

**Nomination letter for Annual Faculty Mentor  
(P Sadayappan, Computer Science Department, OSU)**

P Sadayappan has been an exceptional mentor and advisor to me. In fact, I could not have asked for a better PI. From day one of my PostDoctoral appointment, he has been guiding me through the process of becoming an independent researcher. He gave me an opportunity to work on many projects, but he never forced me to work on any individual work, he always gave me the freedom to explore various topics and projects. His exceptional guidance allowed me, along with Ph.D. students, to publish many papers on top-tier conferences.

I believe that for a PostDoc to succeed, the following skills are important i) managing and interacting with students as an advisor and mentor ii) teaching skills: designing and teaching courses iii) building a professional network with top researchers in academics and industry iv) writing proposals to obtain funds. Saday has helped me in all these areas well beyond my expectations. During the initial months of PostDoc, he allowed me to interact with all his students. This allowed me to update my technical and communication skills in addition to improving my mentoring skills. He allowed me to attend and teach in some of his courses. This definitely improved my teaching skills. He also asked me for suggestions to improve the curriculum, which helped me to start thinking about designing courses. In-fact, Saday and I are planning design an entirely new course in the next semester. Building a network with top-level researchers is always a challenge, but with Saday's help, this was not at all difficult. He helped me to collaborate with national labs, industries, and other universities. Obtaining funds is the most difficult part for a researcher. From my early days as a PostDoc, he allowed me to take part in all his research proposals. This allowed me to get a first-hand experience in designing and writing technical proposals. In fact, he encouraged me to apply to get PI status. In addition to all the above, Saday encourages and supports me to attend top conferences so that I am aware of the state-of-the-art technologies and to build research networks. He also encourages me to attend many professional development events inside and outside of OSU.

Saday always helped me to think one step in advance and guided me on how to manage time. A concrete example of this is that, when I joined his lab, I was only working with CPUs. However, in my area (high-performance computing), GPUs have gained much traction. Hence, he suggested learning GPUs to be future proof. The result is that over 90% of the papers I publish now are GPU based. Now that other technologies are gaining traction, he encourages and provides opportunities for me to learn them. On similar lines, he encouraged me to write the research and teaching proposals required for academic applications well before the deadlines and helped me to revise them. He helped me to keep an open mind about technologies and techniques and enhanced my scientific thinking skills. One of his outstanding skills is to encourage others to think positively. As a PostDoc, it is very important to work with someone who is positive.

Its one thing to be a good advisor but it is totally a different thing to be a good mentor. Saday has always been an exceptional advisor and an exceptional mentor. He helped me tremendously in other aspects of life outside campus. When I joined OSU, since it was my first time in the US, I had some difficulty in settling down and Saday helped me a lot to alleviate all the issues. He has guided me through all aspects of the career.

Louis Noel Pouchet who worked as Saday's PostDoc is now working at Colorado State University as an Asst. Professor. Whenever I met him, he always attributed his success to Saday. He always mentions how Saday influenced him to a better researcher. Arjun Suresh (Owner of gateoverflow.com) also worked as a PostDoc with Saday. He left the lab to start his own company. He always tells that interactions with Saday helped him a lot especially to develop better technical skills and to become a better person.

One page is not sufficient to tell how Saday helped, guided and influenced me. I am honored and proud to do my PostDoc for 2 years with him. In fact, in my professional circle, I don't know anyone who can outperform Saday as a PI.