



# Humanities@ work in the Community, Health & Tech Industries

*Cross-Disciplinary Conference  
(6th Edition)*

**University Club**

**March 29, 2023**

*Working together to create an environment where everyone has an opportunity to develop the skills they need to succeed, while cultivating a robust, and diverse workforce to improve life and work.*

**UPMC HEALTH PLAN**



Frederick Honors College  
University of Pittsburgh



THE FORBES FUNDS







University of  
Pittsburgh

## Humanities @ Work in the Community, Health & Tech Industries

6th Edition Cross-Disciplinary Conference Program

March 29, 2023

The University Club  
123 University Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Contact Soudi for all questions: [soudia@pitt.edu](mailto:soudia@pitt.edu)



[www.linguistics.pitt.edu/2023-humanities-at-work-disciplinary-conference](http://www.linguistics.pitt.edu/2023-humanities-at-work-disciplinary-conference)

### Organizing Committee

Abdesalam Soudi, PhD (Project Director)	Sara E. Baumann, PhD, MPH
Judy C. Chang, MD, MPH	Fred Brown, MSW
Rob Mucklo, MA	April E. Belback, DEd
Gayle Rogers, PhD	Rasha Al-Hashimi, MEd
Gaetan Sgro, MD	Bernard J. Costello, DMD, MD
Clark Chilson, PhD	Ellen Beckjord, PhD, MPH
Shelome Gooden, PhD	David V.P. Sanchez, PhD
Tracey Conti, MD	Valerie Kinloch, PhD



## Welcome,

We are delighted to welcome you to the 6th edition of our cross-disciplinary conference related to the *“Humanities at Work in the Community, Health, and Tech Industries”* which brings together the University of Pittsburgh’s various schools, the healthcare industry, and community and tech industry partners. One of our primary goals is to expand educational opportunities for students and interns facilitating an appreciation for the application of humanities perspectives, skills, and analytical approaches, while also crucially increasing opportunities for them in the marketplace, and fostering creativity and innovation.

Our cross-disciplinary conferences are specifically branded to serve as a hub or gathering point, bringing together alumni, interns, students, faculty, staff, community, and industry partners to engage in conversations and highlight cross-disciplinary work between the humanities and other fields, both inside and outside academia. Our cooperative environment aims to facilitate the sharing of knowledge through research and education. When we organize an event like this, we set ambitious goals that extend beyond the conference day, and even the journey towards the conference becomes an opportunity to renew relationships, establish new partnerships, or expand existing ones. We are grateful for the valuable contributions of all attendees, who took time out of their busy schedules and travelled from various parts of the country to support education and training of students, host interns, and engage in work and research to empower diverse communities. We highly value our brand and partnerships and view these annual gatherings as an opportunity to cultivate an interdisciplinary community of practice.

At the very core of this cross-disciplinary conference, we emphasize building relationships, connections and fostering empathy to improve life and work for all. We recognize that regardless of our specialization, our collective efforts must strive to create a healthy, safe, diverse, and inclusive environment for everyone, and the humanities play a vital role in this respect. The humanities help us to hear, connect with, and develop empathy for the experiences of others, and to center the voices of those most vulnerable to exclusion. Through the humanities, we gain a deeper understanding of the world we live in, increasing our chances to solve problems, make new discoveries, and build trust with the communities we serve.

Unfortunately, the humanities are often overlooked as a resource for workforce growth and enrichment. This is one of the many reasons why we are holding this conference. Central to the deep examination required for fostering inclusion and equity that ultimately translate to wellness within our communities, the humanities provide a unique perspective that is essential in solving complex societal challenges. The World Health Organization’s (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) noted that the social and physical circumstances in which people find themselves significantly affect the way we live, as well as a wide range of health and quality-of-life outcomes. For us to successfully engage our students, our patients, and the communities we serve, we need to go beyond the clinic or the classroom to learn about the social and socioeconomic factors affecting their lives in the first place.

Student success is a major focus in our cross-disciplinary conferences. We highlight experiential learning opportunities for students and concrete ways in which we can integrate the humanities with technology, medicine, engineering, and other related fields. This is particularly important now as the humanities, despite their values highlighted above, continue to face an uphill battle in the employment sector. Going by Einstein’s metaphor that all disciplines of human knowledge are “branches from the same tree”, we want to engage our students in cross-disciplinary training opportunities to prepare them for versatile careers (The National Academies of Science, 2018; Harper, 2018). This is especially important now considering changing trends in employment. Teaching them skills like creativity, critical thinking and collaboration will serve them in almost any career they pursue.

The planning of this cross-disciplinary conference has been a culmination of several years of work, research, and community partnership. It builds on the success of the Humanities in Health Initiative at Pitt, which was launched in 2016, and the existing internship program within the Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences. In addition, the Board on Higher Education and Workforce of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine conducted a study in 2018 focused on better understanding the impact of an integrated educational approach on students, which has further informed our methodology. The University of Pittsburgh has a strong emphasis on the value of humanities and cross-disciplinary work. Furthermore, the goals of this conference align with the Strategic Plan for the University of Pittsburgh, particularly with regards to creating an institutional environment and culture that celebrate interdisciplinary collaborations and team accomplishments.

