

Biographies

Hyun-Jun Kim

Hyun-Jun Kim, PhD, is a Research Assistant Professor and Director of Health, Sexuality, and Gender Research at the Goldsen Institute, School of Social Work. As Principal Investigator of the Health Equity and Intersectionality Study, he developed and validated an innovative tool assessing complex social networks of people with disabilities and their role in navigating healthcare services and conceptualized a framework of social network and non-social network factors that facilitate access to dementia resources and healthcare services. He also co-led Care Network-IDEA, an intervention designed to improve quality of life for sexual and gender minority older adults experiencing memory loss without care partners. His leadership extends to serving as project director and Co-Investigator on two NIH/NIA-funded R01 studies: Aging with Pride: National Health, Aging, and Sexuality/Gender Study (NHAS) and Innovations in Dementia, Empowerment, and Action (IDEA). With extensive expertise in designing and analyzing both observational and clinical trial studies, he specializes in examining behavioral, psychological, social, and cognitive changes in hard-to-reach populations with multiple marginalized identities. He has successfully directed research teams while developing rigorous systems for participant retention, creating older adult-friendly and culturally tailored data collection tools, and optimizing data management for participants with physical and cognitive impairments. Dr. Kim's primary research focuses on healthcare access, social connectedness, and how social exclusion and isolation affect cognitive and physical health among older adults with intersecting marginalized social positions. His qualifications and breadth of experience make him exceptionally well-suited to serve on an interdisciplinary research team for the proposed study.

Anita Souza

Anita Souza, PhD, is a Clinical Professor in the School of Nursing. Her research focuses on the care and support of older adults across the cognitive continuum, particularly those in the early stages of memory loss. She is especially interested in the psychosocial and healthcare needs of individuals with cognitive decline who live alone and remain in community settings. She has extensive experience providing psychosocial support to this population, including developing and delivering educational programs and offering counseling to individuals and families on dementia-related care issues. This practical experience complements her academic training as a Nursing Science researcher. Her previous work explored the impact of self-efficacy, mood, and quality of life on individuals living alone with memory loss compared to those with identified care partners. This research helped identify subgroups within this population who are particularly vulnerable and have unique service needs. Since 2016, she has secured both intramural and extramural funding (RIFP, ITHS Community Partnership Grant, and Premera Foundation) focused in this area. Her expertise includes: (1) recruiting and engaging hard-to-reach study participants, (2) developing training programs and research protocols for individuals with cognitive impairment, and (3) applying qualitative research designs, including participatory approaches, in particular, photovoice. As a researcher her approach is grounded in Community-Based Participatory Research methods. Her experience with community-based approaches, combined with her longstanding involvement in dementia programming and research, aligns well with the goals of this grant and positions her well for the Co-Investigator role on this proposal.

Brittany Jones-Cobb

Brittany Jones-Cobb is a fourth-year PhD candidate in Social Welfare at the University of Washington School of Social Work, with research informed by over 15 years of practice experience as a social worker serving older adult populations. She applies critical gerontology and disability studies frameworks to advance health equity for marginalized older adults living with chronic conditions and disabilities—particularly those without the support of a familial or chosen care partner. Her work is rooted in a deep commitment to improving outcomes for populations disproportionately isolated by intersecting systems of oppression related to disability, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, and gender identity. For her doctoral qualifying paper, she conducted a scoping review mapping the precarities, outcomes, and interventions of older adults without a care partner. Building on this foundation, her mixed-methods dissertation investigates (1) modifiable risk factors to guide intervention development for marginalized older adults without care partners and (2) early implementation readiness for one of the few existing interventions supporting this population. For the last three years

Brittany has contributed to federally funded intervention research led by Drs. Kim and Fredriksen-Goldsen as a research assistant, addressing the unique needs and strengths of sexual and gender diverse people with memory loss. She also recently co-authored a paper for a special issue of *The Gerontologist* focused on bridging aging and disability research. Her research interests and experience related to older adults without care partners and those living with chronic illness or disability align well with the goals of this grant proposal.

