

Veronica A. Rivera

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<https://vrivera2017.github.io>

Research Overview

I study digital safety, bridging human-computer interaction and computer security to defend against digital threats both online and offline. Using qualitative and quantitative methods (interviews, participatory design, and large-scale surveys) I characterize harm, assess protections, improve system design, and guide policy, to create a safer on/offline ecosystem.

Appointments

Georgia Institute of Technology , <i>Assistant Professor</i> School of Cybersecurity and Privacy	2026-
Max Planck Institute for Security and Privacy , <i>Postdoctoral Researcher</i> Advisor: Yixin Zou	2025-2026
Stanford University , <i>Embedded Ethics Postdoctoral Fellow, Computer Science, Institute for Human-Centered AI (HAI) & McCoy Family Center for Ethics in Society</i> Advisor: Zakir Durumeric	2023-2025
National Domestic Workers Alliance , <i>Consultant</i> AI Ethics and Carework Curriculum Expert	2024
University of Florida , <i>Visiting Researcher, Computer and Information Science and Engineering</i>	2023
Max Planck Institute for Software Systems , <i>Visiting Researcher, Safety and Society Group</i>	2022-2023

Education

PhD, University of California Santa Cruz , <i>Computational Media</i> <i>Dissertation</i> : Safety & Harm in Social Computing Systems that Support Matching Markets <i>Committee</i> : David Lee, Chris Benner, Elizabeth Gerber, Elissa M. Redmiles, Norman Makoto Su	2017-2023
BSc, Harvey Mudd College , <i>Joint Computer Science and Mathematics</i> Minor in Psychology	2013-2017

Publications

* indicates equal contributions

† indicates postdoctoral or student co-authors I advised

Peer-Reviewed Conference & Journal Papers

- [P1] **Rivera, V.A.**, Li, T[†], Ozdemir, A., Han, C., Durumeric, Z., Redmiles, E.M., *Goals, Risks, and Safety Practices in Online Labor Abuse Disclosures*. USENIX Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security. SOUPS 2026
- [P2] Munyendo, C., **Rivera, V.A.**, Hu, J., Tweneboah, E., Shahnawaz, A., Sowon, K., Keküllüoğlu, D., Silva, M., Deng, Y., Omeiza, M., Kancherla, G.P., Silva, M.R.N., Bichhawat, A., Marmolejo-Cossio, F., Redmiles, E.M., Zou, Y. *"I Wonder if These Warnings Are Accurate": Security and Privacy Advice in Nine Majority World Countries*. IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (Oakland). IEEE S&P 2026

- [P3] Ruth, K., **Rivera, V.A.**, Akiwate, G., Kelley, P.G., Fass, A., Thomas, K., Durumeric, Z. *“Perfect is the Enemy of Good”: The CISO’s Role in Enterprise Security as a Business Enabler*. ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. CHI 2025
- [P4] **Rivera, V.A.**, Wilkinson, D., Augusta, A., Li, S., Redmiles, E.M., Strohmayer, A. *Safer Algorithmically-Mediated Offline Introductions: Harms and Protective Behaviors*. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction. CSCW 2024
- [P5] Huang, J., Ma, N.F., **Rivera, V.A.**, Somani, T., Lee, P., McGrenere, J., Yoon, D. *Design Tensions in Online Freelancing Platforms: Using Speculative Participatory Design to Support Freelancers’ Relationships with Clients*. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction. CSCW 2024
- [P6] **Rivera, V.A.**, Su, N.M. *Teaching Ethics and Activism in a Human-Computer Interaction Professional Master’s Program*. ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education. SIGCSE 2024
- [P7] Ma, N.F.*, **Rivera, V.A.***, Yao, Z., Yoon, D. *“Brush it Off”: How Women Workers Manage and Cope with Bias and Harassment on Gender-agnostic Gig Platforms*. ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. CHI 2022
- [P8] **Rivera, V.A.**, Lee, D.T. *I Want to, but First I Need to: Understanding Crowdworkers Career Goals, Challenges, and Tensions*. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction. CSCW 2021
- [P9] Nelson, S., Orrison, M., **Rivera, V.** *Quantum Enhancements and Biquandle Brackets*. The Journal of Knot Theory and its Ramifications. JKTR 2017
- [P10] Tenorio, D., **Rivera, V.**, Medina, J., Leondar, A., Gaumer, M., Dodds, Z. *Visual Autonomy via 2D Matching in Rendered 3D Models*. The International Symposium on Visual Computing. ISVC 2015
- [P11] Nelson, S., **Rivera, V.** *Quantum Enhancements of Involutory Birack Counting Invariants*. The Journal of Knot Theory and its Ramifications. JKTR 2014

