

Distinguished Alumni Service Award

Mr Abdullah Bin Tarmugi

With a political career that spanned 27 years, Mr Abdullah Bin Tarmugi was elected Member of Parliament for Sengkang in 1984, a role which he held on to until 2011.

Mr Abdullah held various offices including serving as Minister for Community Development and Sports, and Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs. He also served as the Speaker of Parliament from 2002 until his retirement.

Since his retirement, Mr Abdullah has shown no signs of slowing down. He continues to serve on the boards of several companies as an Independent Director. He was also a former NUS Board of Trustees member. Currently, he serves as a member of The Courage Fund, the S R Nathan Education Upliftment Fund, the iShine Cloud Board and the Jazz Association Singapore.

Mr Abdullah was also appointed to the Presidential Council on Minority Rights by former President Tony Tan, and sworn in as a permanent Council member by President Halimah Yacob in 2018.

Notable in his long list of achievements are also his efforts in doing social good. He is one of the pioneers of Mercy Relief, a homegrown independent charity organisation established to focus on disaster relief and sustainable development programmes. Having served as Chairman of the Advisory Council, he has consistently poured in time and effort for the less privileged.

Today, Mr Abdullah continues to support and contribute to the promotion and development of inter-faith and inter-racial harmony and issues.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr Abdullah Bin Tarmugi, in recognition of his contributions to public service and his dedication to humanitarian efforts.

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Ms Aw Kah Peng

Ms Aw Kah Peng amassed 22 years of experience serving in the Singapore public service and has made significant contributions to both the public and private sectors of Singapore's economy.

Ms Aw began her career at the Economic Development Board, where she focused on building competitive industries and creating meaningful jobs. During her time there, the development of Jurong Island and the chemical industry took off. She subsequently helmed the Singapore Tourism Board as CEO and was involved in projects that transformed the tourism sector such as the development of integrated resorts and the F1 night race.

Ms Aw joined Shell in 2012 and took on a number of global and regional roles that included strategy development and commercial responsibilities. Her multifaceted skillset led to her appointment as Chairman of Shell Companies in January 2019.

Despite her demands at work, Ms Aw has always been closely involved in voluntary networking and sharing sessions, including those organised by NUS. She is committed to nurturing future generations through regular conversations with youths.

An avid supporter of local arts, Ms Aw is a Board Member of the Singapore Repertory Theatre. Besides serving on the International Advisory Board of the City of Rotterdam, she is also a Steering Committee Member of the Philip Yeo Initiative for young entrepreneurs at NUS.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Ms Aw Kah Peng, in recognition of her contributions to both the public and private sectors of Singapore, and her dedication in nurturing the next generation.

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Ms Jocelyn Chng Yee Kwang

Award-winning businesswoman Ms Jocelyn Chng is an astute entrepreneur who has successfully led her traditional family-run business, Sin Hwa Dee, into the global arena. Under her stewardship, the company is now one of Singapore's leading F&B players and exports to over 30 countries.

Ms Chng assumed the role of Managing Director from her father when she was a second-year student at NUS and breathed new life into the family business. With the support of her family, the business rapidly expanded to three factories. Despite this success, she continued to push for increased production while tapping into the potential of overseas markets. With the establishment of JR Foodstuff in 2001, Ms Chng added another successful venture to her resume - Chef-in-Box is a pioneer in the food industry.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms Chng supplied free meals to the less fortunate. She also drives the corporate social responsibility efforts at Sin Hwa Dee and is a member of the UN Global Compact. A former NUS Alumni Advisory Board Member, Ms Chng also co-founded Social Innovation Park Ltd, a non-profit organisation that incubates social entrepreneurs worldwide.

Her awards include the Women Entrepreneur of the Year by the Association of Small & Medium Enterprises in 2001, Montblanc Businesswoman of the Year in 2003, the NUS Eminent Business Alumni Award in 2016 and the EY Entrepreneurial Winning Women Asia Pacific Programme in 2018.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Ms Jocelyn Chng, in recognition of her enterprise and innovative achievements, and her efforts in effecting social change.

