

Regents' Creative Activities – Community College  
Mark Wherry

Dr. Mark Wherry is the Director of Vocal Music at CSN where he conducts the CSN Chamber Chorale and Jazz Singers. He also teaches private and class voice and Jazz Appreciation. The CSN Jazz Singers were awarded 2nd place in the Community College Division at the Reno Jazz Festival in 2018. In 2017 The CSN choirs performed "Music of the Game of Thrones" with the Game of Thrones composer Ramin Djawadi at the MGM Grand Garden Arena and music from the film "The Greatest Showman" with Hugh Jackman at Caesar's Palace. In 2015 Mark was one of a select group of teachers chosen as a quarter finalist for the GRAMMY's Music Educator Award. Dr. Wherry is also the Director of Music at Mountain View Presbyterian Church.

As an alumnus of the prestigious BMI Music Theater Workshop in New York, his music was featured in the critically acclaimed Off Broadway musical review "It's That Time of Year." Dr. Wherry has composed the following musicals "It's Only Business" (CSN), "We're Here for You" (Las Vegas Fringe Festival) and "Mister Wives" (Onyx Theater). He appears regularly at The Composer's Showcase at the Smith Center, presenting his unique comedy material. His most recent work, a parody of tenor shows titled "Baritones of Love", was awarded "Best of the Fringe" at the Las Vegas Fringe Festival in 2019.

Dr. Wherry received his doctorate in choral conducting and jazz pedagogy from the University of Northern Colorado, Masters of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Miami and a Bachelor of Music from Hastings College.

Regents' Creative Activities – UNLV, UNR, NSC  
Dmitri Atapine

DMITRI ATAPINE has been described as a cellist with "brilliant technical chops" (*Gramophone*), whose playing is "highly impressive throughout" (*The Strad*). As a soloist and recitalist, he has appeared on some of the world's foremost stages, including Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, Zankel and Weill halls at Carnegie Hall, Chicago Cultural Center, and the National Auditorium of Spain. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Atapine is an artists with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and is an alum of The Bowers Program. His multiple festival appearances have included Music@Menlo, Chamber Music Northwest, La Musica Sarasota, Pacific Music Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, and Aix-en-Provence Festival among many others, with performances broadcast on television and radio in the United States, Spain, Italy, Canada, Mexico, and South Korea, including a nationally televised "Live from Lincoln Center" PBS special. Mr. Atapine is a regular collaborator with some of the most distinguished artists in the world, and his recordings, among them a world-premiere of Lowell Liebermann's complete works for cello and piano, can be found on the Naxos, Albany, Urtext Digital, BlueGriffin and Bridge record labels.

Mr. Atapine holds the doctorate degree from Yale School of Music, where he was a student of Aldo Parisot. Born into a family of musicians, his teachers have included Alexander Fedortchenko and Suren Bagratuni. The Artistic Director of Ribadesella Chamber Music Festival (Spain) and Apex Concerts (Nevada), he is Professor of Cello and Chair of Department of Music at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Regents' Teaching – Community College – Not-Tenured  
Cris Aguilar

Cris Aguilar is a Surgical Technology educator. He began in 2010 as an instructor for a Surgical Technology program in Boise, Idaho. In 2012, Cris became the Surgical Technology Program Director at the College of Southern Nevada. Cris' expertise lies in practical teaching methods and building/maintaining positive relationships with clinical partners.

Cris earned an Associate of Applied Science degree from the College of Southern Idaho in 2002 and became a Certified Surgical Technologist that same year. In 2011, Cris earned a Bachelor's Degree in Training and Development from The Idaho State University. Cris earned his Master of Education – Curriculum and Instruction in 2016 from the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Cris is an active member of the Association of Surgical Technologists and the Nevada State Assembly of Surgical Technologists.

In 2017, Cris testified on behalf of Surgical Technology educators in favor of mandatory education and certification for surgical technologists. The successful passage of this law now requires all surgical technologists in Nevada to have graduated from an accredited program and hold the credential of Certified Surgical Technologist. Parallel to this was the extension of the CSN Surgical Technology Program into Reno, NV. This was accomplished through a partnership between CSN, TMCC, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center and Renown Regional Medical Center.

