I believe that computer scientists occupy a crucial and powerful position to confront inequalities, both within the realms of technology and academia, and beyond in the broader society. As educators and pioneers, we hold a distinctive role in nurturing an understanding of the significance of equity and inclusion in the minds of future generations. In my career so far, I have utilized the resources at my disposal to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Recognizing my contributions to advancing equity through my research, and my contributions to diversity and climate efforts in my department and university, I was awarded the Deans' Martin Luther King Jr. Spirit Award in 2023. As a faculty member, I will continue to prioritize DEI efforts in my practice, actively championing these values within my research group, department, university, and the broader community.

Fostering Inclusive Mentorship and Teaching

As an educator, I aim to make diversity and inclusiveness central to my mentorship, teaching, and recruitment. I have had the fortune of working with remarkably diverse teams in my career, and I have observed that teams fostering inclusivity among members from various backgrounds, genders, races, and nationalities tend to achieve significant success and generate knowledge that has broader applicability across multiple communities. Moreover, working in a diverse group helps expand the horizon of every group member, as each member brings in a new perspective that can change the way we think about the world. I witnessed this firsthand during my PhD program, where the majority of my peer group comprised of women and included individuals from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, each providing support and helping others to thrive. I aim to emulate such a healthy group dynamic in my faculty role, **recruiting students with diverse strengths and backgrounds through reaching out to underrepresented communities and establishing an environment where every student feels respected and is proud of the perspective they bring to my group**. I want all of my students to recognize that their ideas and experiences are respected and valued, and to cultivate an environment where they feel completely free to express themselves. The latter also involves providing students with the confidence to embrace mistakes and the chance to ask for help. **My priority will always be to support students in their respective journeys, both in research and in life, and provide them with the space and resources they need to flourish**. This includes identifying and reaching out to the right person or resource when appropriate where other professionals are better suited to fill in with their assistance. I see my role as a mentor akin to that of a navigator, offering support to the student in the driver's seat, allowing them the autonomy to steer their career in their desired direction.

I believe that the key to successful mentorship lies in effective communication, particularly when it comes to addressing the unique challenges faced by students from underrepresented communities. A student's time at university is significant and critical, underscoring the importance of effective communication as a mentor. I will focus on establishing a clear and open communication policy with my students, where they feel comfortable opening up to me about anything. I plan to do this by being open about my own successes, failures, challenges, and difficulties, and hope that this helps develop an empathetic group dynamic where everyone feels comfortable sharing their unique struggles with me. This will in turn allow me to identify roadblocks for students and remove them, and encourage my students to utilize the appropriate departmental and external support should they need it. By fostering effective communication, I aim to obtain constructive feedback from my students that can contribute to my own growth and improvement as a mentor.

As the advisor-student relationship plays a pivotal role in a student's early career success, my aim is to swiftly cultivate a supportive atmosphere with my students, facilitating a positive and enriching educational experience. Some of the best support I got during my time in graduate school was from my senior peers. I have tried to emulate the same support for the students I have mentored so far by organizing social events and co-working sessions, and providing them with feedback and support. **I intend to promote peer mentoring as a means for students to forge connections within their cohort and access peer support whenever necessary**. This involves facilitating opportunities for students to collaborate both within and beyond the department, encouraging students to explore internships in industry, and fostering a positive, uplifting, and supportive lab environment. My goal is to nurture my students' sense of belonging and help them envision themselves as integral members of the department and the academic community.

Besides mentorship, I also view fostering inclusivity and equity in the classroom as fundamental in my role as an educator. I recognize that systemic inequities influence the experiences of all students, creating significant disparities in experiences and power dynamics both within and outside the classroom. **As a teacher, my goal is to establish a classroom atmosphere where every student feels both welcomed and respected, ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all.** I intend to achieve this by fostering effective and transparent communication regarding course expectations and norms, implementing structured interactions and procedures that facilitate equitable access and participation in learning materials, and being responsive to the diverse circumstances of my students. Moreover, I have discovered great value in participating in workshops like the 'Equity-focused Teaching Strategies Workshop' organized by the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan. I plan to continue to utilize such resources to improve my practice moving forward.