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Mr S Chandra Das

With more than five decades of co-operative experience across many sectors, Mr S Chandra Das has led with exemplary leadership at numerous corporates, government entities and social enterprises.

He has served in stewardship roles at Trade Development Board, Intraco, NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Ltd, Yeo Hiap Seng Ltd, Super Group Ltd and Travelex Holdings (S) Pte Ltd. In 1980, Mr Das was elected Member of Parliament and he went on to serve four terms.

He continued to helm critical roles in public service, including Chairman of the Government Feedback Unit. Having been on the boards of the Port of Singapore Authority and the Public Utilities Board, he currently serves as Life Trustee of the Singapore Indian Development Association, Board Member of NUS Institute of South Asian Studies and Pro-Chancellor at Nanyang Technological University.

Mr Das chaired The Central Co-operative Fund for a decade and his experience extends to diplomatic roles which include Singapore's first Trade Representative to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic from 1970 to 1971, and his current appointment as Non-Resident High Commissioner to Sri Lanka.

A recipient of two Honorary Doctorates, Mr Das has been conferred numerous awards which include the Golden Cross of Merit of Poland in 1991, the Distinguished Service (Star) Award by National Trades Union Congress in 2005, and the Public Service Star (BBM) in 2014.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr S Chandra Das, in recognition of his contributions to the co-operative movement, public sector, and business community.

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Mr Barry Desker

Mr Barry Desker served in the public service for over three decades. He is currently a Distinguished Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), and Nanyang Professor of Practice at NTU. He is also a member of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights and a member of the Board of Directors of the Lee Kuan Yew Exchange Fellowship.

In 1970, Mr Desker joined the Administrative Service and was posted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He served as Singapore's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1982 to 1984, and was the Ambassador to Indonesia from 1986 to 1993. Following his retirement, he was appointed Non-Resident Ambassador to the Holy See and the Kingdom of Spain from 2007 to 2020.

From 2007 to 2014, Mr Desker was the inaugural Dean of the RSIS at NTU. During his time there, he built RSIS into a leading professional school of international affairs and a major think tank in the field of defence and international security.

Mr Desker has remained active in the corporate world and in international public service since retirement. He served on the boards of the Economic Development Board, Trade Development Board, Maritime and Port Authority, and National Library Board, among his many other commitments.

For his contributions, he was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Gold) in 1992, an honorary Doctors of Letters by University of Warwick in 2012 and Doctors of Law by the University of Exeter in 2013.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr Barry Desker, in recognition of his contributions to public service and for flying the Singapore flag high on the global stage.

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Minister Desmond Lee Ti-Seng

The youngest full Minister to be appointed to the Cabinet, Minister for National Development Mr Desmond Lee first became a Member of Parliament after successfully contesting in Jurong GRC in 2011.

Mr Lee headed the legal department of the Ministry of Health, before becoming the Deputy Director of the Legal Policy Division at the Ministry of Law. Upon joining politics, he demonstrated both a good grasp of the complexities of policymaking and an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of Singaporeans.

He has taken on various roles, including Deputy Leader of the House and Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development. In 2017, he was appointed Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development. Later in the same year, he became Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for National Development.

At present, Mr Lee serves as the Minister for National Development and he is concurrently the Minister-in-charge of Social Services integration. In this role, he drives the transforming social services to be more citizen-centric and impactful in uplifting vulnerable members of society.

Mr Lee also serves as Co-Chair of the Emerging Stronger Taskforce and Co-Chair of the Singapore Together Movement. Outside of his work in public service, he also co-founded nuSTUDIOS Film Productions to provide support to aspiring young filmmakers on campus.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr Desmond Lee Ti-Seng, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to public service and his commitment to the betterment of the society.

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Dr Lee Tzu Pheng

One of Singapore's most influential literary figures, Dr Lee Tzu Pheng is a well-respected pioneer of the local literary scene since the 1980s. As Singapore's first generation of nation-building English writers, her works are meditative and lyrical in nature and explore themes of identity and one's role in humanity.

