

Emani Hicks

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NSF-GRFP Fellow | UC-HBCU Fellow | CERES Scholar | PEI Fellow

EDUCATION

2021 - 2026	University of California, Irvine Thesis Title: Fostering Awareness Among People with Noise Sensitivity and Allies	Ph.D. Informatics Expected 2026
2021 - 2023	University of California, Irvine	M.S. Informatics
2016 - 2021	Alabama A&M University	B.S. Mechanical Engineering

AWARDS & HONORS

2024	NSF PROMISE Engineering Institute (PEI) Mentor Academy Fellow
2024	Bob & Barbara Kleist Endowed Graduate Fellowship
2023	UCI Grad Slam Second Place Winner
2023	CERES Scholar
2022	Best Poster Award, UbiComp Conference 2022
2021	National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
2021	UC-HBCU Fellowship

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Publications [Peer-reviewed]

- J2. Aehong Min, Kelli Dickerson, Sohyeon Park, **Emani Hicks**, Ariel Han, Jennifer D. Rubin, Ella Lombard, Katharine Chen, Riddhi Divanji, Candice Odgers, and Gillian R. Hayes. 2026. Perceptions of AI-Driven EdTech: Nationwide Survey and Focus Group Insights from Key End Users. *ACM Trans. Comput.-Hum. Interact.* Just Accepted (February 2026). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3798278>
- J1. **Emani Hicks**, Sohyeon Park, Avery Mavrovounioti, Weijie Du, Jialuo Hu, Kade Joshua Na, Nathan Serrano, Rafael Carrillo Muñoz, Elizabeth A. Ankrah, Aehong Min, Jazette Johnson, and Gillian R. Hayes. 2025. Informing the Design of Mobile and Wearable Technology for Noise Sensitivity. *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.* 9, 5, Article MHC1017 (September 2025), 26 pages. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3743725>

Conference Publications [Peer-reviewed]

- C3. **Emani Hicks**, Luc Rieffel, Ariya Gowda, Aehong Min, and Gillian R. Hayes. Collaboration and Assistive Technology: Facilitating Joint Awareness for Noise Sensitivity. In Proceedings of the 2026 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '26), April 13–17, 2026, Barcelona, Spain. ACM, New York, NY, USA, 18 pages. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3772318.3793203>

- C2. **Emani Dotch**, Avery Mavrovounioti, Weijie Du, Elizabeth Ankrah, Jazette Johnson, Aehong Min, and Gillian R. Hayes. 2024. Accessibility through Awareness of Noise Sensitivity Management and Regulation Practices. In *The 26th International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS '24)*, October 27–30, 2024, St. John's, NL, Canada. ACM, New York, NY, USA, 18 pages. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3663548.3675630>
- C1. **Emani Dotch**, Jazette Johnson, Rebecca W. Black, and Gillian R. Hayes. 2023. Understanding Noise Sensitivity through Interactions in Two Online Autism Forums. In *The 25th International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS '23)*, October 22–25, 2023, New York, NY, USA. ACM, New York, NY, USA, 19 pages. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3597638.3608413>

Extended Abstracts, Short Papers, & Posters [Lightly peer-reviewed]

- SP6. **Emani Hicks**, Luc Rieffel, Ariya Gowda, Arturo Morales-Tellez, Aehong Min, Jesus A. Beltran, and Gillian R. Hayes. 2025. AudioBuddy: Demonstrating a Wearable and Mobile System Approach for Noise Sensitivity Awareness. In *Companion of the 2025 ACM International Joint Conference on Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing (UbiComp Companion '25)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 4 pages. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3714394.3754370>
- SP5. Ariya Gowda, **Emani Hicks**, and Gillian R Hayes. 2025. Enchanted Forest: A Gamified Approach for Children's Self-Regulation in Noisy and Overstimulating Settings. *Proceedings of the 24th Interaction Design and Children*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 1151–1155. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3713043.3731554>
- SP4. **Emani Dotch**. 2024. AudioBuddy: An Assistive Technology for People with Noise Sensitivity and Their Care Networks. In *Companion of the 2024 on ACM International Joint Conference on Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing (UbiComp '24)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 267–271. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3675094.3678365>
- SP3. **Emani Dotch**. 2024. Facilitating Joint Awareness Within Care Networks for Noise Sensitivity Management and Regulation. In *Companion Publication of the 2024 Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW Companion '24)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 17–20. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3678884.3682042>
- SP2. **Emani Dotch**, Jialuo Hu, Avery Mavrovounioti, Weijie Du, Jazette Johnson, Elizabeth Ankrah, Aehong Min, and Gillian R Hayes. 2023. Supporting Noise Sensitivity and Emotion Regulation with Children. In *Proceedings of the 22nd Annual ACM Interaction Design and Children Conference (IDC '23)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 522–526. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3585088.3593887>
- SP1. **Emani Dotch**, Jesus Armando Beltran, Jazette Johnson, Ashhad Shah, Kohsuke T. Hirano, Franceli L. Cibrian, and Gillian Hayes. 2023. AudioBuddy: Using Sound Sensors to Support Sound Sensitivity Awareness in Autistic Individuals. In *Adjunct Proceedings of the 2022 ACM International Joint Conference on Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing and the 2022 ACM International Symposium on Wearable Computers (UbiComp/ISWC '22 Adjunct)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 27–29. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3544793.3560336>