Cris is looking forward to innovating and sharing education through technology with as many people as possible. Surgical Technology education with new partners such as UNR is on the horizon, and also the extension of the CSN Central Sterile Technician program into Reno, NV.

Regents' Teaching – Community College  
Jayna Conkey

Jayna Conkey is a Professor of Graphic Design at Western Nevada College. She earned her MFA in Photography and Electronic Media from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1996 and her B.A in Fine Arts from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1987. Before returning to Nevada, she was a Professor of Photography at the Oregon College of Art and Craft in Portland, Oregon from 1997-2000. In 2000, she was hired by Western Nevada College to build a Graphic Design program and create an AAS Degree. In 2003-2004 and 2010-2011 she received the WNC President's Honored Faculty Award and in 2018 she received WNC's Outstanding Faculty of the Year Award. Her work has been shown in over 30 solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally.

Regents' Teaching Award - Not Tenured - (UNLV, UNR, NSC, DRI)  
Kerie Francis

Dr. Kerie Ann Francis is an Assistant Professor in Residence in the Department of Sociology at UNLV. Her areas of specialization include medical sociology, with a specific emphasis on reproduction, feminist theories of work and motherhood, social movements, symbolic interaction, and qualitative research. Kerie's classroom work is her true passion, and she has won several awards for teaching at both the departmental and the university levels.

Dr. Francis challenges undergraduates to develop and apply their sociological imagination to understand the dynamics of power, privilege, and social inequalities. She exemplifies the qualities of an outstanding teacher and is a vital mentor to many undergraduate students. Her focus as a teacher is to empower students to use the analytic tools that sociology provides to think critically about their lives and the collective issues we face as citizens.

Regents' Teaching Award - Tenured - (UNLV, UNR, NSC, DRI)  
Sarah Harris

Dr. Sarah Harris is an Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at UNLV. Dr. Harris was an assistant professor and then associate professor at Harvey Mudd College before joining the faculty at UNLV as an associate professor in 2014.

Her accomplishments since joining UNLV's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering include 1) publishing an internationally renowned textbook (her second major textbook), 2) earning an international research and teaching fellowship, 3) being awarded a \$650,000 NSF S-STEM award in 2018 to support the retention and graduation of UNLV's Engineering students, and 4) revising five courses in the College of Engineering curriculum.

Dr. Harris has won many awards and honors, including being selected by UNLV's Engineering students to receive the 2018 CSUN (Consolidated Students of UNLV) Faculty Achievement Award, earning the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering's 2019 Distinguished Teacher Award, and earning the 2015 Elektra Award - an international award given by industry partners to recognize excellent contributions at the education/industry interface.

Dr. Harris brings both academic rigor and hands-on problem solving to her courses and actively engages students in their own learning process. Student feedback is overwhelmingly positive, with students describing her courses as simultaneously rigorous and empowering.

Regents' Academic Advisor – Community College  
Jennifer Pierce

Jennifer started her career in higher education as an adjunct faculty and tutor at Great Basin College. While teaching developmental English, she realized conversations she had with students outside of class had a critical, positive impact on student success, so she began to explore a career in student affairs. She was the Retention Coordinator at GBC for two years before relocating with her family to Reno, where she decided to finally pursue a Master's degree. She loves being a part of helping students reach their academic and personal goals, and particularly enjoys working with transfer students and students returning to college. In addition to working directly with students, Jennifer serves as the advising liaison to the Liberal Arts Division, and as the Assessment Coordinator and Peer Advisor Supervisor. Jennifer earned a BA in English Literature from Boise State University and an MA in Educational Leadership from the University of Nevada, Reno. She is also an MBTI® and Strong Interest Inventory Certified Practitioner. She has lived in Wyoming, Utah, Idaho and Nevada and cannot imagine living anywhere that does not have mountains where she can camp and hike with her husband and two children. Jennifer loves poetry and the arts, barbecuing with family and friends, and checking things off her to-do list.

