

Dr. Asgerally “Asgi” Fazleabas (1950 - 2026)



It is with profound sadness that we share the passing of Dr. Asgerally “Asgi” Fazleabas and honor a remarkable career dedicated to discovery, education, mentorship, and service. Dr. Fazleabas was a pioneering reproductive biologist, distinguished mentor, and globally respected leader in women’s health research whose scientific contributions transformed the field of uterine biology and reproductive medicine.

Dr. Fazleabas received his early education at St. Joseph’s College in Colombo and later attended St. Thomas’ College in Gurutalawa and Mt. Lavinia, Sri Lanka. He earned his bachelor’s degree from California State University, Fresno, followed by master’s and doctoral degrees in Dairy Science and Reproductive Physiology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He completed postdoctoral training at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

In 1985, Dr. Fazleabas joined the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Illinois Chicago as an Assistant Professor and rapidly advanced through the academic ranks, becoming a full Professor in 1995. From 2002 to 2009, he served as Director of the Center for Women’s Health and Reproduction at the University of Illinois. In 2009, he was recruited to the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology in the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University with the vision of elevating women’s health research to national prominence. Through his leadership and influence, Michigan State University became nationally recognized as a leader in women’s health research and training, including ranking among the top NIH-funded departments in the country for several consecutive years.

Dr. Fazleabas was internationally recognized as a pioneer in uterine biology and for translating basic reproductive science into clinical understanding of implantation failure and endometriosis. Continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health since 1986, his research focused on maternal-fetal interactions during early pregnancy and the mechanisms by which these interactions are disrupted in women and non-human primates with endometriosis. His pioneering work in the development of the baboon model for reproductive biology and endometriosis research represented a major scientific breakthrough that significantly advanced understanding of the disease and its impact on fertility and pregnancy outcomes.

The translational relevance of his work has had a lasting impact on reproductive medicine, particularly in improving pregnancy outcomes for infertile women and deepening understanding of endometriosis, a condition affecting more than 200 million women worldwide.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Fazleabas authored more than 250 peer-reviewed publications, numerous book chapters, and invited reviews, and delivered more than 270 invited lectures around the world.

His extraordinary scientific accomplishments were recognized through numerous prestigious honors, including the National Institutes of Health Beacon Award, the Distinguished Research Award and Carl G. Hartman Award from the Society for the Study of Reproduction, election as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, designation as a World Class University Professor at Seoul National University, and Distinguished Service recognition from SSR. At Michigan State University, he was named both a University Distinguished Professor and an MSU Foundation Professor. In 2020, the University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences honored him with a Career Achievement Award.

Dr. Fazleabas was also an extraordinary mentor whose influence shaped generations of scientists, physicians, and leaders in reproductive medicine. He trained countless undergraduate students, graduate students, medical students, postdoctoral fellows, clinical fellows, and visiting scientists throughout his career. At Michigan State University, he served as Director of the NICHD U54 Specialized Cooperative Centers Program in Reproduction and Infertility Research (SCCPIR), Co-Director of the Reproductive and Developmental Sciences Program for nearly a decade, and Co-Director of the T32 Training Program in Reproductive and Developmental Biology from its inception in 2016.

Beyond his scientific accomplishments, Dr. Fazleabas was deeply committed to expanding educational and research opportunities globally. He played a pivotal role in supporting early-career Sri Lankan scientists through training opportunities in reproductive and stem cell biology in the United States and organized several workshops in Sri Lanka to foster scientific development and collaboration.

Within the Society for the Study of Reproduction, Dr. Fazleabas was a dedicated and influential leader. He served as President of SSR from 2008–2009 and was the lead director and Chair of the Board of Scientific Advisors for the renowned Frontiers in Reproduction Course at Woods Hole for more than two decades. His leadership, vision, and generosity profoundly shaped the reproductive biology community.

Dr. Asgi Fazleabas distinguished himself through a lifetime of pioneering research, dedicated mentorship, visionary leadership, and selfless service. He was not only an exceptional scientist and educator, but also a trusted colleague, collaborator, mentor, and friend to many throughout the world. His passing is a tremendous loss to Michigan State University, the Society for the Study of Reproduction, and the global reproductive science community. His scientific legacy and impact on generations of trainees and colleagues will endure for years to come.