

Singapore uni staff donate paid leave to help students affected by COVID-19



The COVID-19 pandemic has hit people hard. And for some, it has turned their lives upside down, resulting in massive financial losses, and a bleak outlook for the future.

This includes university students, some of which whose parents have lost their jobs due to instability brought on by the pandemic. It's scary, not knowing if you'll be able to pay your next round of tuition fees.



NTU undergrads studying. IMAGE: [Channel News Asia](#)

But employees at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University (NTU) have figured out a way to help students who are struggling during this time.

Together, 1,821 NTU faculty and staff donated over 20,000 annual leave days in an effort to help students affected by COVID-19.

Collectively, the 20,145 annual leave days donated are worth a staggering US\$7.6 million (S\$10.25 million), according to NTU.

Each employee contributed an average of 11 days, with the highest single contributor being 15 days of leave.



NTU's learning hub, the Hive, aka the 'dim sum basket building'. IMAGE: [The Nanyang Chronicle](#)

It's all part of the university's new initiative, in which staff can forfeit their unused days off in order to help struggling students, especially those suffering financially from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

On average, NTU staff have anywhere between 21 and 42 annual leave days.

According to Tan Aik Na, NTU's Senior Vice President of Administration, the donations put forth by the university staff symbolize their collective commitment to ensuring every student in need is given a fair chance.

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



IMAGE: [The Straits Times](#)

Among the staff who donated their annual leave days, Dr Babu Narayanswamy, materials scientist and Director at the Nanyang Environment and Water Research Institute, plans to do so again next year.

"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 Narayanswamy, who donated 14 days of annual leave.

If that doesn't bring tears of hope to your eyes, I don't know what will.

Source: <https://sea.mashable.com/social-good/13319/singapore-uni-staff-donate-paid-leave-to-help-students-affected-by-covid-19>