This project is in line with our mission of building an engagement platform/hub for connecting humanities to the community, health, and tech industries. Its main aim is to create an interdisciplinary Community of Practice that will provide support and structure for collaborative studies focused on centralizing humanities and cross-disciplinary

training. The conference will also facilitate greater access and more diverse participation and will allow several opportunities for networking, in addition to the scheduled talks, to allow for the organic generation of new partnerships. Ultimately, the conference will contribute to the growth and development of a vibrant, engaged community that can help drive positive change in the world.

### ***Conference Layout***

To begin, we open this conference with remarks from the University of Pittsburgh Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ann E. Cudd, followed by executive sponsor remarks by Mr. John Lovelace, the President of UPMC for You, Inc and the President of Government Programs & Individual Advantage. Immediately after that, Dr. Ruth Watkins, President of Strada Impact at Strada Education Network will deliver the keynote speech centered around the actions that higher education institutions and states can take to create more equitable pathways to opportunities through postsecondary education.

Additionally, alumni and current students will share their experiences, and expert panels will discuss various topics including working across disciplines, social determinants of health, capacity building, humanities in technology, healthcare related to working with language data, curricular highlights, and 21st-century skills such as collaboration, diversity, global competency, critical thinking, and problem-solving. During lunch, we will recognize our community and industry partners. Following lunch, Fred Brown, President & CEO of The Forbes Funds will deliver a plenary session on cultivating transformative leadership to move from systems change to regenerative ecosystem co-creation.

In conjunction with this conference, the National Endowment for the Humanities will also host a Regional Grant Workshop, NEH Funding Opportunities, and a Mock Panel Interview on March 28, sponsored by the Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Research, in collaboration with the Humanities @ Work Conference. Additionally, Dr. Hannah Schell will hold pre-scheduled office hours on March 28 and drop-in office hours on March 29. Other partners, such as the Center for African Studies, Edge, Global Wordsmiths, and Panthers Forward, will also host resource tables. Industry partners will hold office hours with students in The University Club Library.

### ***Acknowledgments***

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who made this conference possible. Many people contributed time and effort into planning it from its conception to today's final product. The organizing committee worked very hard in the spirit of collegial partnership. We had a blast working together. I am grateful that my team has been awarded one of the first ever Pitt Seed Grants to grow this program and to contribute to the strategic mission directly and actively at Pitt. This institutional endorsement has allowed us to grow since then.

We were able to organize this conference and offer it at no cost to you thanks to generous support from our executive sponsor, UPMC Health Plan, Silver Sponsors, The Forbes Funds, and The University of Pittsburgh's David C. Frederick Honors College, Bronze Sponsor, Edge Fearless Learning, and other support from the Department of English, the Department of Linguistics, the Department of Family Medicine, the Department of Ob/Gyn and Reproductive Sciences, the School of Education, Center for African Studies, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences, and the Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Research. Additionally, I am thankful to all our speakers, contributors, moderators today who took time from their busy schedules to share their experiences and insight. Some of our speakers and attendees have traveled from far away to be here. I am thankful to all my colleagues, students, and interns.

The following people helped bring all the pieces together: University Center for Teaching and Learning; Alexandra Rodwick, Dorothy Sherman, and Janine Walker (Event Coordinators); Ken Hale (Hizwerks Productions, Art and Design); Dann Varley (Web Developer); Allison Thompson (Administrative Officer, Interdisciplinary Team Leader); the Blue and Gold Society; Career Center; Delaney Hawk (Department Administrator); Kristin Hopkins (Fiscal Director, Humanities Division); Garrett Strawn and Jason Humphrey (Managers, The University Club Conference Services); and conference volunteers.

**Abdesalam Soudi, Ph.D., Project Director,  
on behalf of the Conference Organizing Committee**



## Opening remarks:



**Dr. Ann E. Cudd**  
Provost & Senior Vice Chancellor  
University of Pittsburgh

Ann E. Cudd is the University of Pittsburgh's Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor. Appointed in September 2018, she has primary responsibility for all aspects of the University of Pittsburgh's academic mission. Her duties include supporting scholarly excellence among more than 4,600 faculty members and student success among the University's nearly 35,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students on all five Pitt campuses.

Dr. Cudd previously served as Boston University's Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, which is the institution's largest college. Prior to joining Boston University in 2015, she served for 25 years at the University of Kansas, where she earned the title of University Distinguished Professor of Philosophy. At the University of Kansas, Dr. Cudd held various positions of increasing responsibility culminating in the position of Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, an inaugural role for that university.

Dr. Cudd is an accomplished teacher and scholar whose research explores themes of oppression, economic inequality, capitalism, and gender. Her philosophical interests—the focus of more than 50 books, articles, and chapters published under her name—span social and political philosophy, philosophy of economics, decision theory and feminist theory.

She holds a Doctorate in Philosophy and two master's degrees—a Master of Arts in Philosophy and a Master of Arts in Economics—all earned from the University of Pittsburgh.





## Keynote:



**Ruth Watkins, Ph.D.**  
President of Strada Impact,  
Strada Education Network

Ruth V. Watkins is president of Strada Impact, where she leads Strada Education Network’s research, philanthropy, thought leadership, and policy efforts to help more individuals access and complete postsecondary education and training to improve their careers and lives.