Papers in Submission

Breen, C.F., **Rivera, V.A.**, Bailey, M., Chi, G., Zagheni, E., Redmiles, E.M., *Migrant Social Integration Before Arrival: Evidence from 3.9 Billion Facebook Friendships*

Workshop Papers and Posters

- [W1] Shah, A[†]., **Rivera, V.A.**, Votipka, D. *Safety Perceptions and Behaviors of Young Adults who use Dating Apps*. USENIX Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security. SOUPS 2026
- [W2] **Rivera, V.A.**, Lee, D.T. *It Takes a Village to Change Jobs: Towards Workplace Relationships that Support Reskilling in Crowdwork*. The Future of Work(places): Creating a Sense of Place for On-Demand Work. Workshop at ACM CSCW. CSCW 2019
- [W3] **Rivera, V.** *A New Approach to Testing Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder Using Affect*. Doctoral Consortium at the International Conference on Intelligent Tutoring Systems. ITS 2018

Policy White Papers

Elissa M. Redmiles, Sarah Adel Bargal, Grace (Natalie) Brigham, Nina Grgic-Hlaca, Tadayoshi Kohno, Jaron Mink, **Veronica A. Rivera**, Carmela Troncoso, Lucy Qin, Miranda Wei. *Formal Response on NIST AI Executive Order*. Published via the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy’s Massive Data Institute. Georgetown MDI 2024

Teaching Experience

Instructor of Record

Sociotechnical Security, *Georgia Institute of Technology, Planned Fall 2026*

Course surveying topics in usable security and privacy and digital safety; introduction to empirical and design methods

Ethics in Technology, *Stanford University Pre-Collegiate Summer Institutes, Summer 2023*

10 day intensive high school course I designed based on my UCSC HCI 220 course

Ethics & Activism in Technology & Design, *UCSC HCI 220, Spring 2022; Winter 2023*

I designed the course in Spring 2022 as an elective in the HCI Professional Master's program; it was made a required course in the program after the first offering

Teaching Assistant

Human-Centered Design Research, *UCSC CMPM 178, Winter 2021; Winter 2022*

Data Structures for Interactive Media, *UCSC CMPM 35, Fall 2021*

Beginning Programming in Python, *UCSC CSE 20, Spring 2021*

Introduction to Programming, Accelerated, *UCSC CMPS 12A, Fall 2018*

Introduction to Programming in Java, *UCSC CMPS 5J, Winter 2018; Spring 2018*

Introduction to Computer Science, *Harvey Mudd College CS 05, Fall 2014*

Embedded Ethics Teaching Fellow (Curriculum development and instruction)

Programming Methodology, *Stanford University CS 106A, Fall 2024; Winter 2024*

Programming Abstractions, *Stanford University CS 106B, Spring 2025; Fall 2024; Spring 2024*

Computer Organization and Systems, *Stanford University CS 107, Spring 2025; Spring 2024; Winter 2024; Fall 2023*

From Languages to Information, *Stanford University CS 124, Winter 2025; Winter 2024*

Human-Centered Product Management, *Stanford University CS 177, Fall 2023*

Artificial Intelligence: Principles and Techniques, *Stanford University CS 221, Spring 2025; Fall 2024; Spring 2024; Fall 2023*