Encouraging Diversity through Outreach and Department Service

In addition to mentorship and teaching within my department, my aim is to extend education and opportunities to a wider audience in society. **I have been involved in outreach activities aimed at bringing STEM education to school students of all ages**. As an undergraduate student in India, I was the outreach manager of a student club, through which I organized multiple courses, events, and workshops for

school students and orphanage children in the area. These events were focused on encouraging underprivileged students, such as those coming from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, to explore an education and career in science and engineering. I remember myself being stunned at the students' thirst for knowledge. Their enthusiasm for learning, thoughtful engagement, and thought-provoking questions inspired me, and is a large part of the reason you are reading this statement today.

I continued being involved in outreach during my graduate program. For two years, I served as the outreach chair for my department's graduate student organization, CSEG, and organized several workshops that focused on introducing the foundations of computer science to school students in Michigan. I collaborated with other organizations such as FEMMES and Michigan Engineering to organize and connect to middle- and high-school students for these events, recruited volunteers from my department, and participated in teaching the basics of computer algorithms and computer hardware. In particular, working with FEMMES at the University of Michigan, a student organization aiming to increase the participation of women in STEM, provided me with the opportunity to interact with students from underrepresented gender groups, including women, transgender, and non-binary students. During these events, I primarily recruited volunteers in my department from underrepresented gender groups who could serve as role models to these young students, and explored the increasing possibilities that a career in computer science can offer. I would love to continue such outreach efforts that can increase diversity in computer science and engineering in my faculty role.

Apart from outreach, **I have also contributed to DEI efforts in my department during graduate school and used my role as a board member in the graduate student organization to tackle climate issues**. For instance, filling in as a Co-DEI chair for my student organization in 2021-2022, I attended meetings of the department's DEI committee on behalf of the student community, voicing student concerns and opinions regarding high-profile cases of sexual misconduct and toxic lab culture. Moreover, I spearheaded the inclusion of graduate students from different backgrounds into the graduate school application review process, the goal being to include minority voices in the admissions process and enhance the diversity of incoming students. My contributions have facilitated a sustainable method for incorporating graduate student perspectives into the admissions process.

Promoting Equity through Research

My research has centered on mitigating digital inequity, addressing disparities in Internet access, and advocating for the development of more equitable technologies. Internet censorship, geoblocking, and related forms of connection tampering disproportionately affect marginalized sections of the population, and these communities are adversely affected economically and socially because of such Internet restrictions. My research has developed platforms such as the Censored Planet observatory that empirically study connection tampering, built privacy enhancing tools, and driven policy change that has bolstered Internet freedom. For instance, my work led to the prevention of large-scale HTTPS interception in Kazakhstan, that protected secure Internet access for millions of targeted users. In particular, **I work closely with communities affected by Internet restrictions, and aim to produce tangible benefits to these communities through enabling data-driven policy making and developing privacy enhancing tools**. Throughout my career, I have prioritized bringing my research to a broad audience through accessible blog posts and news articles. I plan to continue such efforts, working with other members and organizations in the Internet freedom community to actively contribute to more equitable access to the Internet.

Given how politically-sensitive this type of research can be, **I commit to providing proper care for my students and collaborators, particularly when they are from countries where stringent regulations exist**. I plan to do this through setting up support groups with other experienced members of the community who come from similar backgrounds. Through these support groups, we can develop and promote best practices for well-being when doing research. For example, I will offer students the option to receive recognition anonymously or under a pseudonym if they prefer, while ensuring that they still receive the appropriate visibility and acknowledgment within the community. Moreover, I plan to have regular check-ins with my students about their well-being and connect them to self-care experts who can provide need-based support.