



General photo of the event



Dr Kim Binsted, Professor of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of Hawaii and Principal Investigator of the NASA-funded HI-SEAS Project.



Dr Tim Sullivan, AUK president with Dr Kim Binsted



General photo of the event

RISE Director Dr Zeid highlights role of women in innovation, STEM in ME

AUK hosts talk on women ‘leading way in space exploration’

KUWAIT CITY, Oct 30: The Center for Research in Informatics, Sciences and Engineering (RISE) at the American University of Kuwait held a talk entitled, “To Mars and Beyond: Women Leading the Way in Space Exploration and STEM” by Dr Kim Binsted, Professor of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of Hawaii and Principal Investigator of the NASA-funded HI-SEAS (Hawaii Space Exploration Analog and Simulation, hi-seas.org) project. The talk was facilitated by the United States Embassy in Kuwait.

In his welcoming remarks, RISE Director Dr Amir Zeid highlighted the role of women in innovation and STEM in the Middle East region honoring success stories from his former students and the local community. Dr Binsted’s lecture shed light on stories and lessons learned

from her career as both a computer science professor and the Principal Investigator of HI-SEAS project.

Purpose

The purpose of the talk, as she explained, was to provide ideas and models that might help students decide what they might do with their future. Although the theme revolved around women in STEM, Dr Binsted emphasized that the lessons she will share are applicable to both men and women. She began by touching on the misconceptions surrounding scientists and how they can be perceived to have always had a gift for science, even as children. This is not necessarily the case as she demonstrates that her interests and hobbies growing up have included improvisation and comedy.

Dr Binsted walked the audience through her journey which led her to



RISE Director, Dr Amir Zeid become a Professor in the Information and Computer Sciences Department at the University of Hawaii, and the Prin-

icipal Investigator of the NASA-funded HI-SEAS. HI-SEAS, an acronym for Hawaii’s Space Exploration Analog and simulation, is a habitat on an isolated Mars-like site on the Big Island of Hawaii at approximately 8200 feet above sea level with conditions that are explicitly designed to be similar to those of a planetary exploration mission. At HI-SEAS, Dr Binsted and her team study crew selection, composition, cohesion and performance on long-duration (4-, 8- and 12-month) simulations of space exploration missions. She explained how using these simulations to discover and test solutions and to create realistic scenarios of combining people and systems is crucial for the success of future space missions to Mars.

The lecture also highlighted the importance of risk-taking and failure as necessary elements of a successful career. Dr Binsted explained

that if one is not failing on a regular basis then they are not trying hard enough or trying enough interesting things. She gave examples of times she failed during her career like when she tried to launch a start-up in Tokyo, or had 8 applications to become an astronaut rejected. In addition to fear of failure, Dr Binsted told the students that most people — including scientists — suffer from impostor’s syndrome, but that it is necessary to keep trying or “fake it until you make it.” She also addressed the importance of mentorship and role models for both women and men, giving examples of three female mentors that have influenced her life and career.

In addition, Dr Binsted touched on other topics of relevance such as the academic/industry trade-off in the STEM field, the challenges and rewards of leading an international

team of highly motivated professionals, the relationship between team cohesion, autonomy and performance, and why astronaut crews to Mars are likely to be diverse. Throughout the talk, Dr Binsted’s deep knowledge and expertise was complemented by her delightful sense of humor. The students described her speech as “motivational” and “inspiring” for everyone, not only scientists.

The American University of Kuwait (AUK) is an independent, private, equal opportunity, and co-educational liberal arts institution of higher education. The educational, cultural and administrative structure, methods and standards of AUK are based on the American model of higher learning. The language of instruction is English. More information on the American University of Kuwait can be found at www.auk.edu.kw

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Latest

and 18 years old); Snack break; Distri-

bution of the Grand Mosque publications and souvenirs; End of tour.

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Nov 1

ICSK Senior Paradigm 2017: The Indian Community School (Senior) Kuwait, is organizing Paradigm 2017,

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Magic Fountains

The Font Màgica is a musical show featuring water fountains and colored lights that make a wonderful after-dark treat for children. The magic fountain is a spectacular display of color, light, motion, music and water acrobatics - if you mix these elements together in just the right combinations, you end up with pure magic!

Situated between Plaza Espanya and the Palau Nacional, the fountains were created in 1929 for the World Exhibition and are a popular attraction in Barcelona. The shows run every 30 minutes with 15 minute breaks with times varying according to the time of year. You can watch the show from various points, on the steps of the MNAC gallery or in the various areas around the fountains. If you want a close up view on a windy day, prepare to get a little wet! The magic fountain is a “must see” when you come to Barcelona!

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