Before joining Strada in 2021, Watkins built a strong reputation for supporting social change and community workforce needs as the 16th president of the University of Utah. In that role, she increased degree completion rates and research funding, established innovative student funding models, and built strong partnerships with community stakeholders. Uniting the campus as “One U,” Watkins and her team drove innovation in research, education, and operational efficiency, and addressed major societal challenges, including in mental health and interpersonal violence.

Under Watkins’ leadership, the University of Utah cultivated broad and deep connections to communities and was responsive to the state’s workforce needs. During her tenure, the university produced more graduates in high-demand fields than any other state institution, and those graduates secured employment or proceeded to graduate or professional school at noteworthy rates.

Watkins previously served as the University of Utah’s senior vice president for academic affairs for five years before being appointed president. Earlier in her career, she spent 20 years in leadership and faculty roles at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she served as dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, vice provost, and associate provost.

Watkins graduated with highest honors from the University of Northern Iowa with a bachelor’s degree in speech-language pathology. She earned a master’s degree and a doctorate in child language at the University of Kansas, where she was a National Institutes of Health predoctoral fellow. Her scholarship focuses on communication development and disabilities in young children.



## Plenary Session:



**Fred Brown**  
President and CEO  
The Forbes Funds

Fred Brown is President & CEO of The Forbes Funds, a supporting organization of The Pittsburgh Foundation, and a philanthropic organization focused on strengthening the management capacity and impact of community nonprofits in the Pittsburgh area. Mr. Brown previously served as the President & CEO of the Homewood Children's Village, a non-profit that takes a multi-generational approach to improving quality of life in Pittsburgh's Homewood neighborhood; and previously worked at the Kingsley Association developing green/sustainable communities through holistic visioning, resident capacity building, community empowerment, micro/macro planning and sustainable redevelopment implementation.

Mr. Brown has been a climate justice trainer, environmental justice leader, policy analyst, adjunct professor, dean of students, teacher, coach, mentor, certified Juvenile Justice Judge's trainer (TOT), certified conflict mediation and resolution trainer (TOT), master consultant, supervisor, director, and executive director of non-profit organizations since 1987.

He has helped to rewrite public policy through the Transportation Equity Network (WIN) that revised federal guidelines regarding public participation and transportation equity and recently helped designed a web-based environmental/energy reduction tool that teaches community residents how to strategically and pragmatically reduce their energy use through weatherization efforts, retrofits, alternative energy practices and monitoring energy use; creating models for green sustainable communities-via the Imagine Larimer Software and the use of SMART Board technology. A frequent speaker, trainer, coach, mentor, and consultant; Mr. Brown has a BS in Education from Indiana University of PA, MSW from the University of Pittsburgh, and was a doctoral candidate working on a PhD in SW and an MPH from the University of Pittsburgh.

## Recognition of Industry, Community Partners and Collaborators

We are very grateful to our partners and colleagues for working collaboratively to build strong and lasting relationships with our program, as well as providing interns with practical work experience, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. We also appreciate that these opportunities translate into supporting the talent needs of various host organizations and providing them with a humanities perspective. We are proud of our internship partnership.

Today, we want to recognize and express our gratitude to our partners and colleagues who have been directly involved and engaged with our internship program and the humanities @ work project. We will announce recipients of these awards during lunch.

Outstanding Industry Partner Award  
Outstanding Collaborator Award  
Outstanding Community Partner Award

## Linguistics Research and Internship Support Fund

The Pitt Linguistics Internship Program is a pioneer in the country in preparing students for challenging careers where linguistics is part of the solution, training them in a supportive environment, and strengthening Pitt Linguistics-industry partnerships to share knowledge through research and education. These internship experiences are highly impactful and help students to secure employment after graduation.

Such opportunities, especially if unpaid, are not always accessible to students who may need to earn money to support themselves. We have established a scholarship Fund in 2022 to support our students in need and attract a diverse student population to Pitt Linguistics, and help strengthen the pipeline for underrepresented students.

We are very grateful to all our donors. Thanks to their support, we are excited to share that we gave 4 scholarships already and we plan to award more scholarships in Fall 2023.

Fall 2022 Internship Grant Recipients:

Caiden Dietz  
Mayah Mbangah  
Meghan Bucheral  
Tarna Batelman

## Opportunities for Conference Audience Members



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

Drop-in Office Hours with The National Endowments for the Humanities

March 29, 2023

Dr. Hannah Schell

Location: The University Club Library

Drop-in office hours

1pm - 3pm

4:15 - 5pm

Office hours with Industry and Community Partners (Opportunities for students and interns): March 29, 2023

Location: The University Club Library

10:45am – 12:15pm

Jani Syed, Principal Specialist Solutions Architect, AWS

Nori Li, Senior Product Manager, Zoom

Derry Moore, Senior Linguist, Decodis

Ben Naismith, Assessment Scientist, Duolingo

Resource tables: Center for African Studies; Edge; Global Wordsmiths; Panthers Forward; Division Applicant Recruiter from the FBI (Special Agent Matt Schwersenska)

3pm – 4pm

Laura Brown, Sr. UX Researcher, Reality Labs, Meta

Post Conference Opportunities:

