

INL News Release
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INL taps industry senior leader to lead GAIN as the initiative continues to grow

Editor's Note: A photo and bio of Dr. Rita Baranwal are attached

Dr. Kemal Pasamehmetoglu, associate lab director of Idaho National Laboratory's Nuclear Science & Technology directorate, has announced the selection of Westinghouse executive Dr. Rita Baranwal to serve as director of the INL-led Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) initiative. As GAIN director, Baranwal will lead efforts to support the development of innovative reactor technologies in the U.S.

Pasamehmetoglu has served a dual role leading the GAIN program since it launched in late 2015, as well as INL's Nuclear Science & Technology directorate at the nation's lead nuclear energy laboratory. The addition of Baranwal will enable further growth as GAIN continues to expand. She will begin in her new role on Aug. 22.

"Rita brings a wealth of industry experience and nuclear fuels and materials science expertise to her new role," Pasamehmetoglu said. "I'm confident that she will provide strong leadership for the GAIN program as it continues to grow as a catalyst for innovation in advanced nuclear technologies."

Baranwal served most recently as director of Technology Development in the Engineering Center of Excellence at Westinghouse Electric Corporation. and has held many other roles in nuclear fuel design and engineering. She holds a doctorate in materials science and engineering from the University of Michigan.

INL is one of the DOE's national laboratories. The laboratory performs work in each of DOE's strategic goal areas: energy, national security, science and environment. INL is the nation's leading center for nuclear energy research and development. Day-to-day management and operation of the laboratory is the responsibility of Battelle Energy Alliance.

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Bio:

Dr. Rita Baranwal will be joining INL's Nuclear Science & Technology directorate later this month as the director for the Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) initiative.

Baranwal most recently served as the director of Technology Development and Application at Westinghouse Electric Corporation in Cranberry, Pennsylvania. In that position, she led the creation and development of game-changing technologies and managed characterization and hot cell laboratories to support Westinghouse, its customers and the nuclear power industry. Her previous positions at Westinghouse include director of Core Engineering and manager of Materials and Fuel Rod Design. Prior to joining Westinghouse, she was a manager in the Materials Technology organization at Bechtel Bettis, Inc.

Baranwal was an adjunct faculty member of University of South Carolina's nuclear engineering graduate program from 2010-2012. She holds two patents for materials engineering technology and has co-authored publications related to characterization of irradiation and fabrication process effects on material microstructure and properties. She received her bachelor's degree from MIT in materials science and engineering and her master's degree and Ph.D. in the same discipline from the University of Michigan. She also completed an executive management program at Duquesne University's Beard Institute in 2009.

Baranwal has been an active American Nuclear Society member since 2008 and currently serves on the ANS Materials Science and Technology Division Executive Committee. She also serves on the board of directors for Big Brothers Big Sisters in Pittsburgh and was recently elected to serve on the board of directors for North Hills Community Outreach.