Regents' Academic Advisor – Undergraduate – UNLV, UNR, NSC  
Grace Leal

Grace Leal received her BS and MS degrees in Industrial/Organizational Management from Saint Mary's College. Grace has spent more than 25 years in academic counseling and advising in higher education. She began working at the University of Nevada, Reno in 2014 as the Pre-Professional Advising Coordinator. She is responsible for implementing a comprehensive career and advising system to provide on-going assistance to students who are seeking admission into professional schools (i.e., medical, dental, physical therapy, pharmacy, physicians' assistants, occupational therapy and optometry). When hired, she was tasked with developing a Pre-Professional advising curriculum and establishing collaborative relationships and pipelines for students to continue their education. Grace has taken that task and excelled at it. She has built workshops on a variety of topics including an overview of what it takes to develop a successful medical school application, multiple mini-interviews, and personal statement writing. She has developed an ACE 101 course where students can dive into understanding how to be a successful candidate. Most importantly, Grace has developed trusting relationships with students across campus. Grace gives her all to the development of a pre-professional advising curriculum, but more importantly she has given her students a space to develop, and work towards their educational goals without feeling judged or overwhelmed.



Regents' Academic Advisor – Graduate – UNLV, UNR, NSC & DRI  
Anne Leonard

Dr. Anne Leonard earned her Ph.D. in Animal Behavior at the University of California, Davis in 2008. She began her career at the University of Nevada, Reno in 2012 as an Assistant Professor in Biology and received tenure and promoted to Associate Professor in 2018. In her years at UNR, she has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to advising graduate students and postdocs. Dr. Leonard's exceptional commitment to mentoring and graduate advising began very early in her career. Since joining UNR, Dr. Leonard has continued her deep commitment to mentoring. She currently has three Ph.D. students who are all on good trajectories, having received an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, presented at conferences, and publishing papers. Two of her former postdoctoral researchers, although not students, have gone on to establish themselves with vibrant early careers and tenure track positions in both America and Columbia. She established the BioCareers forum in 2014 in which she advises graduate students and postdocs as they contemplate the next steps in their careers. This weekly/biweekly discussion group focuses on academic survival skills and includes topics such as effective mentoring. Dr. Leonard has recruited diverse faculty to visit with the group so that students get to hear a broad range of perspectives. BioCareers has had a significant positive influence on graduate students at UNR in the life sciences and the scope of her impact through these efforts reach far beyond the boundaries of her own research group. In 2016, graduate students in the Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology program selected her as the recipient of the Jenkin's Mentoring Award.

Regent's Researcher Award – Distinguished  
Kenton Sanders

Kenton Sanders trained at UCLA (PhD) and the Mayo Clinic (Post-doctoral Fellowship) in smooth muscle biology and electrophysiology. After beginning his own lab in 1979, he was recruited to the University of Nevada in 1982 by Professor Jackie Wood, one of the pioneer investigators of the enteric nervous system. When Dr. Wood took the Chair of Physiology at Ohio State, Dr. Sanders decided to remain at UNR and embarked on building the department by becoming Chair in 1988. In 1989 Dr. Sanders landed a Program Project Grant (PPG) from the NIH, the first grant of this type and magnitude in Nevada. This Program sought to understand the cellular basis for gastrointestinal motility, and it was renewed competitively and repetitively for the next 30 years. As a result of this Program, much was learned about the ion channels that regulate behaviors of GI smooth muscle cells, neurotransmission in GI muscles, and the interstitial cells that generate and contribute to regulation of motility behaviors. In combination with smooth muscle cells, interstitial cells (Kit<sup>+</sup> interstitial cells of Cajal and PDGFR $\alpha$ <sup>+</sup> cells) form an integrated electrical network or syncytium, known as the SIP syncytium. A lengthy series of publications described how SIP cells constitute the myogenic (i.e. non-neurogenic) component of GI motility and set and regulate basal levels of smooth muscle excitability, generate rhythmic patterns of contractile behaviors in peristalsis and segmentation, respond to neurotransmitters and convey stretch-dependent responses. Many of the tools and reagents used to study visceral smooth muscles and interstitial cells originated or were implemented by Dr. Sanders lab. Dr. Sanders also received a prestigious 10 year MERIT Award from the NIH and directed a COBRE Program that developed the careers of several junior faculty at UNR. Dr. Sanders has received many international recognitions for his research contributions including a Carnegie Centenary Professor from the Carnegie Trust of Scotland (2004) and an honorary Doctorate from the University of Antwerp (2005). He also served on the National Commission on Digestive Disease, organized by the National Institute of Health National (2006-2008) and charged with designing the national agenda for research in gastroenterology for the next decade.