March 31, 2023

Noon: Nori Li (Zoom Project Manager) will meet prospective students

3pm: Nori Li will deliver a colloquium

Venue: G8 Cathedral of Learning

For questions, email: [soudia@pitt.edu](mailto:soudia@pitt.edu)



Humanities @ Work in the Community, Health & Tech Industries  
 Conference Schedule  
**Morning Speech Events**

8:00	Registration and continental breakfast (Ballroom A)
8:50	Conference Overview: Abdesalam Soudi, Ph.D.
9:00	Opening Remarks: Dr. Ann E. Cudd, Provost & Senior Vice Chancellor Executive Sponsor Remarks: UPMC Health Plan - John Lovelace, President, UPMC for You, Inc.; President, Government Programs and Individual Advantage Product
9:15	Keynote Speech: Ruth Watkins, Ph.D., President of Strada Impact, Strada Education Network
10:00	Coffee & Snack Break
10:15	Panel: 21st Century Skills, Working Across Disciplines, Social Determinants of Health Moderator: Judy C. Chang, MD, MPH Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ellen Beckjorde, Ph.D. Vice President, Population Health, UPMC Health Plan</li> <li>• Joanne Walters, MBA, Ph.D. Chief People Officer, SimpleSense</li> <li>• Catharine Young, Ph.D. Assistant Director for Cancer Moonshot Engagement and Policy at The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy</li> <li>• Susan Baida, Executive Director, The Collaboratory Against Hate, partnership between Pitt &amp; CMU</li> </ul>
11:15	Panel: Curricular Highlights and Cross-Disciplinary Training Moderator: Sirry Aang, Ph.D. Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Leavens, Ph.D. and Jess FitzPatrick, Ph.D.: Department of English Curriculum Highlights</li> <li>• Abdesalam Soudi, Ph.D., Na-Rae Han, Ph.D., Alan Juffs, Ph.D.: Department of Linguistics Curriculum Highlights</li> <li>• Chris Barlow, Pitt Business: Preparing Students to be Catalysts for Change</li> <li>• Belkys Torres, Ph.D., Office of the Provost: Interdisciplinary Transcript Distinction</li> </ul>
12:15	Lunch - Mediterranean Buffet (Ballroom A) Remarks by Nicola Foote, Ph.D., Dean, David C. Frederick Honors College, Professor, Pitt Graduate School of Public and International Affairs Recognition of Industry & Community Partners: Scott Kiesling, Ph.D., and Abdesalam Soudi, Ph.D.

Humanities @ Work in the Community, Health & Tech Industries  
 Conference Schedule  
**Afternoon Speech Events**

1:00	<p>Introduction: Valerie Kinloch, Ph.D., Renée and Richard Goldman Dean          Plenary Session: 2030 and Beyond: Cultivating Transformative Leadership to Move from Systems Change to Regenerative Ecosystem Co-Creation,          Fred Brown, President &amp; CEO of The Forbes Funds</p>
1:45	<p>Panel: Humanities in Tech, Alum and Guest Speakers from Industry          Moderator: Abdesalam Soudi, Ph.D.          Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nori Li, Ph.D. (Pitt Alum, 2017), Senior Product Manager, Zoom</li> <li>• Ben Naismith, Ph.D. (Pitt Alum, 2022), Assessment Scientist, Duolingo</li> <li>• Emily Peifer (Pitt Alum, 2020), Linguistic Data Specialist, and Susi Burger, Data Resources Manager, 3M</li> <li>• Laura Brown, Ph.D., Sr. UX Researcher, Reality Labs, Meta</li> </ul>
2:50	Coffee & Snack Break
3:00	<p>Panel: Humanities and Arts in Health          Moderator: Bernard J. Costello MD, DMD          Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sara E. Baumann, Ph.D.: Art, Visual Methods and Health</li> <li>• Jason Bitterman, MD; Christina Cheung, Medical Student; Olivia Legan Medical Student: Graphic Medicine: Teaching Comics to Medical Students</li> <li>• Gaetan Sgro, MD: My Life, My Story Program</li> <li>• A. Soudi, Ph.D. &amp; Tracey Conti, MD: Cultural Competency Education in Medical Practice</li> </ul>
4:15	<p>Panel: Reflections on Diverse Internship Experiences          Moderators: Gaetan Sgro, MD; A. Soudi, Ph.D.          Panelists - Pitt undergraduate internship alum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jose Martin (Pitt Alum, 2017), Digital Platform Engineer, Shift Paradigm</li> <li>• Kaylen Sanders (Pitt Alum, 2017), Associate Product Manager, CommonLit</li> </ul> <p>Panelists - Current Pitt undergraduate and graduate interns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Omar Alfadhel, Graduate Intern</li> <li>• Lynnette Tibbolt, Undergraduate Intern</li> <li>• Giordana Verrengia, Undergraduate Intern</li> </ul>
5:15	Closing

## Featured Speakers

### **Ellen Beckjord, Ph.D., MPH, Vice President, Population Health and Clinical Optimization, UPMC Health Plan**



Dr. Beckjord is a behavioral scientist, epidemiologist, and licensed clinical psychologist in disciplined pursuit of harnessing the power of connectivity to promote authentic connection to place health, peace, and abundance within equal reach of all. She did her doctoral training in clinical psychology at the University of Vermont and the Vanderbilt-VA internship consortium and her post-doctoral fellowship in the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Cancer Prevention Fellowship Program. From NCI, Dr. Beckjord spent three years in research consulting (RAND Corporation) and five years in academic medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and Hillman Cancer Center. In February 2015, she joined UPMC Health Plan where she serves as the Vice President of Population Health and Clinical Optimization and hosts the Health Plan's podcast, Good Health, Better World. Her current work is focused on population health, behavioral science, and the use of digital tools in clinical operations to promote health, wellness, and health behavior change.

