

DENISE PHUA LAY PENG

AGE: 46

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Denise Phua is a full-time volunteer serving as President of the Autism Resource Centre (Singapore) or ARC. She also serves as School Supervisor/Acting Principal of Pathlight School, the first autism-focused school in Singapore. Her role is to lead and direct a team of volunteers and professional staff to deliver quality services to the special needs (autism) community. The group also aspires to identify critical issues and execute world class initiatives with government and public to shape a future Singapore where no disabled people, physical or otherwise, are left behind.



Before giving up her corporate job to serve fulltime in the special needs sector on 1 January 2005, Denise Phua was the Regional Managing Director/Consultant and a founding partnerr of the Centre for Effective Leadership (Asia) Pte Ltd (CEL). Her partners and her then sold CEL to Right Management Consultants, part of the US-based Manpower Corporation.



CEL was a regional leadership training firm based in Singapore with operations in China (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou), Hongkong, Taiwan and Vietnam. CEL was the authorised representative of world-renowned intellectual content from Franklin Covey Co., BT.Novations Inc., Decision Processes International (Training) and Quma Learning.

Denise has more than 20 years experience in human resource management, product marketing and marketing communications in both local and overseas capacities.

She started her career in Human Resource in Hewlett-Packard Singapore (HP) where she acquired in-depth experience in the functions of training and development, expatriate management, employee communications, job analysis and evaluation, and total compensation.

Denise then spent several years in both Beijing, China and Palo Alto, United States in Marketing Communications, helping to develop and implement HP's communications strategy to market its range of computer products in China and HP's education offerings from its Corporate Education office.



Upon her return to Singapore, she joined HP's Asia Pacific Peripherals Group Marketing Center as a regional Product Manager. There, she was responsible for marketing high-end HP Laserjet printers and the then-new scanner product line in the Asia Pacific region.

In 1991, Denise joined the Wuthelam Group and was promoted to the role of Human Resource Director. In this role, she contributed actively in local and foreign executive search, setting up HR functions in all the group's major start-up companies,

consulted and managed employee turnover, total quality and organizational development issues.

Denise was educated in Raffles Girls' Secondary School and Hwa Chong Junior College in Singapore. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English from the National University of Singapore, a Graduate Diploma in Personnel Management and a Master of Business Administration Degree from the Golden Gate University, United States. She was recently voted as the winner of the "Great Women of Our Times, Education and Public Service Category" awarded by the Singapore Women's Weekly.

Denise is an active volunteer since year 1999. She founded WeCAN (Worldwide Collaborations on Autism Needs), a charity organisation aimed to equip family caregivers and medical professionals to help individuals with autism effectively. She was later elected to become President of the Autism Resource Centre and selected by Pathlight School's Board to be School Supervisor, overseeing the principal and all staff. She is motivated to help build Singapore as the centre of excellence for special education in the region.

Denise is married with one daughter, 11 and one son, 10.

"Denise is often teased by her family and close friends as a fighter for the 'underdogs'. Perhaps that is how she landed up becoming a full time volunteer with the Autism Resource Centre and also a board director of an orphanage in China, after more than 20 years of corporate life. She takes her volunteer work very seriously working a regular 12-hour day with her team mates, many of whom have become her closest friends.

Denise is an avid reader . She also loves the sea. She would actively scout the internet and bookshops for the latest reading materials on her area of interest at the time. These have included anything from religion, British humour, leadership, finance to autobiographies of people with disabilities. With books in tow, she could spend hours reading, in front of the sea at nearby beach resorts. Her favourite haunt is a little known kelong resort near Bintan, Indonesia where she spends happy times reading."