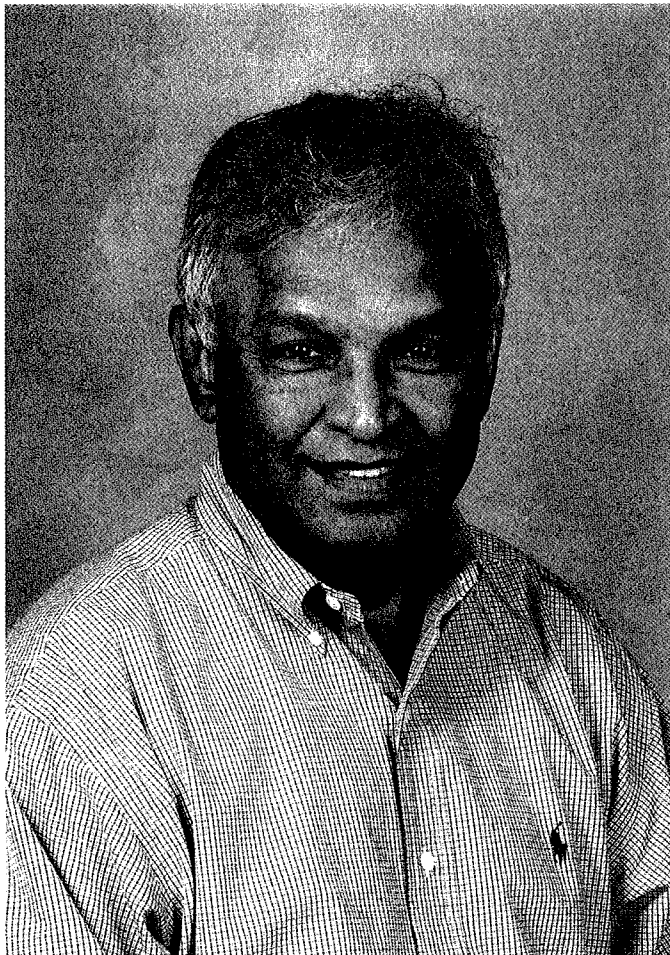


## DISTINGUISHED COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY TEACHER AWARD

S. K. BALLAL, PHD

*Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, Tennessee*

Dr. S. K. Ballal

The Tennessee Academy of Science (TAS) recently honored Tennessee Technological University Biology Professor Dr. S. K. Ballal with the Distinguished College/University Teacher Award. Dr. Ballal received a plaque in recognition of his ability to inspire, understand, and encourage students. The TAS Distinguished College/University Teacher Award was established to recognize Academy members who have made significant contri-

butions primarily to science teaching but also to academic research at the College/University level in Tennessee.

Dr. Ballal received multiple nominations from former students who wanted to show their appreciation for how he influenced their education, careers and personal lives. Former student Barbara Fleming, now director of quality and performance for the Veteran's Health Administration, supported his nomination.

"He immensely enjoys what he teaches and has an infectious enthusiasm for his subject matter and just a pure love of learning," says Fleming. "Plus, he's able to transmit that enthusiasm to his students.

"Both my husband and I were at Tennessee Tech. in the 1970s and have an incredible appreciation of how Dr. Ballal inspired us to go beyond what we expected we'd ever accomplish. He was always available and made huge contributions to our careers. Multiply the effect he had on us by his 30-plus years of having the same influence on other students, and you can see why he deserves recognition."

More recently, Karen Peters, who graduated in 2004 with an education degree, experienced how encouraging Dr. Ballal could be as a teacher and mentor.

"I'm a non-traditional student, so when I returned to college three years ago after many years and with four children to care for, his class was just what I needed to encourage me about how exciting learning can be," says Peters.

"When Dr. Ballal teaches, he relates the material to his students' lives, uses real-world examples and brings current scientific discoveries into the classroom," she says. "He challenges your prejudices and preconceived ideas so that you find yourself thinking about the lessons even after the class has ended. My interest in several fields of science has been sparked solely from having Dr. Ballal as my mentor and teacher."

Dr. Ballal received his BS and MS degrees from Madras University, and earned his PhD in Botany from the University of Tennessee. A TAS member since 1962, Dr. Ballal was named a TAS fellow in 1970, and served as the Academy president in 1982. As professor of Biology at Tennessee Technological University, he has been recognized with the Outstanding Faculty Award three times (1977, 1981 and 1988). A two-time Fulbright Scholar, he traveled to India in 1998 and recently returned from Sri Lanka, where he lectured about cell biology and biotechnology at a prominent university.