### **Joanne Walters, MBA, Ph.D., Chief People Officer, SimpleSense**



Joanne Simon-Walters is a dynamic speaker, author, human resources, and leadership professional with 20 years of progressive management experience in multiple industries including education, healthcare, information technology, and financial services. Joanne's personal mission is to create and sustain platforms where intentionally excluded people are able to find their voice and share their stories.

Currently, Joanne is the Chief People Officer at a software company that integrates data and technologies to help operators and responders get the information they need to react faster during emergency incidents. In addition, Joanne develops and delivers online training courses for LinkedIn Learning and Madecraft. Joanne is the co-author of five HR certification preparation manuals published by McGraw-Hill. In July 2017, Joanne delivered a TEDx Talk on The Role of Transformational Leadership in Eliminating Workplace Bullying.

Joanne is a candidate for a Ph.D. in Creative Leadership for Innovation and Change. Additionally, Joanne has earned a Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a concentration in Technology Management and a Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in Finance. Joanne is a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), SHRM-Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP), certified Crucial Conversations trainer, Prosci Change Management Practitioner, and a trained paralegal specializing in employment law.

When Joanne is not working, she is spending time with her family on her favorite Caribbean beaches in her birthplace of St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands and her parents native country, Antigua, West Indies.

### **Catharine Young, Ph.D., Assistant Director for Cancer Moonshot Engagement and Policy at The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy**



Originally from South Africa, Dr. Catharine Young holds a doctorate degree in Biomedical Sciences and completed her Postdoctorate training in Biomedical Engineering. Currently she serves at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to advance the Cancer Moonshot - The President and First Lady's mission to decrease the number of cancer deaths by 50% over the next 25 years. Besides Catharine's federal government experience, Catharine's career has spanned a variety of sectors including academia, non-profit, biotech, and foreign government, all with a focus on advancing science. Awards include being selected as a TED Fellow, a New Voices Fellow of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, a Presidential Leadership Scholar, and Social Enablers top 100 most inspiring social entrepreneurs. Catharine is an advocate for women in STEM and has been a contributor to major social and media networks including TED-Ed, the Guardian and the UK Science and Innovation Network.

### **Nori Li, Ph.D. (Pitt Alum, 2017), Senior Product Manager, Zoom**



Noriyasu Li is a Senior Product Manager at Zoom. He has a background of over 10 years in academic research, automatic speech recognition, natural language understanding, and product management. His primary focus at Zoom are Machine Transcription and Translation. Prior to Zoom, he was a Product Manager and Language Engineer at Amazon, and was a core member of Alexa's Japan launch in 2018. He received his Ph.D in Linguistics in 2017 from the University of Pittsburgh.

## Susan Baida, Executive Director, The Collaboratory Against Hate

Susan Baida is the inaugural Executive Director of the Collaboratory Against Hate (CAH), a research and action center that seeks to develop effective interventions to inhibit every stage in the creation and growth of extremist hate as well as to minimize its impacts. A partnership between Carnegie Mellon University and University of Pittsburgh, CAH leverages the strengths of both campuses to develop and support innovative multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and cross-university research that translates into real time interventions. Susan works with academic leaders and external partners to build multidisciplinary research, foster growth, fundraise and manage daily operations.



Prior to this role, she served as Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at UPMC where she developed and implemented systemwide strategy for its 40+ hospitals and 92,000+ employees that addressed increasing workforce diversity, minimizing health inequities for underserved communities, and deepening community partnerships. During the first half of her career, she was a global marketing executive for Fortune 500 companies in the cosmetics and hotel industry and then left corporate life to co-found a healthcare technology venture addressing the needs of family caregivers of aging parents inspired by her personal experience. Parallel to her career, she volunteered in her community serving as director for Manhattan Community Board, an advisor to the Mayor's office where she chaired the Human Services committee and passed resolutions to address affordable housing, same sex marriage, class size reduction, homelessness, etc.

She currently serves on the board of directors for Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, La Promesa Foundation, the Pittsburgh Women's Alliance, and the Pine Richland Anti-Racist Parent Coalition. She graduated from Emory University with a BA in Liberal Studies. She received executive leadership training from Vassar College through Estee Lauder Companies and DEI leadership training from Inclusant, LLC.

## Sarah Leavens, Ph.D., Department of English

Sarah Leavens is a Teaching Associate Professor in English at the University of Pittsburgh, where she serves as the Internship Coordinator for the English Department. She teaches a range of courses in the Public and Professional Writing Program, including Language of Policy and Power, History and Politics of the English Language, and Integrating Writing and Design, and works with graduate teachers via CEAT (the Committee for the Evaluation and Advancement of Teaching). A long-time faculty tutor in the Writing Center, Leavens also co-coordinates the Writers' Café, a series of informal creative writing workshops.



