Welcome Speech by Professor Bernard Yeung, Dean of the NUS Business School at the Asia Centre for Social Entrepreneurship & Philanthropy, Philanthropic Speaker Series Talk, at the Executive Dining room MRB, NUS Business School, Monday April 11 2011, 5pm.

Dr Pamala Wiepking, guest speaker
Professor Dennis Cheek, Visiting Professor ACSEP
Mr Keith Chua, Chairman of ACSEP BOA and executive chairman of ABR Holdings
Mr Terry Farris, Head of Family Office & Philanthropy Services, DBS Private Banking
Mr Stanley Tan, Chairman of NVPC and Community Foundation of Singapore
ACSEP Board of Advisors,
Colleagues and alumni of NUS Business School
Distinguished guests
Good afternoon.

I am happy to welcome you all to this philanthropic speaker series, hosted by the Asia Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy (ACSEP) at the NUS Business School.

Many exciting developments are taking place in Asia, particularly in the social enterprise and philanthropy sectors, and the developments present vast opportunities for research and education in these fields.
The express goal and mission of ACSEP is to advance research, teaching, student experiences at undergraduate and graduate levels, alumni involvement, and executive education in the twin areas of social entrepreneurship and philanthropy. Given ACSEP’s strategic thrusts in developing Asia-focused research and case studies and projects that are grounded in Asia, it made strategic sense for the centre, previously called CSEP, to include “Asia” in its name and be known as the Asia Centre for Social Entrepreneurship & Philanthropy (ACSEP). Certainly, this new name will align the centre neatly with NUS Business School’s vision to be “Asia’s Global Business School.

In the area of research, the faculty and researchers currently affiliated with ACSEP are not only conducting Singapore-focused research, but are also engaging in cross-national, comparative research in the Asian context. Although located within and supported by the NUS Business School, it is ACSEP’s desire to not only embrace and involve colleagues from NUS but to also engage in in-depth, multidisciplinary activities in collaboration with partners in Singapore, Asia, and beyond.

We believe such comparative and regional-based research programmes will position ACSEP as a centre of excellence in creating knowledge on Asian social entrepreneurship and philanthropy.
For our students, ACSEP currently provides opportunities for them to do their consulting practicum with social enterprises and non-profit organizations in various Asian countries. In addition, ACSEP supports and works with various NUS student teams who carry out community development projects in various parts of Asia.

This talk is therefore timely. Not only do we want to look at the nature of philanthropy in the Netherlands and the US, we also want to understand better how our knowledge of these models will help shape our own here in Singapore and the rest of Asia.

The Charity Governance Report for 2011 released by the Charity Council in Singapore highlights the state of governance in the charity sector, the capability building initiatives, as well as profiles of good practices by charities. The report also notes that in addition to a greater adherence to governance and management guidelines, more than 700 charities are now tapping on the VWOs-Charities Capability Fund (VCF) for training, consultancy, and other shared services grants. In a survey conducted to determine needs, respondents mentioned the desire for more education on strategic philanthropy. Other needs included the need to share information, dedicated staff to source opportunities, and emphasis on regulation, transparency, and accountability and due diligence.
I believe this evening’s talk and dialogue will help further shape our understanding of philanthropy. It will also give us a chance to reflect more deeply and think more actively about the way we give back to society.

At the NUS Business School, we are keen to engage with and contribute to the community. This is one of the reasons behind the setting up of ACSEP. We want to develop partnerships with foundations, family business networks, financial institutions, high net worth individuals and families and organizations where we can collaborate to better serve and support meaningful philanthropic endeavors. Together, we can create opportunities and solutions to support the less fortunate in our society.

We are honoured to have Dr Pamala Wiepking as our guest speaker. I am also glad to see so many of you here today, motivated by your sincere passion and profound desire to do good.

I hope that you will enjoy this evening’s talk and discussion and deepen your understanding of the new and exciting sectors of social entrepreneurship and philanthropy.

Thank you.