

Singapore

NTU staff donate more than 20,000 days of unused annual leave to raise money for student aid



File photo of The Hive, Nanyang Technological University (NTU). (Photo: Alif Amsyar)

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SINGAPORE: Employees at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) have donated more than 20,000 days' worth of unused leave towards student aid and endowments, said the university on Monday (Nov 23).

The collective 20,145 days of annual leave are worth S\$10.25 million, said NTU in its media release.

The donations were made by 1,821 faculty and staff, with each employee contributing an average of 11 days. The highest donation was 15 days of leave.

NTU said the donation exercise was a new initiative that allowed employees to put their unutilised leave "towards a good cause".

"As part of the opt-in exercise, all NTU employees were given the option to voluntarily redeem their unutilised earned annual leave value, based on each individual's salary rates, for donation to an NTU fund of their choice," added the university.

On average, NTU employees are given between 21 and 42 days of annual leave depending on their employment scheme and length of service.

Another round of the opt-in leave donation exercise will be held in October next year.

NTU senior vice president (administration) Tan Aik Na said the donations showed how the university's community was invested in the success and wellbeing of its students.

"Everyone has been impacted by COVID-19, but some have been hit harder than others. Some of our students' parents have lost their jobs or have had their income reduced.

"So, it is doubly important during the pandemic for us to rally our support ... to help these students," said Ms Tan.

Dr Babu Narayanswamy, who gave 14 of his leave days in cash value, said he planned to donate again next year.

"I consider myself one of the fortunate ones to have a job that has not been adversely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic," said the materials scientist and director at the Nanyang Environment and Water Research Institute.

"While the Government has been doing all it can, I believe this is the time for those of us who can, to pitch in and help in whatever way possible," said Dr Babu.

Earlier this year, NTU launched a S\$2 million fund to support students affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Eligible students are able to receive an interest-free advance of up to S\$1,500 which they have to reimburse to the university within two years after graduation.

Source: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/ntu-employees-donate-unused-annual-leave-covid-19-13619830>