Natural Language Processing with Deep Learning, *Stanford University CS 224n, Winter 2025*

Social Computing, *Stanford University CS 278, Spring 2025*

Guest Lectures

Ethics in Computing: A Problem at the Intersection of Engineering, Education, and Policy, *Stanford University CS 106B (Programming Abstractions), June 2025*

Needfinding: Lessons for Programming Language Design, *Stanford University CS 343S (Domain Specific Language Design Studio), April 2024*

Data Ethics: Choices and Values, *Stanford University CS 106A (Programming Methodology), March 2024*

Privacy and End-to-End Encryption, *Stanford University CS 106A (Programming Methodology), February 2024*

Ethics and Problem Selection in Security, *Stanford University CS 356 (Topics in Computer and Network Security), December 2023*

Grants and Competitive Gifts

CRA Microsoft Trustworthy AI Research Fellowship, \$17,000	2026
Stanford Internet Observatory Gift for Online Trust & Safety Research, A Cross Country Exploration of Security & Privacy Advice, with Collins Munyendo (lead), Jackie Hu, Elissa Redmiles, and Yixin Zou, \$15,000	2024

Awards and Honors

USENIX Security Distinguished Reviewer	2025
Rising Star in AI Ethics, Women in AI Ethics (WAIE)	2024
ARCS Scholarship, UC Santa Cruz, excellence in academics and STEM research	2021
Chancellor's Graduate Internship Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz 1 out of 5 recipients in the university	2019
CRA Travel Scholarship, CRA, To attend CRA-W Grad Cohort Workshop for Women	2019
CRA Travel Scholarship, CRA, To attend CRA-URMD Grad Cohort Workshop for underrepresented students	2019
Summer Regent's Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz	2018
President's Scholarship, Harvey Mudd College, 4-year full-tuition 1 out of 8 recipients in the graduating class of 2017	2013

Academic Service

Program Committees

ACM CHI, Associate Chair, Critical Computing, Sustainability & Social Justice Outstanding reviewer recognition (2026)	2026
USENIX Security Symposium, Program Committee Distinguished reviewer award (2025)	2025-2027
ACM CSCW, Associate Chair Outstanding reviewer recognition (2024)	2024

Department and University Service

SCP Security Colloquium Committee Co-Organizer, Georgia Tech	2026
Ethics & Society Review Coordinating Panelist, Stanford University, HAI Seed Grants Review Committee	2023
Ethics & Society Review Coordinating Panelist, Stanford University, HAI Seed Grants Review Committee	2023
Assistant Community Manager, UC Santa Cruz Computational Media Department	2020-2021
Alumni Admissions Interviewer, Harvey Mudd College	2018, 2020
Graduate Student Mentor, UC Santa Cruz Department of Computational Media Helped first year graduate student navigate the department and grad school	2018

External Reviewer

USENIX Security Symposium, Paper sub-reviewer	2024
New Media and Society, Invited paper reviewer	2023
IMC 2023, Student travel grant application review committee	2023

CHI 2022 , <i>Paper reviewer</i> Outstanding reviewer recognition	2021
CSCW 2021 , <i>Paper reviewer</i> Outstanding reviewer recognition	2021
CSCW 2020 , <i>Paper reviewer</i>	2020
CSCW 2019 , <i>Paper reviewer</i>	2019
Human-Computer Interaction Journal , <i>Invited paper reviewer</i>	2019

Research Mentoring

Ph.D. Students

Ishika Keswani, *Georgia Tech CS Ph.D*, 2026-

Muhammad Muiz Farhan, *Georgia Tech CS Ph.D*, 2026-

Undergraduate Students

Tracy Li, *Stanford University CS '28*

CURIS Summer Intern

Makenzy Caldwell, *Stanford University Tech, Ethics, and Policy Rising Scholar*

Hannah Kim, *Stanford University CS BS/MS '25*

Sasha Ronaghi, *Stanford University CS BS/MS '25*

Annika Lin, *Georgetown University CS BS '24*, Now: Analyst at Charles River Associates

