, and retain diverse students in Computer Science.

## Recruiting, Engaging, & Retaining Diverse Students

I am a firm believer that teaching goes beyond the classroom and often, as it should, involves activities outside the classroom. I feel a sense of obligation as a woman of color in a white male dominated field to activities outside the classroom that relate to the recruitment and retention of minorities in Computer Science. I know what it's like to look for another "me" in my surroundings, often with no success. I also know what it's like to not "get it" when it comes to the jokes and references made in and out the classroom.

But also, as a woman of color in tech that actively sought others like myself, I have been fortunate enough to build networks and accrue experiences in communities of others like me. I also have an intimate understanding of what does, and does not, work when attracting students from diverse backgrounds. Given my teaching philosophies, prior experiences as a student and professor, and connections in diverse communities, I believe I have what it takes to recruit, engage, and retain diverse students at any university.

The first step to a diverse and inclusive environment is recruiting diverse individuals. I know from my own experiences that waiting for diversity to find you is often unsuccessful. Therefore, one way I plan to recruit diverse students is by tapping into the diverse communities I am part of. This includes, but is not limited to, conferences, such as the Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing and National Society of Black in Computing Conference, as well as campus organizations, like the National Society of Black Engineers, that are designed to build communities of minorities in technology. In the event that campus organizations like this do not exist, I have the necessary experience to help form and maintain such a group. This is not only beneficial for the recruitment of diverse students, but also for engagement and retainment.

Recruiting diverse students is an important part of the battle, however, an even bigger challenge is engaging and retaining these individuals once they're there. I plan to engage, and thereby retain, diverse students by mimicking the practices that have worked for myself and other minorities I've worked with. In my courses, following my teaching philosophy, I will incorporate practical and culturally relevant examples that give students a diverse, realistic, and interdisciplinary view of computer science. Another way I will engage and retain diverse students is by connecting them with diverse groups and communities, on and off campus, available to them. This gives students who may feel alienated on campus where they do not see people like them opportunities to connect with others like them for knowledge-sharing, inspiration, and motivation.