



A WORTHY APPOINTMENT

LIM CHWEE TECK
*Appointed NUSS
Professor on
1 July, 2017*

*Professor,
Department
of Biomedical
Engineering, NUS*

*Principal
Investigator,
Mechanobiology
Institute, NUS*

*Faculty Fellow,
Singapore-
MIT Alliance
for Research &
Technology*

His passion

Professor Lim is an engineer, inventor and entrepreneur. He loves problem-solving – it is what drives him to innovate, create and commercialise new products.

Early achievements

In the early 2000s, Professor Lim and his team developed a device for “crash-testing” mobile phones and other portable electronic devices. He co-founded a start-up and worked with Nokia, Research In Motion and Motorola.

PROFILE

Professor Lim Chwee Teck is the first full-time professor at NUS to be conferred the NUSS Professorship. We speak to him about his new role and what he hopes to achieve for the Society.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR APPOINTMENT?

I'm honoured to be bestowed this recognition as a Singaporean, NUS alumnus and NUSS member.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE DURING YOUR TENURE?

One of the first things I'd like to do is conduct a series of lectures for members and the public, to share with them the exciting biomedical engineering research at NUS and how it benefits society. On 15 November, I will be conducting a lecture for members on emerging medical technologies for precision medicine or personalised treatment. Through lectures like this, I hope to inform the public about the importance of research, and how they can play their part in supporting such efforts. I'm also looking forward to sharing my entrepreneurship experiences with members.

WHAT IS YOUR MAIN AREA OF RESEARCH AND EXPERTISE?

I'm a mechanical engineer by training, but my research now focuses on mechanobiology and biomedical engineering. I conduct research on diseases and develop devices that can better diagnose and treat patients.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO PURSUE YOUR INTEREST IN MECHANOBIOLOGY, DISEASE DETECTION AND HEALTHCARE?

It excites me when I am able to see our projects through all its stages, from lab to bedside. It brings me even greater satisfaction to see my work making an impact in the healthcare sector and patients' lives.

WHAT IS YOUR KEY ACHIEVEMENT IN THE AREA OF GLOBAL RESEARCH?

In 2009, I co-founded a company, Clearbridge Biomedics, to commercialise a biochip that allows us to isolate cancer cells from a patient's blood – a process known as liquid biopsy. With this technology, healthcare professionals can capture and analyse circulating cancer cells with greater accuracy in a shorter time frame. This test can provide real-time feedback on the condition of a patient, allowing doctors to closely track the disease's progression and provide immediate and personalised treatment. This invention won the President's Technology Award in 2011 and the Wall Street Journal Asian Innovation Award in 2012. Today, our technology is used in more than 60 locations here and around the world, such as in the US, UK, Japan and China.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS?

Create an innovative solution that solves a societal need. You also need to be passionate and have the perseverance to see it through.

YOU'VE BEEN AN NUSS MEMBER SINCE 1999. WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE?

I once took up a business Mandarin course to improve my communication skills. Through this course, I had the opportunity to connect with fellow members who were also looking to hone their Mandarin speaking skills. It was nice to have so many like-minded people in the same room!

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO SEE NUSS ACHIEVE IN THE FUTURE?

I would like to see NUSS become 'the place' for meaningful engagements between members and their alma mater. ■

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Awards & Credentials

- International Precision Medicine Conference Prize, 2017
- ASEAN Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award, 2016
- IES Prestigious Engineering Achievement Award, 2016
- Asian Scientist 100, 2016
- Elected Fellow, American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering, 2016 – Present
- Gold, Wall Street Journal Asian Innovation Awards, 2012
- Credit Suisse Technopreneur of the Year Award, 2012
- President's Technology Award, 2011