With a background in nonprofit outreach, community-integrated projects, and nontraditional classroom teaching, as well as visual art, she also works as a teaching artist specializing in intersections of writing and art. She has taught with PAArts in Education, Creative Nonfiction magazine, and the Pittsburgh Office of Public Art, among others. Leavens received an MFA in poetry and nonfiction from Chatham University; her work has appeared in Creative Nonfiction, Corium, and So to Speak, among other places

## Jess FitzPatrick, Ph.D., Department of English

Jessica FitzPatrick conducts research at the confluence of postcolonial theory, speculative fiction studies, spatial studies, and new media creation. As the Director of the Digital Narrative and Interactive Design (DNID) program, FitzPatrick works with DNID students, faculty, and advisors across the School of Computing and Information and the English Department in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. She regularly mentors DNID students as they design and implement interactive projects tuning narrative with code. FitzPatrick also directs the English Department's Digital Media Lab (DML), which supports educational programming and creative pedagogy about digital media.



## Na-Rae Han, Ph.D., Department of Linguistics

Na-Rae Han is a Teaching Professor in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Pittsburgh, where she teaches computational linguistics and data science methods. She advises PyLing, "Pitt Python Linguistics Group", a community of students and alumni committed to studying and practicing computational linguistics. Before joining Pitt, she was part of ETS's Automated Scoring and Natural Language Processing Group. She participated in multiple linguistic data and annotation projects throughout her career, many of which were published by the Linguistic Data Consortium.





## **Abdesalam Soudi, Ph.D., Department of Linguistics**



Abdesalam Soudi is a Teaching Associate Professor in the department of Linguistics in the Dietrich School, a Faculty Fellow with the Honors College, and a Faculty Affiliate with the African Studies Center at Pitt. Dr. Soudi is the primary investigator of a project on Humanities @ Work in the Community, Health, and Tech Industries. He has been co-directing a master's level course on cultural competency offered through the Institute for Clinical Research Education for 17 years. In collaboration with colleagues at Pitt, he created the Humanities in Health (HinH) Initiative. He won the inaugural Diversity in the Curriculum Award in 2017 for his success in creating a diverse and inclusive learning environment; in 2018, he won the first-ever Pitt seed grant award for a proposal to build an engagement platform for humanities at work.

He is also the founder of the Linguistic Internship Program, and he collaborates with diverse community and tech industries. In 2019, he was recognized as an "Honorary Employee" by M\*Modal. His research interests include Electronic Health Records, Arabic Linguistics, Medical Discourse and Cross-Cultural Communication. He is a Lead Innovator of The Cultural Engagement Playbook® which is focused on creating culturally and linguistically inclusive spaces for living and working together while embracing cultural differences. He has published his research in several journals and magazines. He co-edited a volume called Diversity Across the Disciplines in 2020.

## **Alan Juffs, Ph.D., Department of Linguistics**



Alan Juffs is Professor in the Department of Linguistics. He was the Director of the English Language Institute at the University of Pittsburgh from 1998-2020. Originally from the United Kingdom, he has lived and taught in France, China (Hunan Province), Japan, and Canada.

His research interests include links between semantics and syntax, second language acquisition and teaching, and corpus linguistics. He has contributed extensively to the field through his research, which has been published in numerous scholarly journals, and his books on topics such as the lexicon, sentence processing, and language development in Intensive English Programs have become standard references in the field.

In addition to being a highly regarded expert and leading authority in the field of linguistics, he is also known for his dedication to teaching. He is committed to sharing his knowledge and expertise with students and mentees. Alan is a Winner of the 2013 Provost's Award for Excellence in Mentoring Doctoral Students.

Alan also serves as Director of Grad Studies, LRDC Center Associate, and Humanities Co-Teaching Fellow. He enjoys hiking in the wonderful natural areas of western Pennsylvania and wherever he can escape from a city.

## **Ben Naismith, Ph.D. (Pitt Alum, 2022), Assessment Scientist, Duolingo**



Ben Naismith is an Assessment Scientist on the Validity and Outreach team of the Duolingo English Test. His work at Duolingo focuses on advancing the field of high stakes testing through research and development, supporting the Duolingo English Test's mission of lowering barriers to education access for English language learners around the world. Prior to joining Duolingo, Ben was involved in the field of English language teaching for nearly 20 years. In this time, he worked in numerous countries and contexts as a teacher, teacher trainer, materials developer, assessment specialist, and researcher. He holds a PhD, MSc, and MA in Applied Linguistics, and his research interests include second language acquisition, corpus linguistics, language assessment, teacher education, and lexical development.

## **Emily Peifer (Pitt Alum, 2020), Linguistic Data Specialist**



Emily Peifer is a Linguistic Data Analyst for 3M Health Information Systems where she regularly works with clinical conversation data doing transcription, annotation, and data management. She also serves as the intern liaison for the 3M/Pitt Linguistic internship program, helping to train and acclimate the interns to the tasks of the Linguistic Data Team at 3M. She holds a BA in Linguistics as well as Spanish from the University of Pittsburgh where she graduated in 2020. She never dreamed it was possible to find a job in the technical industry with a degree in Linguistics which is why she's excited to share her insights with you.



