

Regents' Research Award Biography
Kwang J. Kim, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)

Kwang J. (Jin) Kim is Southwest Gas Professor of Energy and Matter of the Mechanical Engineering Department at the University of the Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). Prior to joining UNLV in Fall 2012, he was with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) as Professor and Chair of the Mechanical Engineering Department. He graduated from Yonsei University, South Korea in 1987 and received his MS and Ph.D. from Arizona State University in 1989 and 1992, respectively. His all three degrees are in Chemical Engineering. Later, he completed a postdoctoral study at the University of Maryland-College Park (UMCP) (1993-1995) in Mechanical Engineering. His research interests are in a broad spectrum of Energy Systems and Active Materials/Sensors. He has authored and co-authored more than 325 technical publications including 152 journal papers and 3 monographs. His academic accomplishments were recognized by a number of awards including the 2011 UNR Foundation Professorship, the 2006 UNR College of Engineering Lemelson Award for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and the 2002 Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Award in Engineering from Oak Ridge Associated Universities. Also, he enjoys working with industry where he finds an important link between his academic research and engineering products via technology transfer and intellectual property development. He has 2 granted patents and 3 pending patents. His patents include development of unique artificial muscle, special polymer sensors for catheters, functional coatings for condensers, and enhanced heat dissipating plate device for automobile head lamps. He is a Fellow of American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and currently serves on the editorial boards of four journals in his field of research.

Lynn Comella, Ph.D.
Regents' Rising Researcher Award

Academic Biography

My research program is animated by a desire to better understand a number of broad sociological themes, including the relationship between social movements and marketplace culture. I am part of a small but growing number of scholars whose research focuses on the cultural study of sexuality—an area that has special significance for a city like Las Vegas. The impact of my research is evidenced by the award of three internal research grants; a single-authored monograph under contract with Duke University Press; a co-edited volume (forthcoming from Praeger Press in January 2015); and a number of single-authored publications in peer-reviewed journals and high profile collections. I have edited three special journal issues related to my research, and have served as an invited keynote speaker at conferences in the US, Sweden, and Canada. I am contacted on a regular basis by local, national, and international media outlets to provide expert opinion on a wide range of issues regarding gender and sexuality. I have served as a resource, interviewee, or subject for more than 50 media stories. An important part of my research agenda is an ongoing commitment to public scholarship and civic engagement. Over the past four years I have researched and written more than 45 articles about sex and culture (totaling more than 45,000 words) for local and national media outlets. I have reported on the state of sex education in Nevada, the history of prostitution in Las Vegas from 1905 – 1955, and the growth of women's erotica, among other topics. My public scholarship bridges the genres of academic and popular writing, allowing me to extend the impact and reach of my research beyond traditional venues of academic publishing. In these, and other ways, I embrace UNLV's stated mission to “confront the challenges of economic diversification, urban growth, social justice and sustainability” through an active program of research, publication, scholarly outreach, and civic engagement.

Dr. Eelke Folmer Bio
University of Nevada, Reno

Eelke Folmer is an Associate Professor in Human-Computer Interaction at the University of Nevada in Reno. Eelke received an MS in 2001 and Ph.D. in software engineering in 2005 from the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. For his Ph.D. research he worked on a large European Union funded research project investigating how software architecture design can make software more resilient to usability changes. During a one year postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Alberta in Edmonton he changed his research focus to the emerging areas of video games and human-computer interaction. In 2006 he joined the Computer Science and Engineering department at UNR as an assistant Professor. His research focuses on designing, building, and evaluating technology to address high-impact social problems pertaining assistive technology, "real-world" accessibility, health and well-being. His research is largely motivated by the belief that a disability can be turned into a driver of innovation and that solving interaction design problems for users with "extreme" abilities allows for discovering interaction solutions that could benefit anyone. Eelke's research is supported by the National Science Foundation, Microsoft Research, Google Research and the Partners for Sight Foundation. His research has been featured in the New Scientist and MIT's Technology Review magazines. Eelke's graduate students have gone on to pursue careers in Academia as well as at companies such as Microsoft, Google, Apple and Amazon.

Dr. Amanda Keen-Zebert Biography
Desert Research Institute
Nominee for the Nevada Regents Rising Researcher Award

Dr. Amanda Keen-Zebert is an Assistant Research Professor of Geomorphology at the Desert Research Institute (DRI). Dr. Keen-Zebert received her Bachelors and Masters from the University of Arkansas, her Phd. from Texas State University, and was a National Science Foundation (NSF) International Research Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Institute of Geography and Earth Science, Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth, Wales, UK.

Dr. Keen-Zebert's research program at DRI focuses on geochronology and geomorphology, and she is the director of the E.L. Cord Luminescence Laboratory (DRILL) in the Institute's Division of Earth and Ecosystem Sciences (DEES). She has extensive training in Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating and fluvial geomorphology, and her studies focus on how luminescence research can inform on fluvial processes and vice versa. Though her main interests are at the cross roads of OSL and geomorphology, through the DRILL she conducts a wide range of research and applications in luminescence dating. Her other areas of interest and expertise include floodplain reworking, channel migration, bedrock channels, landscape evolution, and surface processes.

Dr. Keen-Zebert has been successful acquiring grant and contract awards, including the recent award of a NSF Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) grant for the acquisition of a Broad Energy Gamma Spectroscopy System for the Luminescence Laboratory. She is well published, with peer-reviewed articles appearing in Journal of Geology and Geomorphology. In addition to her position at DRI she is also a member of the graduate faculty at the University of Nevada, Reno Department of Geological Sciences and Engineering, where she advises students in luminescence research.