Clara Berridge

Clara Berridge, PhD, MSW, is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance. She is a gerontologist whose research for more than a decade has focused on engaging people living with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and dementia in decisions about using technology to support their care. Her research advances the effective use of technological tools to support dementia care in ways that uphold patient-centered values. Dr. Berridge brings expertise in eliciting preferences and supporting decision making by people living with dementia about care options, qualitative research, user testing of health informatics interventions, and intervention and survey development for people living with MCI and mild dementia. She has served as PI on eight funded studies that involved primary data collection, including three funded by the National Institute on Aging, and as co-investigator on the relevant R21 project, “Health Outcomes for Patients with Dementia without Family Caregivers.” Over the course of multiple studies, she has demonstrated expertise in applied ethics in the use of digital health technologies, effective communication with people living with mild dementia about care options, and mixed methods dyadic research with racially and economically diverse participants including immigrant older adults and Medicaid beneficiaries living with dementia. She is a co-investigator for the NW Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center, advisory board member for the Decision-Making in Alzheimer’s Research R01, and past member of the UW Medicine Memory & Brain Wellness Center’s Community Education & Impact Advisory Board.

Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen

Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen, PhD, is Professor and director of the Goldsen Institute and the Healthy Generations Center at the School of Social Work. She is an internationally recognized scholar who has collaborated closely with Dr. Kim (Lead PI) for over 15 years on groundbreaking longitudinal and intervention studies addressing issues of health, longevity, disparities, and well-being in resilient yet underserved communities, including sexual and gender minorities (SGM) and those living globally with HIV and other chronic conditions. As MPI of the NIH-funded study, Socially Isolated Older Adults Living with Dementia (P30) and Older Adults Living with Alzheimer’s Disease and Their Caregivers (R01), she led the first intervention studies for older adults with dementia - projects developed in collaboration with Dr. Kim. She is also a PI of the landmark National Health, Aging, and Sexuality/Gender Study (NHAS): Aging with Pride (R01), the longest-running longitudinal investigation of SGM midlife and older adults, where their partnership has identified key modifiable factors influencing health trajectories in these communities. Dr. Fredriksen-Goldsen is the author of many books, special issues, and publications in leading journals. She has served as both a scientific mentor and thought partner to Dr. Kim, offering expert guidance on culturally responsive methodologies, recruitment of hard-to-reach populations, and intervention design. As both a senior scientist and valued collaborator, she brings unparalleled expertise to this project, ensuring rigorous, impactful research to address the needs of socially marginalized and underserved older adults, particularly those with cognitive impairment who lack care partners.

June Yang

June Yang, PhD, is a Research Scientist at the University of Washington’s Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology and eScience Institute. She is a computational demographer and earned her PhD in Sociology from UW with concentrations in Demographic Methods and Social Statistics. Her research focuses on developing and applying advanced analytical techniques—including complex survey analysis, social network analysis, and natural language processing—to study hard-to-reach and health-disparate populations. This project’s focus on individuals living alone with early cognitive impairment directly aligns with Dr. Yang’s expertise. These individuals represent a critical gap in dementia research and care policy as they are often missing from standard sampling frames and face unique challenges

in accessing healthcare systems. She will play a significant role in designing the survey methodology, analyzing social network structure and function, and examining how structural barriers and technological tools shape healthcare engagement patterns. Her expertise will be invaluable in developing strategies to effectively reach this vulnerable population and interpret complex data patterns. Additionally, she will contribute to disseminating findings to both academic audiences and policy makers, ensuring the research has meaningful impact. Dr. Yang's interdisciplinary approach, combining demography, computational social science, and public health perspectives, makes her uniquely qualified to address the methodological challenges of this study and advance its goals of improving care for underserved populations with cognitive impairment.