### **Susi Burger, Data Resources Manager, 3M**

Susi Burger is a Data Resource Manager at 3M|IM\*Modal with over 30 years of professional experience in both academia and industry. Her areas of expertise include discourse analysis and dialog summarization, phonetics and speech technology, with a special focus on emotion in speech, dialects and accents. Prior to her current role, she worked as a Project Scientist and Senior Data Collection Manager at CMU and as a Research Associate at the University of Karlsruhe and the University of Munich in Germany.



Susi has been a pioneer in speech technology research since the early 1990s. Her research has been published in diverse academic journals and presented at numerous international conferences, covering a range of topics such as emotion in multiparty conversation, evaluation of ASR applications, features of spontaneous speech, filled pauses in spontaneous speech, cross-system adaptation and combination for continuous speech recognition, and competitive evaluation of commercially available speech recognizers in multiple languages.

Susi is deeply committed to mentoring and believes in the importance of providing students with opportunities to gain real-world experience beyond the classroom.

Susi's work has had a profound impact on the generation of linguistic and multimodal resources for a diverse set of speech and multimodal technologies, as well as on the students she has mentored throughout her career.

### **Laura Brown, Ph.D., Sr. UX Researcher, Reality Labs, Meta**

Trained with a PhD in Linguistic Anthropology and an interdisciplinary humanities postdoc, I spent several years as a faculty member in Pitt's Department of Anthropology before transitioning to work in tech. I'm currently a pathfinding researcher at Meta Reality Labs, where I draw on methods from Anthropology, Linguistics, and Semiotics to help define directions for emerging technologies. My recent work has examined how people who live together share control of electronic devices, how built environments create opportunities for social connection, and how the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated shifts in how people mark and measure time. As well as conducting primary research, I collaborate with designers, engineers, and artists to help translate insights into product direction and strategy. I teach a course on "Ethnography for design of emergent technologies" for employees at Meta. Chat with me about: transitioning from academia into big tech, models of academic-industry collaboration, cartooning as a research method, and game design as a way to communicate research findings.



### **Belkys Torres, Ph.D., Associate Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence in Education Teaching Assistant Professor in Latinx and Gender Studies**

In her capacity as Associate Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence in Education, Dr. Torres focuses on increasing educational equity by identifying and working toward the removal of academic and structural barriers to student persistence and completion, with an emphasis on those issues that disproportionately impact select student groups.

Dr. Torres also holds the position of Teaching Assistant Professor in Latinx and Gender Studies for the Literature Program in the Department of English. She earned her doctorate at the University of Notre Dame. Her dissertation, "Serial Storytelling, Female Audiences and Telenovelas: Television's influence on Contemporary Latina/o Fiction," offers a multidisciplinary approach to examine melodrama's subversive potential within U.S. Latina/o literature by adapting recent scholarship on serialized melodrama and feminist theory to discussions of the Latin American telenovela and U.S. Latinx fiction. Her research interests include Latinx literary and cultural studies, ethnic media studies, cultural hybridity, transnationalism, feminist theory, intercultural competency training, global & community engaged learning, and program/curricular assessment



## **Sara E. Baumann, Ph.D.: Art, Visual Methods and Health**



Sara Baumann is a global health, mixed methods researcher with primary research interests in harnessing participatory, arts-based, and visual research methods to investigate complexities surrounding women's and adolescent reproductive health. She has over 14 years of experience conducting research and programming in health and development in South and Southeast Asia, with a current focus on Nepal. Her research agenda embraces community-engaged methods for developing evidence-based approaches for improving social determinants of health. Her research has been published in a range of peer-reviewed journals such as *Qualitative Health Research*, *Global Public Health*, *Health Promotion Practice*, the *American Journal of Public Health*, and more. Her visually-situated research outputs have been featured in diverse media outlets from NPR to *Glamour Magazine*, and her films have been screened at the Smithsonian Institute, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, and United Nations Headquarters in New York. Dr. Baumann's work has been supported by a Fulbright Scholarship to Bangladesh, and a Boren Fellowship to Nepal.

## **Christina Cheung, Medical Student**



Christina is currently a fourth-year medical student at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. She grew up just north of Pittsburgh in Wexford and went to Cornell University for her undergraduate years to study Human Development. She has always had an interest in art and music, both of which she always found to be stress relievers. However, throughout medical school, she unfortunately felt she had to somewhat sacrifice these hobbies. Yet, she was able to take a couple electives offered by the medical school that incorporated art into medicine, which she loved. She now hopes to incorporate her passion for art in any way possible into her medical practice in the future. As for next year, she is excited to be in New York City at Mt. Sinai Hospital training to be a pediatrician/general psychiatrist/child and adolescent psychiatrist!  
Olivia Legan, Medical Student

## **Olivia Legan, Medical Student**



Olivia Legan is a 4th year medical student at University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and will begin her Pediatrics residency this summer. She is especially interested in child advocacy, adolescent medicine, and medical humanities. She has been lucky enough to complete fantastic electives in both graphic medicine (with Dr. Jason Bitterman) and narrative medicine (with Dr. Gaeten Sgro) this year. She looks forward to further exploring medical humanities during her Pediatrics training.

