

# MIS Professor Premkumar Passes Away

**Dr. Prem Premkumar**, the Union Pacific Professor of Information Systems in the College of Business, passed away on

Thursday, November 29, 2007, in Ames following complications due to pneumonia. He was 53.

Premkumar was regarded as a brilliant scholar, respected colleague, caring individual, and excellent teacher. He was survived by his wife, Shoba, a lecturer in finance for the College of Business, and their two sons, Mukund and Deepak.

“We are all terribly saddened at the loss of Prem,” said Labh Hira, College of Business dean. “He was an outstanding faculty member and a wonderful human being. We grieve deeply for Shoba and their sons.”

Premkumar was born November 23, 1954, in Madras, India. He earned a bachelor of engineering from Regional Engineering College in India in 1975. He moved on to graduate from the Indian Institute of Management in information systems and operations with a P.G.D.M. (MBA) in Management in 1982.

The Premkumars were married in 1985. After obtaining a PhD in information systems from the University of Pittsburgh in 1989, Prem joined the College of Business at Iowa State University. He was an especially active member of the faculty, particularly in curriculum development.

He served on the college’s curriculum committee, computer advisory committee, and student outcomes assessment committee. He received

several grants for course development and research, most notably to develop libraries of computer-based tutorials and integrate them into the MIS curriculum. He also developed two graduate programs in information system.

Premkumar was also actively involved in connecting the College of Business to the business community. He participated in the information technology task force with the Greater Des Moines Partnership, and he developed an information systems certificate program in partnership with John Deere. These efforts earned him the college’s Business Impact Award in 1998, given to a faculty member who demonstrates an impact on industry practice. The Union Pacific Professorship in Information Systems was created in 1998 for outstanding MIS professors who have worked

to link Iowa State’s education with real-world practices. In 2000, Premkumar became the first recipient of the professorship, which he held until his death.

Premkumar was the 2004 co-chair of the Big 12 MIS Symposium, hosted by the College of Business. He planned and hosted a successful three-day event which included attendees from all Big 12 MIS departments. The

conference provided a forum for MIS faculty to discuss their research and for MIS PhD candidates to network with potential employers.

“Prem was dedicated to making our MIS program the best it could be,” said Mike Crum, John and Ruth DeVries Endowed Chair in Business and associate dean. “He worked very hard to improve the quality of our curriculum and connect the program to the community.”



“I will always remember Prem as a wonderful scholar, teacher, colleague, and friend.”

—DICK POIST

Premkumar was also an accomplished researcher in the areas of interorganizational systems, electronic commerce, knowledge management, telecommunications network design, and strategic information systems planning. His papers have been published or are forthcoming in some of the leading journals and conference proceedings in his field. He also served in editorial roles for a number of prominent journals.

Premkumar also greatly enjoyed the interaction with students that teaching allowed him. He once said, "I enjoy teaching and it gives me a great sense of personal satisfaction to disseminate knowledge to students, and see them learn and succeed in their professional life." His teaching interests were in telecommunications, electronic commerce, system analysis, and system design.

But for his many accomplishments as a faculty member, he is most remembered as a warm person and a dedicated family man. His classmates at the Indian Institute of Management presented Shoba with a memory book, each of them sharing their admiration for his work and career.

"Prem has been a wonderful, caring person and a great father to our children," said his wife Shoba. "He spent a lot of time with the family. The great memories we have will last a lifetime and give us the strength and courage to go forward in life."

Their son Mukund is 19 years old and studies

genetics at Iowa State. "My dad had a strong work ethic and always encouraged us to do our best in everything," he said. "He is my role model, and someday I would like to accomplish as much as he did in his lifetime."

Deepak is 15 and attends Ames High School. "Dad was brilliant and hardworking. He taught me a lot about computers and I am inspired by his great work. I will miss him a lot."

Shoba Premkumar is grateful for the outpouring they have received since Prem's death. "I want to thank all our friends, colleagues, and neighbors for the support since Prem passed away," she said. "I feel happy that Prem has touched many lives in a very positive way and that many of his colleagues and friends hold him in great esteem."

"Prem was nationally and internationally recognized for his important research contributions," said Dick Poist, Jacobson Companies Fellow in Transportation and Logistics and chair of the Department of Logistics, Operations, and Management Information Systems. "At Iowa State, he served many important roles in our department. I will always remember him as a wonderful scholar, teacher, colleague, and friend. He will be missed greatly." ■

## NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

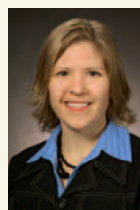


**Tim Folger** ('06 MBA, '84 Graphic Design, '79 Biology) is a new lecturer of marketing. Folger was formerly employed at the Iowa State Center as

Conference Services Manager. He is currently in a temporary appointment as a

finance integration manager with Easter Seals of Iowa.

**Robert Kemp** is a new lecturer of logistics and supply chain management. He is president and owner of Kemp Enterprises, a business consulting, supply management and professional development company.



**Jenny Reitano** ('06 MBA, '99 Exercise and Sport Science) joined the college in January as director of MBA recruitment and marketing. She

was previously employed as a wellness specialist at FBL Financial Group.