

# ITLS and HEDI Students Showcase Cutting-Edge Research at AERA 2024 in Philadelphia

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Umar Shehzad presenting at AERA



Mengying Jiang presenting at AERA



Jake Hayward presenting at AERA



Christina Morgan presenting at AERA

Students from the Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences (ITLS) and Higher Education and Student Affairs (HEDI) programs captivated audiences at the prestigious 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association (AERA) held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from April 4-8.

The AERA Annual Meeting, renowned as the world's premier gathering of education researchers, drew over 15,000 participants this year. Among them, ITLS and HEDI students stood out, presenting their innovative research alongside esteemed faculty mentors.

Jake Hayward, a senior in HEDI, showcased his expertise in a presentation titled "Reflective practices in designing with conversational artificial intelligence," mentored by [Dr. Ha Nguyen](#). Hayward's outstanding work recently earned him the 2024 ITLS Undergraduate Researcher Award, while Dr. Nguyen was honored with the 2024 ITLS Undergraduate Research Mentor Award.

Accompanied by collaborators [Dr. Breanne K. Litts](#), [Dallas Haws](#), and [Dr. Melissa Tehee](#), ITLS doctoral student [Christina Morgan](#) shared insights on "Closing the Distance in Community Research Partnerships: Considering the Roles of Technology and Expertise in Relationship Building." Morgan's presentation, held within the structured poster session for the SIG-Media, Culture, & Learning, highlighted the pivotal role of technology in fostering meaningful community connections.

Additionally, Umar Shehzad, postdoctoral researcher alongside collaborators Dr. Jody Clarke-Midura and Dr. Mimi Recker, presented a paper title "Exploring Practical Measures as an Approach for Measuring Elementary Students' Attitudes Towards Computer Science," contributing valuable insights to the field of education. Mengying Jiang, an ITLS PhD student under the guidance of Kristin Searle, showcased her research on "Promoting data literacy in social studies through data visualization construction: Bar graphs and e-textile projects," emphasizing the importance of innovative teaching methods in enhancing data literacy skills among students.

These remarkable presentations underscore the dedication and innovation of ITLS and HEDI students in advancing educational research. Through their contributions, they continue to shape the future of education, enriching learning experiences and fostering meaningful connections within communities.