

## Sastry Gouripathi Pantula



Sastry Gouripathi Pantula was born on July 1, 1957 in Vizianagaram, a city in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. His father, Pantula Somanadham, was a Lecturer of Mathematics at Maharaja College in Vizianagaram, and his mother, Sowbhagya Lakshmi, was a house maker. He did his high school education in Vizianagaram, and he fondly remembers his father tutoring mathematics to him and to his friends early morning during his high school days. He received his B.Stat (Hons.) degree in 1978 and M.Stat (ASDA) degree in 1979 from the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata (Calcutta). Immediately after his M.Stat, he joined Iowa State University for his Ph.D., which he completed in July 1982. His doctoral dissertation was in the area of Time Series Analysis.

Dr. Pantula has been the head of the Department of Statistics at North Carolina State University (NCSU) since 2002. He joined NCSU as an assistant professor immediately after receiving his doctoral degree in 1982 from Iowa State University. He became Associate Professor in 1988 and a Professor in 1994. He served as the Director of Graduate Programs, Department of Statistics, NCSU during 1994-2002. As a DGP, he worked on enhancing the quality, quantity and diversity of the statistics graduate programs at NCSU. He worked with a number of companies, such as Becton Dickinson, GlaxoSmithKline and SAS Institute, to increase the number of Graduate Industrial Traineeships, and with companies like Eli Lilly, Merck and SAS to develop Graduate Fellowships. Dr. Pantula is passionate about mentoring, broadening of training, and diversifying the workforce in mathematical and computational sciences. He also served as the Director, Institute of Statistics, NCSU during 2002-09.

Dr. Pantula is the present director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Division of Mathematical Sciences in the Mathematical and Physical Science Directorate.

During a scholarly leave in 1990-91, Dr. Pantula worked at SEMATECH, a semiconductor consortium in Austin, Texas, where he developed and taught various courses in quality control and experimental design, and collaborated with engineers from semiconductor industries in the US and supplier companies in Mexico.

Dr. Pantula received the Young Statistician Award from the International Indian Statistical Association in 2002. He was the recipient of the Department Head Award of the SAA-PAMS in 2005 & 2008. He received

the D.D. Mason Faculty Award in 2001. He also received the George Snedecor Award for the most outstanding PhD candidate, Department of Statistics, Iowa State University in 1981

Dr. Pantula is a member of many scientific and professional societies, including the American Statistical Association (ASA), Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS), International Biometrics Society (IBSENAR), International Statistical Institute (ISI), International Indian Statistical Association (IISA), International Chinese Statistical Association (ICSA), and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He is also a member of the NCSU Academy of Outstanding Teachers. He is also a member of the Honour Societies, Phi Kappa Phi, Sigma Xi and Mu Sigma Rho.

In 2002, Dr. Pantula was elected as a Fellow of ASA for his contributions to research in time series analysis, exemplary service in graduate education as a teacher, researcher, mentor and recruiter of graduate students and industrial partners, and for his "contributions to the profession". Pantula has been active in the ASA, serving as Program Officer for JSM 2000; Publications Officer, 2001-2004; Chair-elect 2007; COPSS Award Committee, 2002-2005; Youden Award Committee, 2004-2006. He has served as ASA Board Treasurer since 2005, and also has chaired the Finance and Audit Committees. He was the associate editor of *The American Statistician* from 1987-1993, and the *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics* from 2001-2006. He was the President-Elect of the American Statistical Association in 2009 and finally he served as the 105<sup>th</sup> ASA president in 2010.

Dr. Pantula's areas of research include time series analysis, spatial statistics; and linear and nonlinear models; Quality Control etc. His research ranges from applications of statistical methods to derivation of asymptotic theory. In addition to a number of publications in various journals, he co-authored a textbook, *"Applied Regression Analysis: A Research Tool"* published by Springer Verlag with J.O. Rawlings and D. A. Dickey. He has authored many scholarly articles, technical reports etc.

Besides his academic arena he is also interested in watching drama, Indian movies and spending time with his daughter Asha.

He delivered the forty fifth convocation address of Indian Statistical Institute on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2011.

*Article by: Sugata Adhikari, Statistical Quality Control & Operation Research Unit, ISI, Kolkata*