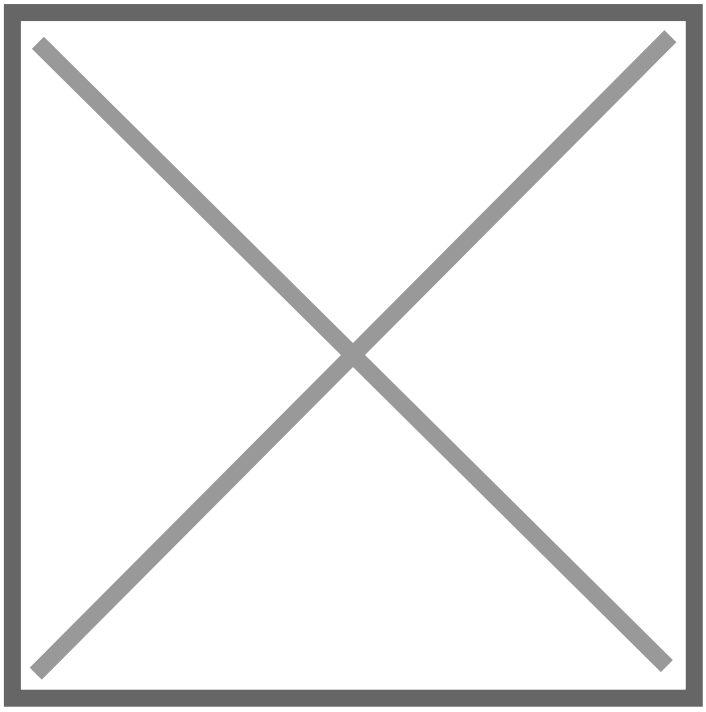
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Vishnu Varshney bags APVCA 2006 Inaugural Award

11 April 2006 | News



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The Asia Pacific Venture Capital & Private Equity Association, an alliance of Asia-Pacific Venture Capital associations (APVCA) has honored Vishnu Varshney, CEO, Gujarat Venture Finance Limited (GVFL) with the APVCA 2006 Inaugural Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the venture capital and private equity industry in Asia and his longstanding service to GVFL. He is the first recipient of the award and the only venture capitalist in India to receive this honor.

"Vishnu has been one of the earliest VCs in the country when the term was less known and has done a tremendous amount to encourage small entrepreneurs and industry. The industry was barely $100 million when Vishnu became a VC and today it is over $ 2 billion, " said Saurabh Srivastava, chairman, IVCA.

"After a lull, the venture capital industry in India is seeing a resurgence, with about $2.3 billion being invested in Indian companies across 147 deals during 2005. New age entrepreneurs are getting opportunities to work in innovative and niche areas with immense potential. The APVCA award is an acknowledgement of the work and results that GVFL has achieved in nurturing enterprises across India, " said Vishnu Varshney, CEO, GVFL Ltd.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw voted "most influential" in Bio-Business

Dr Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairman and managing director, Biocon was voted as "most influential" in Bio-Business (outside the US and Europe) in a poll conducted by the international journal Nature Biotechnology.

"I consider this international acknowledgement as recognition of the potential and promise that Biotechnology holds for our country and I accept this on behalf of the entire Indian biotech community," Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw said.

Last year Dr Shaw made it to the Fortune's list of the 50 most powerful women in international business. A recent survey by a leading Indian business magazine declared her as one of the most powerful women in Indian business.

Nature Biotechnology noted, "Curiously, the winner of the 'Bio-business in the rest of the world' category, Biocon's CEO Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, seems to be more popular on the global scene than she actually is at home."

In January, Nature Biotechnology's e-mail registrant list and website visitors were asked to vote for the people they viewed as most influential in eight different categories of biotech. The poll, posted online from January 12 to 31, 2006, included 291 nominees, short-listed by the editors of Nature Biotechnology.

Dr Kaiser Jamil elected President of TWOWS

Dr (Smt.) Kaiser Jamil, emeritus scientist and head, genetics department, Bhagvan Mahavir Medical Research Centre, Hyderabad has been elected president of Third World Organization for Women in Science, Italy. She has also been given the additional responsibility of heading the research division of Indo-American Cancer Hospital and Research Centre. A recipient of many awards, Dr Jamil was formerly an active scientist at the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Hyderabad.

Melvin Oscar D'Souza is new MD of Novo Nordisk India

Melvin Oscar D'Souza has been appointed as the managing director of Novo Nordisk India. Prior to this, he held the post of Sales and Marketing Manager, Novo Nordisk Pharma Gulf FZ-LLC, International operations, Regions of North Africa and Gulf, Saudi Arabia and Gulf.

