

2003 RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

LESLIE GUNATILAKA, *Professor, Office of Arid Lands Studies
Director, Southwest Center for Natural Products Research and Commercialization
(Natural Products Center)*

Leslie Gunatilaka joined the University of Arizona in 1997. Acting as principal investigator, he has attracted over \$3 million in grants and contracts, and over \$1 million as a co-principal investigator. He has invested more than \$500,000 of his grant/contact funds to purchase equipment and improve the research infrastructure of the Natural Products Center.

Gunatilaka has written 146 peer-reviewed publications and has authored and co-authored more than 115 research communications, contributed seven book chapters and is an author of four patent applications. The common theme, “search for anticancer drugs from Sonoran desert organisms” is prominent throughout Gunatilaka’s research projects. He has trained 23 graduate students, 11 postdocs and numerous undergraduates as part of his commitment to excellence in education during his academic career.

Gunatilaka is currently a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the international journal *Natural Products Letters*, and serves as a manuscript and a book reviewer for nine other international journals. He has delivered more than 65 invited lectures and research seminars in the USA and abroad.

In 1985, during his tenure as professor of organic chemistry and head of the department of chemistry, he won the Sri Lankan Presidential Award for “developing a center of academic excellence in natural products chemistry” at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. He was elected in 1997 as a Fellow of the Third World Academy of Sciences (Italy) in recognition of his outstanding contributions to science and its development of the Third World. In 1998 he was elected a member of the Arizona Cancer Center in recognition of his work on anticancer drug discovery, and in 2000 he received the CaPCURE award for his “dedication to ending prostate cancer as a risk for all men and their families.”

ANIMAL SCIENCES EQUINE PROGRAM

**Mark Arns, Bill Schurg, Wendy Davis, Mary Ann Harris, Susan Rose and
Laura Walker**

This team has successfully increased the number of animal sciences majors to a 30-year high of 146 students this year. The University of Arizona has created an active thoroughbred breeding program consisting of quality stallions for use by our program and clients throughout the state. The breeding of UA mares provides an opportunity to generate revenue to maintain the Equine Center and the foals are used in several academic courses. The UA Equine Sciences Program is known as a leader in the thoroughbred breeding program in Arizona. This team was formed three years ago and since then the Equine Center has been transformed from a “solely operational facility” needing financial assistance from the College to remain in business, to a self-sufficient operation unit and the center of the equine science teaching program. The outreach efforts have led to initiation of educational programs for Arizona horse owners. Due to the increase in faculty and staff, and their diverse backgrounds, Arizona horse owners have been able to capitalize on a number of new educational opportunities.

2003 OUTSTANDING TEAM AWARD