

Panel Discussion:
Academia versus Research Labs: Tales from the Front Lines
Panelist's Vita:

Professor Vincent Poor:

Vince Poor received the Ph.D. in EECS from Princeton in 1977. Aside from a number of summer appointments at several research labs, he has spent his entire career in academia, first at Illinois (1977-90) and now at Princeton (1990-present). He has also held visiting appointments at several universities in the US and abroad. His 30 former Ph.D. students are distributed roughly evenly between universities and industry.

Professor Christopher Rose:

Chris Rose was almost a lifer at MIT in biophysics, but his sentence was interrupted (commuted?) in 1984 by the birth of his first son. He then joined Bell Laboratories "Area 11" (research) in 1985. Since the old Bell Labs was essentially an academic appointment -- without students, but with much of the electricity and excitement of his old digs -- he might have been a lifer there were it not for a certain successful antitrust suit and a concomitant shift in corporate emphasis from basic research to paying the rent. In fact, his colleagues marveled at his timing when he announced he'd be moving to Rutgers the week before all research staff members were given a public talking-to by an outspoken Nobel Laureate about the new direction of Bell Labs Research -- "if your research does not affect the corporate bottom line, you should leave." Thus, in 1990 he began what may actually be his true life sentence at Rutgers, WINLAB where he continues his 20+ year postdoc in communications theory.

Interests: novel communications systems methods

Hobbies: hunting for space alien artifacts.

Dr. Stefano Galli

Stefano Galli received his Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Rome "La Sapienza" in 1998. After completing his Ph.D., he continued as a Teaching Assistant in Signal Theory at the Info-Com Dpt. of the University of Rome. As opposed to Rose's perfect timing, Stefano left academia and joined Bellcore just before the burst of the Internet bubble and the worst downfall of the telecommunications industry ever.

He survived brutal down sizing by doing what a professor generally does: getting infinitesimal funding by writing an infinite number of research proposals for the government. He has also been recently wondering whether he should go back to academia and, given his track record on market-timing, this might be the sign that the telecom industry is finally picking up.

Dr. Emina Soljanin

Emina Soljanin received the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M University, College Station, in 1989 and 1994, and the European Diploma degree in Electrical Engineering from University of Sarajevo, Bosnia, in 1986.

From 1986 to 1988, she worked in the Energoinvest Company, Bosnia and Herzegovina, developing optimization algorithms and software for power system control. After graduating from Texas A&M in 1994, she joined Bell Laboratories, Murray Hill, NJ, where she is now a Distinguished Member of Technical Staff in the Mathematical Sciences Research Center. Her research interests are in the broad area of communications, information and coding theory, their applications to storage systems, and more recently quantum information theory.

Dr. Soljanin was the recipient of the 1992 Texas A&M University Electrical Engineering Department Fouraker fellowship. She served as a Technical Proof-Reader, 1990-1992, and as the Associate Editor for Coding Techniques, 1997-2000, for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. She served as a Co-Chair for the DIMACS Special Focus on Computational Information Theory and Coding 2001-2005.