Dr Asha A Juwarkar bags Pitambar Pant National Environmental Fellowship Award

Dr Asha A Juwarkar, deputy director, environmental biotechnology division, bagged the prestigious Pitambar Pant National Environmental Fellowship for 2003, of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India. The award is in recognition of her contribution to the field of environmental biotechnology and for undertaking research on "Phytoremediation and Bioutilization of Industrial wastes".

Awards galore at DBT Foundation Day function

The foundation day function of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) was held on March 13, 2006. On the occasion, awards in various categories were given to recognize the outstanding contribution of scientists in the field of biology and biotechnology.

The National Award for Senior Women BioScientist for the year 2005 was conferred on Dr A Radha Rama Devi of the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD), Hyderabad, for her lifetime contributions and excellent research on in-born errors of metabolism and genetics. She has established the genetic diagnostic center at CDFD and has devised a cost effective validated method to test for mental retardation and disability in India. The award carries Rs one lakh along with a citation and a gold medal.

The National Award for Women BioScientist under the young category for the year 2005 was conferred on Dr Suparna Sengupta, at the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology, Thiruvananthapuram and Dr Kusum Arunachalam at the North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology, Nirjuli. The award carries Rs 50,000 along with a citation and a gold medal. Dr Sengupta has made important contributions in the area of anti-cancer agents while Dr Arunachalam has worked extensively on characterization of ecosystem dynamics of wetlands, forest and agricultural systems.

To recognize the efforts of the young scientists in basic and applied research covering all the areas of biosciences and biotechnology, the National BioScience Awards for Career Development had been instituted by the Department. Each award carries a cash prize of Rs one lakh, a research grant of Rs three lakh per year for a period of three years and a citation. During 2005-06, six awards were given in this category. The awardees are:

- Dr Apurva Sarin, reader, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore for her outstanding contribution in unraveling the mechanism of apoptosis in T lymphocytes of mammalian origin
- Dr Dulal Panda, associate professor, School of Biosciences and Bioengineering at IIT, Mumbai for his pioneering work in understanding the molecular mechanism of regulation of microtubule assembly dynamics and mechanism of action of microtubule targeted anticancer drugs
- Dr GPS Raghav, scientist, Institute of Microbial Technology (IMTECH) Chandigarh for his significant contribution in the area of bioinformatics and computational biology
- Dr Rajinder Prasad Roy, National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi for his excellent research towards understanding the basic mechanism of protease mediated peptide ligation, which is potentially useful in synthetic design strategies
- Dr Saumitra Das, assistant professor at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore for successfully demonstrating that the ribosome assembly on hepatitis C virus RNA can be effectively targeted on two different steps by using either a

small RNA or a synthetic peptide which can be tried in combination as a multi drug approach

- Dr Sundip Chattopadhyay, scientist, National Centre for Genome Research, New Delhi, for his significant contribution in unraveling the role of transcription factors in light mediated signal transduction pathways controlling seedling development in plants.

The DBT had instituted the Innovative Young Biotechnologist Award in 2005 to identify and nurture young exceptional scientists with innovative ideas who are desirous of pursuing research in frontier areas of biotechnology. The awardees include Dr Amita Gupta, University of Delhi (South Campus), New Delhi; Dr Samir V Sawant, NBRI, Lucknow; Dr D Sundar, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry and Dr Gitanjali Yadav, NII, New Delhi.

In order to encourage students for higher studies in life sciences, the Department awarded 25 biology scholarships to top students in biology at CBSE 10+2 level examination. Each scholarship carries a cash amount of Rs 15,000, a gold plated medal and a certificate of merit.

Shri Aravindhan receives ISCA Young Scientist Award-2006 for Environmental Sciences

Shri Aravindhan, SRF at the Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI), Chennai, has been awarded the Indian Science Congress Association Young Scientist Award 2006 for his outstanding contributions to the area of Environmental Sciences at the 93rd Indian Science Congress held at Hyderabad. Shri Arvindham, M Tech in Leather Technology, is presently working towards his PhD which deals with removal of dyes and chromium from tannery waste water using low cost absorbents. He has been conferred this award for his work on removal of dyes from waste water using a novel zeolite-based catalyst.

NEERI-GVAK research paper bags first prize in biotech cancer

A research paper jointly submitted by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) Nagpur and Go-Vigyan Anusandhan Kendra on the effectiveness of Gomutra in cancer treatment bagged first prize in biotech cancer, an event organized by Hislap College of Biotechnology. The paper discusses in detail how Gomutra acts as a catalyst in triggering destruction of the cancerous cells through Apoptosis. A patent application has been filed for international patent for the treatment method.