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Measuring Compassion in the Workforce

Haley Kirk, Jeffrey Jenkins, Information Systems

My ORCA project is designed to measure a person’s level of compassion using mouse-cursor tracking. The field of compassion is relatively untouched in the world of research, and I wanted to be one of the first to effectively measure compassion. I also wanted this measurement to be easily implemented into the workforce. To achieve this goal, I designed two activities. The first activity is a game that is designed to gauge a person’s level of compassion. The second activity uses mouse-tracking technology to measure compassion in an even more accurate fashion. Using these two activities, my mentor and I created a test that determines a person’s overall level of compassion. While we have not been accepted into a conference to present our research yet, we have high hopes for an upcoming conference in 2019. Additionally, that project has opened many doors for me personally and has given me a better look into the world of research.

My mentor and I initially wanted to submit this paper to HICCS (Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences) for 2019. However, our results were not significant enough to be accepted into this conference. Based on the feedback we received from the admission panel, we were able to modify our experiment to make it more accurate and an better candidate for conferences. Our goal is to be accepted into AMCIS (Americas Conference on Information Systems) for the summer of 2019, where we would present our findings to many of the top information systems researchers in the world. We should find out if we are accepted into this conference around February of 2019.

This project has opened many doors for me. This project, funded by the ORCA grant, has given me practical experience outside of the classroom that has been extremely valuable. For example, over the past summer I was able to complete an internship at PetSmart’s headquarters doing web development. The experience I had running my own research project, from both a technical and managerial perspective, was extremely useful.

Additionally, I was chosen as a finalist for the Women Tech Awards this past fall. I was chosen to be a finalist partially due to my role in this research project. When I was interviewed by the Women Tech Council in preparation for the awards ceremony, all the judges asked me about this project. It was a really cool experience to be able to tell the prestigious judges about my work with compassion, a research field that is so untouched.

The best part about my mentoring experience was my mentor himself. Jeff Jenkins really took the time to help me understand what it takes to be a great researcher. He also took the time to help with the smaller, minute details of my project. Jeff helped me think of ways to better my project. His previous experience with research proved to be an extremely valuable asset. Additionally, I was appreciative of how flexible my mentor was with me regarding my schedule. Going through the Junior Core for my major proved to be a large consumer of my time. Jeff was really considerate when it came to working with my schedule, despite his own hectic life.

I can’t think of any way that my mentoring experience could be improved. Overall it was a very positive experience.

This mentorship has greatly improved my undergraduate experience at BYU. It has provided me with opportunities that I would not have been exposed to otherwise, such as being chosen as a finalist for a prestigious award, and potentially travelling overseas to present my findings. It has also helped me build...
relationships with professionals in my field. I am thankful for the opportunities this mentorship has provided.

I am so thankful to the donor who funded my ORCA grant. Without this grant, I would not have been able to run all the tests needed to make this project successful. I am so thankful for you and for all of the opportunities your generosity has given me. I have loved being able to make my own mark in the world of research. I look forward to the additional contributions I will make and will always remember the impact that the ORCA grant had on my ability to research.

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