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Dhir named outstanding FVSU teacher

By Annette Coward, public information editor

“Dedicated.” “Committed.” “Encouraging.” Those are just a few of the words Fort Valley State University students use to describe Dr. Sarwan Dhir, an associate professor of plant biotechnology.

Dhir’s colleagues agreed with the student assessment by honoring him with FVSU’s 2005 John W. Davison Outstanding Teacher Award during commencement exercises on May 7.

The Davison award is presented annually to an FVSU faculty member who has been judged to have best demonstrated the traits of a successful teacher and outstanding educator, according to Dr. Melinda Davis, biology professor and member of the selection committee.

Dhir is the second member of the College of Agriculture, Home Economics and Allied Programs to be honored with the Davison Award in recent years. Last year, Dr. Curtis Borne, professor of agriculture education, received the award. The award includes a \$2,500 stipend and a plaque.

Dhir, who came to FVSU in 1995 from Monsanto in St. Louis, Mo., appeared calm and grateful as he searched for words to describe his feelings about receiving the award.

Kay Knowles, a lab manager who works with Dhir, nominated him for the award.

“Dr. Dhir is one of the most extraordinary teachers who stand out at this University,” Knowles said. “He assesses students’ needs, [is] very detailed and spends extra hours going beyond his schedule.”

Danier Moore, a former student of Dhir and now his lab assistant, said, “He encourages you to pursue your dreams and always look for opportunities beyond medical school.”

“He’s an incredible mentor,” she said. “He includes his students and is very instrumental in placing kids in areas where they can get hands-on experience.”

“Research is appealing and is a path that helps benefits a person completely,” Dhir said.

In addition to his duties as a teacher, researcher and director of the Center for Biotechnology, Dhir coordinates a pair of summer programs for high school and college students interested in careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Nurturing his students’ academic and professional growth and giving them practical, hands-on experience are what Dhir said drives him to come to work every day.

“My job is just to provide different avenues for these exceptional students,” Dhir said. “I just want them to know hard work pays off.”



Photo by: B.K. Lilla

Dr. Sarwan Dhir, an associate professor of plant biotechnology, receives the 2005 John W. Davison Outstanding Teacher Award from FVSU President Kofi Lomotey during commencement on May 7.