

# SERVICE STATEMENT

Ben Leong

I have served in a number of administrative capacities since joining NUS. The following are some of the major highlights of my service to the school (in reverse chronological order). These activities are in addition to the “routine” activities, like participating in the annual Open Houses, teaching workshops and giving talks to students as part of our outreach efforts, and interviewing students for admissions, which are too numerous to enumerate.

## **1 Experimental Systems & Technology Lab, Ministry of Education**

With effect from 1 July 2014, I will be taking up a joint appointment with the Singapore Ministry of Education as the Founding Director of the Experimental Systems and Technology Lab, MOE. The Ministry of Education has decided that there is a need for the Civil Service to build its own internal software engineering capabilities and I was approached to help to set up this new lab with the Ministry. This will be a 3-year joint appointment in the first instance. When fully operational, the new lab will have 15 fulltime software engineers and an annual operating budget of \$2 million. In this new appointment, I will also be working with iDA on the review of the HR management policies for software engineers within the public sector.

## **2 NUS IT-enhanced Education Task Force**

Since Oct 2012, I have been a member of the IT-enhanced Education Task Force, where University-level policies on IT-enhanced education. Pursuant to this appointment, I have also been appointed as a Panel member of the NUS LIFT Grant, which is a 5-million-dollar fund that will support the development of new technology-based initiatives to enhance education within the University.

## **3 iDA Talent Attraction and Development Committee**

iDA has a Talent Attraction and Development Committee consisting of representatives from higher education and industry. I served on the Committee from May 2012 to Apr 2014.

## **4 SoC Faculty Teaching Evaluation Committee**

I had the privilege of serving on the Faculty Teaching and Evaluation Committee for 2 years from 2011 to 2012. The Committee decides on the winners for the Faculty teaching awards annually and also nominates colleagues for the NUS Annual Teaching Excellence Award.

## **5 SoC Computer Science EXCO, Junior Faculty Representative**

The CS Department has an Executive Committee that formulates and discusses policies for the CS Department. I had the privilege of serving on the EXCO as the Junior Faculty representative from Oct 2008 to Jun 2011.

## **6 Computing for Volunteer Welfare Organizations (May 2007 – present)**

I started a volunteer group called Computing for Volunteer Welfare Organizations (CVWO) in 2007 and have served as the faculty advisor ever since. My students apply their skills to build IT systems for VWOs during their summer vacations (See <http://www.comp.nus.edu.sg/vwo>). Our students have successfully developed many IT systems, benefitting a large number of VWOs, including MINDS, YMCA, Lions Befrienders, Methodist Welfare Services, and Fei Yue Community Services, among others. Each summer, I spend one afternoon every week meeting with the students and supervising the projects. Over the years, we have trained about 100 students under this initiative.

While this initiative started as a community service project, it became abundantly clear that it had significant pedagogical value because it exposes our students to the real work of software development where they not only have to apply their software engineering skills, but they have to pick up communication and project management skills in a hurry. The students are required to write a report at the end of their projects. In 2011, CVWO was awarded the highest distinction award by Lions Befrienders, the “Friend of the Lions Befrienders” Award.

## **7 Organization of National and ACM Programming Competitions**

I served as a member of Scientific Committee for the National Informatics Olympiad (NOI) for three years from 2007 to 2009. I was involved in the setting and checking of the questions for the competition. In 2008, I also served as a member of the Organizing Committee of the ACM ICPC Regional Contest that was held in Singapore.