Thesis committee member

Betros Abraha, *UC Santa Cruz BS '23*, Now: Software Engineer at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Ashvini Bhupatiraju, *UC Santa Cruz BS '22*, Now: Software Engineer at Wells Fargo

Jason Chan, *UC Santa Cruz BS '20*, Now: Product Designer at Adobe

Mark Gonzales, *UC Santa Cruz BS '22*, Now: Electronic Engineer at ZaiNar Tech

Gurdikhia Kaur, *UC Santa Cruz BS '19*, Now: MSc Student at UCL

Sonali Malik, *UC Santa Cruz BS '21*, Now: Product Manager at Microsoft

Taylor McPherson, *UC Santa Cruz BS '20*, Now: Frontend Engineer at Hightouch

Benjamin Paulsen, *UC Santa Cruz BS '23*, Now: Associate Game Designer at Blizzard

Mathew Raju, *UC Santa Cruz BS '24*

Saki Yokokawa, *UC Santa Cruz BS '23*, Now: Web Developer at Cubic Transportation

Celeste Zhao, *UC Santa Cruz BS '22*, Now: MS Student at Univeristy of Washington HCDE

Su Zin, *UC Santa Cruz BS '23*

Invited Talks

Digital Whisper Networks: Objectives and Threats of Informal Abuse Reporting

- Max Planck Institute for Security and Privacy, Spark(l)ing Science Seminar (November 2025)

Digital Safety: A Problem at the Intersection of Security, Engineering, and Society

- Harvey Mudd College (June 2025)

Digital Safety Beyond the Platform

- University of Edinburgh (November 2025)
- Carnegie Mellon University (May 2025)
- Ithaca College (April 2025)
- Georgia Institute of Technology (April 2025)
- University of Virginia (April 2025)
- Cornell University (March 2025)
- University of Toronto (March 2025)
- University of California, Los Angeles (March 2025)
- University of Oregon (February 2025)

Safety in Algorithmically-Mediated Offline Introductions

- Stanford Computer Forum Security Workshop (April 2024)
- Stanford HAI Fellows Workshop (March 2024)
- NSF Site Visit, Center on Privacy & Security of Marginalized & Vulnerable Populations (March 2024)
- Georgetown University Massive Data Institute Tea Time (February 2024)
- University of Maryland HCIL Brown Bag Lunch Seminar (February 2024)
- Stanford University HCI Lunch (February 2024)

Safety in Algorithmically-Mediated Offline Introductions: Lessons for Research, Design, and Policy

- Stanford Women in CS Meeting (May 2024)
- Stanford University Tech Ethics and Policy Career Pathways (May 2024)

Post-Digital Safety in Digitally-Mediated Offline Interactions

- UC San Diego HCI Seminar (March 2023)
- Stanford University Security Lunch (February 2023)
- Stanford University Computing & Society Seminar (January 2023)
- Mensch und Computer (MuC) Workshop on Inclusive Security by Design (September 2022)

Long-Term Worker Well-Being in the Future of Work

- Stanford University HCI Lunch (April 2022)

Invited Panel Moderator

- Stanford University, Beyond Content Moderation Workshop (November 2023)

Media Coverage

- Interviewed by **Stanford McCoy Family Center for Ethics in Society**: From Algorithms to Accountability: How Veronica Rivera Makes Technology Safer for Everyone (<https://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu/news/algorithms-accountability-how-veronica-rivera-makes-technology-safer-everyone>)

Professional Development

Teaching for Equity Certificate , UC Santa Cruz Center for Innovations in Teaching and Learning	2021
Graduate Student Leadership Certificate , UC Santa Cruz Graduate Division	2020
Invited workshop attendee , JobKit Developer's Conference at the US White House	2019
Invited workshop attendee , Human-Computer Interaction Consortium on the Futures of Work	2019