Dr Lee's poetry has been read on the BBC and her first three collections were all awarded the National Book Development Council of Singapore Award. She was also awarded the Singapore Cultural Medallion for Literature, the Southeast Asia WRITE Award and the Montblanc-NUS Centre for the Arts Literary Award for English Poetry.

She has served on several bodies such as the National Arts Council, the Drama Review Committee, the Art Resource Panel, and the grants' panel of the Singapore International Foundation. After retiring from her role as Associate Professor at NUS in 2001, she promoted reading and literature among the young and launched the bi-annual Lee Tzu Pheng Poetry Award in 2002 to nurture talent in budding young writers.

Dr Lee's long list of achievements also includes her being the only Singaporean to receive the Gabriela Mistral Award from the Republic of Chile. In 2014, she was inducted into the inaugural Singapore Women's Hall of Fame for her contributions to humanity and creativity. She was also honoured as Literary Pioneer at the Singapore Writers Festival 2017. Dr Lee also penned the lyrics for the National Day Song, My People, My Home.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Dr Lee Tzu Pheng, in recognition of her contributions to giving voice to a new form of local literature and a lifelong dedication to the arts.

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Professor Leo Yee Sin

As a leading infectious disease expert, Prof Leo Yee Sin has been a prominent medical figure over the past two decades. From the Nipah outbreak in 1999, SARS in 2003, the pandemic influenza in 2009 to the current COVID-19, Prof Leo has remained committed to keeping Singapore safe by fighting at the frontline with her team at the now National Centre for Infectious Diseases.

A key contributor to clinical development, Prof Leo actively participates in academic research and public health policies. She led a SG\$25 million dengue study that revolutionised dengue management in Singapore. As a research contributor, Prof Leo is credited in over 300 scientific papers and is a frequent speaker at conferences.

Prof Leo is also recognised for her efforts in advocating for HIV patients. She was among the first doctors in Singapore to tackle the stigma of HIV in the early 1990s and had committed the first decade of her career to this endeavour. To engage the community, she headed an HIV programme in 1995, followed by the establishment of an HIV patient care centre two years later.

As an accredited veteran, Prof Leo has been conferred many prestigious awards which include the Public Service Star in 2003, the Red Ribbon Award in 2014, and the recent Public Administration Medal (Silver). She was also named one of the inspiring and influential women from around the world in the BBC 100 Women 2020 list.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Prof Leo Yee Sin, in recognition of her dedication to fighting at the frontline against infectious diseases, and her leadership in effecting change for the community.

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Mr Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara

Mr Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara was appointed CEO of Temasek Holdings Private Limited in October 2021, and is also CEO of Temasek International. A firm believer in harnessing human potential in the advancement of enterprises, he has contributed to the transformation of organisations throughout his career.

A practising lawyer for over 20 years, Mr Sandrasegara was the Managing Partner of WongPartnership LLP, one of Singapore's largest law firms. His instincts as a leader are evident from his record of accomplishments. He has championed innovation and change throughout the course of his career in both WongPartnership and at Temasek. As an avid supporter of his alma mater, he has provided financial assistance to students at NUS Faculty of Law and has also established the Student Exchange Programme Award for the Community Spirited to enable learning opportunities and international exposure for youths. The intent of his contributions were to imbue beneficiaries with community values and a giving spirit.

Among his many roles, Mr Sandrasegara also currently serves as a member of the Future Economy Council, the National Jobs Council, the Financial Centre Advisory Panel of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, and is a Board Member of the National Research Foundation and Enterprise Singapore.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara, in recognition of his exemplary leadership and consistent community involvements in nurturing the next generation.

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Mr Jack Sim Juek Wah

Mr Jack Sim turned his attention to voluntary social work after achieving financial independence at the age of 40. He is best recognised for his efforts as the Founder of the World Toilet Organisation (WTO) in 2011. Before retirement, Mr Sim started a series of 16 businesses, which included the Australian International School Singapore, and Maybricks Sdn. Bhd, the largest brick factory in Malaysia.

