

them as far as the semifinals at the national championships held in Edmonton in October 1998.

With stellar backgrounds, including top-notch grades, it would not be unusual for premier universities to covet and court such well-rounded persons. Their findings also provide hope for those who live with the conditions they are exploring.

— *Al-Karim Rehemtula*

## STAR-GAZING

Dr. Arif Babul, Assistant Professor at the University of Victoria's Department of Physics and Astronomy, is a professional stargazer. As a physical cosmologist, Babul studies the big picture of the universe. This includes attempting to answer questions such as how our universe formed and evolved, and how galaxies, stars and planetary systems are formed.

Babul sees himself as continuing in the footsteps of Fatimid-era scientists who were interested in the question of origins. For Babul, ideas about the creation and evolution of the universe are not only triggered by images taken by telescopes, but also by



**Babul: Starry-eyed**

imagery from poems, literature and religion. "*Ginans* have striking imagery that relates to how I see the world today," says Babul.

His interest in the universe began at the age of four, when he developed a curiosity about the natural world and especially about the star-studded night-time sky. He credits his parents for allowing his sense of curiosity to flourish rather than suppressing it as a silly, childish activity.

After completing a Bachelor of Applied Science in Engineering Science at the University of Toronto, Babul pursued a doctorate in Astrophysics at Princeton University in New Jersey.

Upon receiving his Ph.D. in 1989, he was awarded a NATO Science Fellowship and appointed post-doctoral research fellow at the University of Cambridge's Institute of Astronomy. In 1991, Babul joined the Canadian Institute of Theoretical Astrophysics in Toronto and in 1994, was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Physics at New York University. He joined the University of Victoria in 1997.

Babul, and his wife Naznin, a neuroscientist, have two young daughters.

Babul gives talks on Islam and Science to high school and university

students and says he is waiting for his next opportunity to fall out of the sky.

— *Feisal Sachedina*

## BEST IN ITS CLASS

Salma Rajwani and Nash Marani of Edmonton were the proud recipients of the 1998 regional Entrepreneur of the Year award for the Prairie Regions.

Sponsored by Ernst & Young together with *Canadian Business* magazine, Bank of Montreal, Nesbitt Burns, McCarthy Tetrault and Air Canada, the award acknowledges exceptional individuals, their businesses and their contributions to society. Nominated under the 'Emerging Entrepreneur' category, Rajwani and Marani amply reflect these attributes.

Rajwani and Marani are two of several directors of CompCanada, a full-service technology solution provider offering technology provisioning, delivery services and IT partner-relationship to clients in western Canada.

In an environment where businesses leverage the benefits of technology to provide a competitive advantage, both directors

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