Regent's Researcher Award – Mid-Career  
Wei Yan

Dr. Wei Yan is University of Nevada, Reno Foundation Professor and Director of the recently established National Center for Male Reproductive Epigenomics. Dr. Yan received his MD from China Medical University in 1990 and PhD from University of Turku, Finland in 2000. After post-doc training at Baylor College of Medicine, he started his independent research as an Assistant Professor at the University of Nevada School of Medicine in 2004. He is currently Professor of Physiology and Cellular Biology at UNR Med. His lab works on genetic and epigenetic control of fertility, and epigenetic contribution of gametes (sperm and eggs) to fertilization, early embryonic development and adulthood health. As a PI, Dr. Yan has been awarded a total of 14 grants with a total of ~\$13 million in direct cost. In 2019, he was awarded a P50 National Center for Translational Research in Reproduction and Infertility (NCTRI) grant by the NIH, with a direct cost of six million dollars for the next five years. This grant award makes UNR one of only eight such centers in the country and the first such center to focus on sperm epigenomics. Dr. Yan has published >130 peer-reviewed research articles and book chapters with >7,500 citations. Dr. Yan has received numerous major academic awards from his home university (UNR Foundation Professorship, the highest honor bestowed by UNR, in 2016 and Outstanding Research Award in 2017) and the State of Nevada (The Nevada System of Higher Education Regents' Rising Researcher Award in 2009 and the Nevada Healthcare Hero Award in 2013), as well as eminent scientific societies, including the American Society of Andrology (2012 ASA Young Andrologist Award), the Society for the Study of Reproduction (2018 SSR Research Award) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (elected AAAS Fellow in 2017). Dr. Yan is serving as Editor-in-Chief of Biology of Reproduction, the official journal of the SSR.

Regents' Rising Researcher – DRI  
Mark Hausner

After receiving his undergraduate degree from Cornell University and serving as a professional civil engineer in private industry and municipal settings, Dr. Hausner pursued a Masters and Ph.D. in the Graduate Program of Hydrologic Sciences at the University of Nevada, Reno. Since graduating in 2013, he has worked at DRI, first as a Postdoctoral Associate and then as an Assistant Research Professor within the Division of Hydrologic Sciences. Dr. Hausner's research has increased our understanding of heat and mass transfer within the environment, the potential impact of climate change on those processes, and assessment of resultant impacts to various aspects of the ecosystem. Dr. Hausner excels at integrating field studies with numerical models and the use of state-of-the-art temperature sensing technology to facilitate his research. Dr. Hausner has established a strong record of publications during the first five years of his career. He has given over 60 presentations at national scientific conferences and workshops and published 18 peer reviewed publications to high quality journals such as Groundwater and Water Resources Research. The subjects of these publications range from delineation of subsurface groundwater flow inferred from thermal perturbations to projecting the impacts of climate change and water management on Devils Hole pupfish. Dr. Hausner's work has improved our understanding of climate change on the environment and on our food and water supply. Dr. Hausner has successfully developed and funded more than 15 grants and contracts from diverse sources such as the Department of Energy, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, NASA, and the Death Valley Conservancy. These funded projects sum to more than \$938,000.

Regents' Rising Researcher – UNLV  
Ashkan Salamat

Dr Ashkan Salamat is an assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, and an adjunct professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, here at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Having received his Master's in Chemistry from Imperial College, UK in 2006 he completed his PhD at University College London in 2010 titled "High Pressure Solid State Chemistry of C-N-H and Ti-N Systems". He then spent 3 years in France, at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility, leading an independent research program exploring materials under extreme conditions using X-rays. Dr Salamat then went on to be a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University, under the supervision of Prof I. Silvera, working on warm dense hydrogen and exotic quantum states of matter.

