

Laurel Goodhart

Software Engineer & Computational Linguist

✉ hi@konahart.com
🌐 konahart.com
in konahart
📷 konahart

I work at the intersection of language, technology, and storytelling to create the next generation of character-driven AI experiences.

Technical Skills & Tools

Specialties Natural Language Processing (NLP), Natural Language Understanding (NLU), conventional Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning, Large Language Models (LLMs)

Skills Data Management, Annotation, User Interface and User Experience Design (UI/UX), Research

Code Python, C#, JavaScript, TypeScript, React, C++, Java

Tools Unity, Jupyter, Chakra UI, Flask, MongoDB, MySQL, Stanford CoreNLP, NLTK, spaCy, Rasa, Git

Experience

- 2021—current **Natural Language Understanding Specialist**, *Walt Disney Imagineering*, remote
- Projects* D3-O9, interactive Star Wars droid character (Star Wars Galactic Starcruiser, Walt Disney World); internal AI character creation tools
- Responsibilities*
- Leading training, evaluation, and improvement of NLU systems for D3-O9 character
 - Collaborating with creative peers to guarantee that our products embody “Disney magic”
 - Using expertise in AI character production to translate between creative and technical teams
 - Designing and building software tools for next generation of AI character experiences
- 2019—2021 **Senior Software Engineer**, *Primed Technologies*, San Francisco, CA / remote
- Product* Long-term companion robot + app-based character for kids
- Responsibilities*
- Led software architecture design for state-of-the-art computer conversation at scale
 - Created a fantastical digital companion in a sprite-based iOS app
 - Conducted rapid prototyping of 3D mobile games
- 2018 **Natural Language Processing Specialist**, *Woebot Labs, Inc.*, San Francisco, CA
- Product* *Woebot*, a mental health chatbot that teaches users Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques
- Responsibilities*
- Applied expertise in chatbot conversational design to improve existing product
 - Created a novel application of NLU to therapeutic exercises
 - Trained, evaluated, and deployed language models for activity and mood classification
 - Established a data collection and annotation strategy
 - Conducted analysis of effects of NLU performance on retention during app onboarding
- 2015—2017 **Artificial Intelligence Engineer**, *PullString, Inc. (formerly ToyTalk, Inc.)*, San Francisco, CA
- Products* *PullString Author*, a no-code software platform for authoring human-fidelity AI conversation; *Hello Barbie*, a first-of-its-kind two-way conversational Barbie doll; character chat apps including: *Hearthstone*, *Call of Duty*, and *Humani: Jessie’s Story* (Facebook Messenger); *Doctor Strange* (Skype); and *Thomas & Friends Talk to You* (iOS and Android)
- Responsibilities*
- Designed and implemented NLP features for use by non-technical users
 - Negation detection, number conversion, user and author input normalization
 - Expressive word/pattern matching syntax for use by non-technical users
 - NLP and ML -powered synonym and phrase suggestion
 - Established large-scale testing to support data-driven decision-making
- ## Education
- 2013—2014 **Professional Master of Science in Computational Linguistics**, *University of Washington*, Seattle, WA
- Focused on Natural Language Processing, Machine Learning, and language modeling
 - Specific topics included Machine Translation, Information Retrieval, and Question Answering
- 2009—2013 **Bachelor of Arts in Applied Linguistics**, *Portland State University*, Portland, OR
- Minor in Computer Science
 - Honors College, undergraduate thesis: “The Linguistics of Sentiment Analysis”