

EYES ON THE PRIZE

Sultana Nahar '82 M.A., '87 Ph.D. created her first research prize in 2000 in her native country of Bangladesh. Since then, she has established prizes to motivate scientific researchers in several other countries, including India, Palestine and Egypt.

But it was a special moment when the first Sultana N. Nahar prize was awarded at Wayne State University in 2016. As Nahar put it, “This is something I did for me.”

Nahar didn't know much about the U.S. when she came to Wayne State for her graduate studies, but she learned a lot from her experiences in Detroit. “Wayne State is like my home,” she said. “I can feel that connection.”



After completing her Ph.D., Nahar became an accomplished astrophysicist, earning recognition from the American Physical Society, Egyptian Physical Society, Topical Society of Laser Sciences, and universities around the world. Since 1990, she has served on the Ohio State University faculty. She is known for her work on atomic processes in astronomical objects and has been nicknamed the Iron Lady for her extensive work on iron important in astronomy.

Nahar began creating prizes to encourage fellow researchers to achieve at higher levels and to show appreciation for their work, especially those in developing countries. “Without research, there are no advances,” said Nahar. She also felt giving back was a moral imperative.

Thanks to Nahar's \$55,000 gift, three prizes are now permanently funded at Wayne State: the Sultana N. Nahar prize for Distinction in Research in Physics and Astronomy, the Sultana N. Nahar prize for Distinction for Teaching Physics and Astronomy, and the Alburuj R. Rahman prize for the Best Ph.D. Dissertation in Physics/Astronomy (named in honor of her son).