Olivia is from California and attended Kenyon College where she studied Psychology and Spanish. She worked at Columbia University's Head Start and then completed Bryn Mawr's Premedical Post-Baccalaureate Program. In her free time, Olivia enjoys reading novels, boxing, and exploring state parks around Pittsburgh.

## **Gaetan Sgro, MD**



Dr. Sgro is an Academic Hospitalist at VA Pittsburgh, an Associate Program Director for the UPMC Internal Medicine Residency Program, and a Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPSoM).

He is a clinician and a writer who serves as the Site Director of the My Life, My Story Program at VA Pittsburgh and Co-Director of the Area of Concentration in the Medical Humanities and Ethics at UPSoM. He is the recipient of teaching awards including the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award, the Golden Apple Teaching Award and the 2022 Carl R. Fuhrman Clinical Educator of the Year Award. His creative writing has been recognized by Glimmer Train's Short Story Awards for New Writers and has appeared in the *The Bellevue Literary Review*, *Hippocampus Magazine*, *Hektoen International*, *The Healing Muse*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *JAMA*, and in the *Best New Poets Anthology*.

## Jason Bitterman, MD

Dr. Jason Bitterman is an Assistant Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Pittsburgh. He completed his residency training at Rutgers New-Jersey Medical School/Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation and his fellowship training at the Hospital for Special Surgery. His clinical practice focuses on spine and musculoskeletal disorders.

Outside of the clinic, Dr. Bitterman enjoys using visual art – in particular comics – to reflect on and satirize his experiences in medicine. He won the AMA Journal of Ethics' Conley Arts and Medicine award in 2017.



## Tracey Conti, MD

Dr. Tracey Conti is an Associate Professor and Executive Vice Chair in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. She also serves as the Program Director of the UPMC McKeesport Family Medicine Residency. A native of Pittsburgh, Dr. Conti attended the Honors College at Prairie View A&M University (TX). After graduating from Temple University School of Medicine, she completed her family medicine residency at the University of Maryland where she served as chief resident. Dr. Conti is fellowship trained in women's health and faculty development. At McKeesport Hospital, she serves as the eRecord Medical Director while also serving on the Medical Executive and Academic Leadership Committees. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the UPMC Health Plan and leads the primary care subgroup of the UPMC Board of Directors Health Disparities Committee. Dr. Conti is also a member of the Black Equity Coalition. This Pittsburgh-based coalition is a group of public health researchers, businesspeople and elected officials working to address health equity as a way to secure better health and economic outcomes for the black community during the pandemic and beyond. Her clinical and advocacy interests include health disparities and healthcare delivery to underserved communities, medical education and women's health. She is a champion for patient empowerment through education and the development of strong patient-physician partnerships in order to optimize individual, family and community healthcare.



## Jose Martin (Pitt Alum, 2017), Digital Platform Engineer, Shift Paradigm

Jose Martin is a Platform Engineer at Shift Paradigm. He completed the linguistics internship in Spring of 2017. He graduated from Pitt with a Linguistics/Urban Studies Bachelor's degree. After graduation, he worked at a boarding school in South Korea for the 2017-18 school year. After coming back, he joined a tech services company as an account representative; soon transitioning to a coding role automating processes. Jose has since worked in Marketing, currently coding to support campaigns as a platform engineer.



## Kaylen Sanders (Pitt Alum, 2017), Associate Product Manager, CommonLit

Kaylen Sanders graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 2017 with a Bachelor's degree in Linguistics and minors in Computer Science and Nonfiction Writing. During her time at Pitt, she interned at Carnegie Mellon University's ArticulateLab where she supported the sociolinguistic analysis of a culturally-aligned, virtual-peer education technology. She went on to complete a Master of Science in Computational Linguistics at Brandeis University, graduating in 2019. Kaylen's career, in both tech and consulting, has been devoted to improving educational outcomes for students through data. She currently works as an Associate Product Manager at CommonLit, a nonprofit edtech company that creates high-quality, free literacy curriculum. In her spare time, she loves reading, trying new dessert recipes, and spending time with her cat, Seven.



### **Omar Alfadhel, Graduate Intern**



Omar Alfadhel is a second-year graduate student studying linguistics at the University of Pittsburgh. Omar is an international student who joined the program as a master's student in 2021. He graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2019 with a BS Finance. His research during the first year of the program was focused on Arabic linguistics and later shifted towards second language acquisition and English as an additional language. Upon completion of his degree, Omar aims to pursue a career as a language teacher. In 2022, he participated in a graduate-level linguistics internship with Kasisto KAI - Digital Experience Platform, which he is excited to share about today.

### **Lynnette Tibbolt, Undergraduate Intern**



Senior undergraduate Lynnette Tibbolt is earning a major in Writing and a minor in Chemistry. Along with her position at Pitt Med Magazine as an Editorial Intern, she also works on the Pitt News Opinions desk as a Senior Staff Columnist. This year, she's completing an independent study analyzing 1800s healthcare and disease through literature.

### **Giordana Verrengia, Undergraduate Intern**



As a Public & Professional Writing major, Giordana Verrengia enjoys when her assignments teach her something new, whether about technology or history. Through her internship at CMU's College of Engineering, she has honed her science writing skills and learned how to translate complex topics so that a general audience can appreciate them.



















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