* Best Poster Award

White Papers & Technical Reports

- WP3 Zolyomi, Annuska, **Hicks, E.**, Ito, M., Jeyte, U., & Park, S. 2025. Integrating Connected Learning, Neurodiversity, and Emerging Technology: An Intersectional Analysis of HCI, Education, and Disability Research. Irvine, CA: Connected Learning Alliance.
- WP2 Rubin, J. D., Lombard, E. J., Chen, K., Divanji, R., Min, A., **Dotch, E.**, Han, A., Dickerson, K., Hayes, G., & Odgers, C. (2025). Navigating AI as a family: Caregivers' perspectives and strategies [White paper]. foundry10. <https://www.foundry10.org/resources/navigating-ai-as-a-family>
- WP1 Pownall, M., Ghai, S., Fassi, L., Hayes, G., ... **Dotch., E.** ... Orben, A. (2024, March 19). What does Open Science mean for Educational Technology Research? Challenges, Opportunities, and a Call for Research. <https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/s73xb>

Non-archival Posters & Workshop Papers

- WP1. **Inclusive Practices for Child-Centered AI Design and Testing**
Emani Dotch and Vitica Arnold
For CHI 2024 Workshop on Child-centred AI Design (non-archival) <https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.05920>

INVITED TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 *Co-designing Technology with Autistic Children to Support Emotion Regulation and Noise Sensitivity*
International Seminar on Emotion and Sensory Experiences in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Hashir International Institute. November 14, 2025
- 2025 *Neurodiversity, Connected Learning, and AI*
Emani Dotch, Mimi Ito, Sohyeon Park, Annuska Zolyomi, and Debroah Fields. Donald Bren Hall. February 25, 2025
- 2025 *Accessibility Through Awareness of Noise Sensitivity Experiences.* Hashir International Institute for Patient Education Program. January 20, 2025
- 2023 *AudioBuddy: Using Sound Sensors to Support Sound Sensitivity Awareness in Autistic Individuals.* CERES Retreat 2023. Ensenada, Mexico. January 13, 2023.
- 2023 *Stop Making That Noise!* St. Margaret's Episcopal School STEAM Expo. San Juan Capistrano, California. April 29, 2023

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Summer 2025 **Human-Computer Interaction** — UC Irvine
Instructor
- Fall 2023 **User Needs Analysis** — UC Irvine
Teaching Assistant
- Spring 2020 **Strength of Materials** — Alabama A&M University
Teaching Assistant
- Fall 2020 **Intro to Mechanical Engineering** — Alabama A&M University
Teaching Assistant

Mentoring and Research Supervision (not comprehensive)

University of California, Irvine

- 2024-2025 Ariya Gowda, Software Engineering (SP5)
- 2024-2024 Jessica Choi, Computer Science
- 2024-2024 Sara Chong, Cognitive Science
- 2024-2024 Jessica Sotelo, Psychology
- 2023-2024 Rafael Carrillo Munoz, Informatics
- 2023-2024 Nathan Serrano, Software Engineering
- 2023-2024 Avery Mavrovounioti, Informatics (C2, SP2)
- 2023-2024 Jailuo Hu, Computer Science (SP2)
- 2022-2024 Vitica Arnold, Informatics PhD
- 2022-2024 Weijie Du, Computer Science (C2, SP2)

Alabama A&M University

- 2018-2022 Miahri Merrell, Mechanical Engineering
- 2018-2022 Jarvis Prewitt, Mechanical Engineering
- 2018-2022 Cameron Bolds, Mechanical Engineering
- 2018-2022 William Blake, Mechanical Engineering
- 2018-2022 Chantelle Williams, Mechanical Engineering
- 2018-2022 Philemon Jones, Mechanical Engineering
- 2018-2022 Jamarian Bell, Mechanical Engineering

ATTENDED TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

- 2025 EWOC Refresh & Reflect, Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders (CAND)
- Workshop for caregivers to engage in self-care and wellness activities.
- 2025 Voices of Experience: Navigating Autism with Families of Color, CAND
- 2025 Activate to Captivate
- Public speaking course
- 2025 Summer Teaching Apprenticeship Program
- A mentoring program for graduate student teachers
- 2024 Qualitative Methods Workshop
- 2023 Sighted Guide Training
- Training course to become a sighted guide for blind and low vision individuals.
- 2022 Mentoring Excellence Program

SERVICE

Professional

2025	CHI 2025 Program Committee, Assistant to Subcommittee Chair
2024-Present	UCI Next Gen Pathways, Mentor
2023-2024	Informatics Graduate Student Association, President
2023-2024	National Coalition of 100 Black Women Orange County's Next Generation of Women Leaders
2022	Competitive Edge Social Planning
2021-Present	UCI Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders (CAND), Encouraging Women of Color Program (EWOC)

Conference Student Volunteer

2025	The ACM International Joint Conference on Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing (UbiComp/IMWUT)
2024	The ACM Computer Human Interaction Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI)
2023	CSUN Assistive Technology Conference
2023	The ACM International Joint Conference on Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing (UbiComp/IMWUT)
2023	The ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ASSETS)

Manuscript Reviewer

2025	The ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)
2025	The ACM Computer Human Interaction Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI)
2025	The ACM Interaction Design and Children (IDC) Conference
2024	The ACM Computer Human Interaction Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI)
2024	The ACM Transactions on Accessible Computing
2023	The ACM Interaction Design and Children (IDC) Conference