Vera Dureke

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EDUCATION

Indiana University East | Cumulative GPA: 3.0 | Richmond, IN
Bachelor of Science: Data Science and Mathematics — May 2026
Coursework: Data Structures, Exploratory Data Analysis, Dataset Building, Training Regression Models

Cornell University — Steubenville, OH
Machine Learning Foundations Certificate, Break Through Tech AI — May 2024-August 2024

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Verizon | *AI Studio Fellow* | Chicago, IL — August 2024-December 2024
- Developed a cutting-edge product categorization system using Verizon's internal data and publicly available datasets, improving classification accuracy by 20%.
- Built and evaluated models using Python, Scikit-Learn, and XGBoost; fine-tuned GPT with BERT using Hugging Face API on high-performance GPUs for nuanced context-aware categorizations.
- Applied research-backed interpretability tools like SHAP and attention visualization to analyze model decisions, improving transparency and stakeholder trust by 15%

CDW Corporation | *Contract Analyst* | Chicago, IL — February 2022-Current
- Conducted thorough review and analysis of 100+ contracts annually, ensuring accuracy, completeness, and compliance with company policies, leading to an impressive contract accuracy rate of 95%.
- Optimized a database containing 500+ contracts, achieving a remarkable 50%+ reduction in contract information search time, thereby enhancing operational efficiency.
- Implemented comprehensive data analysis strategies resulting in a significant 25% improvement in the reliability and accuracy of company data, leading to an overall reduction in discrepancies and ensuring data integrity.

Bank of America | *Database Management Intern* | Plano, TX — June 2024-August 2024
- Developed Tableau dashboards, improving the visibility of key risk metrics by 30% for decision-making processes.
- Standardized data management practices, reducing discrepancies across datasets by 20%.
- Conducted SQL queries and analyses to identify trends, supporting strategic initiatives for risk mitigation.

SpaceLab | *Data Lead (Promoted from Data Science Intern)* | Virtual — January 2023- Current
- Utilized Amazon SageMaker Studio for streamlined model development, improving predictive model accuracy by 15% through advanced data preprocessing and feature engineering.
- Explored PyTorch Datasets and DataLoaders in Jupyter Notebooks to optimize training workflows, reducing model training time by 20%.
- Supervised two case studies addressing aerospace challenges, deriving actionable insights and implementing machine learning solutions in collaboration with interdisciplinary teams.

PROJECTS

Happiness Report
- Implemented a machine learning model to predict the Happiness Score (Life Ladder) of a country using the World Happiness Report dataset. Applied supervised learning regression techniques to analyze key features such as GDP per capita, social support, life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity, and perceptions of corruption.

Technology Product Categorization
- Designed a generative AI system to create detailed, industry-aligned data sheets for technology products, improving documentation accuracy and reducing turnaround time by 40%.

LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Break Through Tech AI | *Fellow* — May 2024-Present
Blacks in Technology Chicago | Chapter *President* — February 2023-Present
Out in Tech Chicago | *Marketing Lead* — October 2022-Present
Baddies in Tech | *Discord Community Moderator* — June 2023-Present

AFFILIATIONS & SKILLS

Affiliations: NSBE, Rewriting the Code, Black in AI, ColorStack, Society of Women Engineers, Women in Data
Tools and Software: Python, R, SQL, Tableau, Power BI, Alteryx, AWS SageMaker Studio