Dr Salamat leads a vibrant research group consisting of an assistant research professor, 7 graduate students, and 3 undergraduate students. He has mentored a total of 20 students, to date, including a number of summer high school students. The research goals of Dr Salamat and his research team are exploring the high energy density landscape of light elemental (H-C-N-O) systems and their related compounds, which are relevant for Fundamental and Applied sciences. The Salamat lab has designed and built a number of unique laser heating systems, for accessing high temperatures and pressures, at a number of national laboratories. They continue to develop new tools to try and understand some of the most demanding questions in material science and physics.

Dr Salamat is the recent recipient of the Early Career award from the Department of Energy, exploring a new group of materials known as metal superhydrides, that may hold the key to room-temperature superconductivity. He is also the lead PI on a NSF grant investigating the synthesis of technetium materials, these are radioactive samples with great importance in nuclear energy and medicine.

Regents' Rising Researcher – UNR  
Mozart Fonseca

Mozart Fonseca was born and raised in a remote rural area in southeast Brazil. He received a bachelor's degree in Agronomy Engineering and a Master's in Animal Science from Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil. After 1 year of his PhD in Animal Science, Fonseca was awarded a research excellence fellowship and moved to the United States to pursue education in applied statistical modeling at Texas A & M University, where he remained until the end of his graduate education. Upon completion, Fonseca accepted a position as Postdoctoral Research Associate at the same institution working with mathematical nutrition modeling. In July 2016 Fonseca joined the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) as assistant professor of beef cattle production and applied modeling. Since then he has been using basic science to answer broader questions among different fields of scientific inquiry by modeling the complexity of systems. He integrates research from different fields into a product of common interest. He uses structural based modeling approaches to solve current problems and develop decision making tools to evaluate consequences of actions and policies, qualifying and quantifying systemic behavior, delays, and their consequences over time. At UNR, Fonseca's group has been fortunate to be awarded a total of 10 research grant proposals, 89% of them being extramural funding. The team have been funded by National Science Foundation, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), USDA-Risk Management Agency, the USDA-NIFA Foundational Program and National Cattlemen's Association. At UNR, Fonseca published, or have been accepted for publications, 16 peer-reviewed manuscripts, 9 conference abstracts and he has given 49 invited presentations about his research findings both in the USA and Internationally. Fonseca have advised 8 graduate students, 8 undergraduate research, 1 research associate, and 4 international visiting scholars on mathematical nutrition research methods in his laboratory. Additionally, in 2018 he was awarded the Senior Scholar Award by UNR. In 2019, Fonseca was awarded an International Visiting Professor Fellowship in Brazil and was identified as one of UNR's nominees for the 2019 Blavatnik Young Research Award in the category of Life Sciences.

Regents' Rising Researcher – UNR  
Kostas Alexis

Kostas Alexis obtained his Ph.D. in the field of aerial robotics control and collaboration from the University of Patras, Greece in 2011. His Ph.D. research was supported by the Greek national-European Commission Excellence scholarship.

After successfully defending his Ph.D. thesis, he was awarded a Swiss Government fellowship and moved to Switzerland and ETH Zurich. From 2011 to June 2015 he held the position of senior researcher at the Autonomous Systems Lab, ETH Zurich, leading the lab efforts in the fields of control and path planning for advanced navigational and operational autonomy.

His research interests lie in the fields of control, navigation, optimization and path-planning focusing on aerial robotic systems with multiple and hybrid configurations. He is the author or co-author of more than 50 scientific publications and has received several best paper awards and distinctions, including the IET Control Theory & Applications Premium Award 2014. Furthermore, together with his collaborators, they have achieved world records in the field of solar-powered flight endurance. Kostas Alexis has participated in and organized several large-scale multi-million dollar research projects with broad international involvement and collaboration. In July 2015, Kostas moved to the University of Nevada, Reno with the goal to dedicate his efforts towards establishing true autonomy for aerial and other kinds of robotics.