In an effort to pave the way for serious discussions to address the global sanitation crisis, Mr Sim founded WTO. Since its inception, WTO has facilitated major sanitation efforts, including the construction of over 110 million toilets in India and influenced changes in public policy to attract an estimated US\$131 billion foreign investments into Brazil's sewage treatment plants.

In 2019, Mr Sim completed the SDG Centre with a mission to unlock the spirit of enterprise and good work ethics of the low-income group through improving the quality of life for others. Mr Sim also took on the role of Adjunct Associate Professor at NUS Business School where he inspired students to the purpose of lifelong volunteering. In 2019, he founded BoP Hub, which went into a joint initiative with NUS Enterprise to champion social innovation. The initiative provides mentorship, incubation support and resources via multi-disciplinary programmes.

Mr Sim's achievements has garnered him the Schwab Foundation Award for Social Entrepreneur of the Year in 2001. He was also named one of the Heroes of the Environment by Time Magazine in 2008, and received the Queen Elizabeth's Commonwealth Points of Light Award in 2018.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr Jack Sim Juek Wah, in recognition of his contributions to mobilising global support for a greater social good.

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Dr Tan Lai Yong

As a doctor, Dr Tan Lai Yong has poured his time and practice into alleviating poverty through medical services and training village health workers. His 14 years in rural Yunnan saw him caring and working with the less fortunate. Aside from training hundreds of rural healthcare workers, he also planned surgery camps, educated minority ethnic groups on health and hygiene, and led tree planting efforts to improve village environments.

For his work in China, he was presented with multiple awards, including the Friendship Award for Foreign Experts by former Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in 2004. In 2010, Dr Tan returned to Singapore to immerse himself in local voluntary welfare groups and migrant worker communities to address pressing needs.

In 2012, Dr Tan joined the College of Alice & Peter Tan (CAPT) as a pioneering Resident Fellow and was the inaugural Director for Outreach and Community Engagement. He currently teaches at the Division of Family Medicine in Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, where he helms the “Medicine for the Marginalised” module. A three-time recipient of the Residential Colleges Teaching Excellence Award, he is also on the NUS Residential Colleges Teaching Excellence Award Honour Roll.

Described as a “wandering saint” in Parliament, Dr Tan led his team to provide education access to migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past twelve months, he also led and participated in a dozen tree-planting projects in migrant workers’ dorms, Pulau Ubin and at the Kent Ridge campus.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Dr Tan Lai Yong for his distinguished contributions to community service, and his dedication to championing economic and social progress.

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Mr Sonny Yuen Chee Choong

Mr Sonny Yuen Chee Choong is a veteran with over 30 years of experience in the management and supply chain sectors of Singapore. Before co-founding his headhunting firm, JonDavidson, he led companies at the senior management level.

A multifaceted business leader whose expertise spans across human resources, IT, project management, finance and supply chain management, Mr Yuen is also an active member of the NUS community. From 2013 to 2021, he was the Founding President of Raffles Hall Association. As a former Junior Common Room Committee President, he ignited a deep re-engagement with alumni across five decades to reconnect and participate in multiple activities with current residents.

Under his leadership, a combined SG\$1.6 million was raised through two successful charity golf tournaments. Many memorable social and charitable activities that enriched the Hall are now his legacy. Mr Yuen is also a founding member and former President of the NUS Business School Alumni Association (NUSBSA). He built a team that established the NUSBSA Women's Wing, and the NUSBSA Accountancy Wing, which resulted in a 30 percent increase in female representation and Accounting alumni on the association's board.

Mr Yuen continues his NUS giving journey as the current Chairperson of NUS Alumni Leaders Forum. In 2019, NUS Business School paid tribute to his distinctive leadership and business achievements, with the Eminent Business Alumni Awards.

The University is pleased to confer the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award on Mr Sonny Yuen Chee Choong for his contributions to the NUS community, and his commitment as a champion fundraiser who embodies the spirit of giving through passion and hard work.

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