WHILE a smooth path to success is
enviable, the story of a person who
stumbled over failure and went
against the odds to follow his passion and
finally achieve his dream deserve just as
much, if not more respect.

Looking at Foo Wing Jian’s joy at the recent
graduation dinner, it is hard to imagine that
his dream of becoming a doctor was almost
derailed because his grades couldn’t make the
cut.

Ever since he first wrote “doctor” on the
ambition section of his primary school report
card, Foo had loved learning everything about
science and eventually in high school, biology.
In his own words, he says that science and
him “just clicked”.

At the same time, his interest in the medi­
cal profession grew and he worked hard to
get the grades required for medical school.
This saw him consistently being at the top of
his class and scoring well in his SPM exami­
nations.

It was during Form Six that he hit a brick
wall.

“When the results were announced, I found
out that I received bad results – one of the
worst in the school,” he says.

Not only could he not gain a place to do
medicine in a government university, the
people around told him that he was not good
enough to be a doctor.

Follow your passion

Looking back, Foo recalled that he would
have accepted the discouragement, if not for
the fact that his passion for medicine was
unwavering.

“Even after all that, I knew I was still inter­
ested in medicine!” he says.

With his parents’ support and his heart set
on becoming a doctor, he sought the advice of
the course counsellors at UCSI University.

To his relief, the course counsellors did not
immediately dismiss his desire to pursue the
Bachelor of Medicine programme. Instead,
they examined his results, noting that he
consistently performed well in biology, even
during his STPM.

After consulting the dean of the Faculty of
Medicine and Health Sciences, the university
decided to take Foo in for the programme.

This was an unusual decision as the faculty
maintained a strict standard for its entry
requirements – the 2012 intake saw 95% of
its students entering the programme with a
CGPA of 3.7 or higher for their Foundation
programme.

“I was so happy but at the same time, I told
myself I had to learn from my Form Six night­
mare,” Foo says.

He worked extra hard. To his surprise,
he did not find the programme difficult at
all – he consistently performed well in the
examinations and tests for every semester.

He reasons that this was because of his
passion for medicine, whatever difficulties he
faced were bearable and even enjoyable.

“My course-mates did call me The Human
Typist’ though,” he says with a grin, explain­
ing that the nickname came about because
he was always writing down everything the
lecturers said.

He explains that his copious note jott­ing
was because he valued the experience of his
lecturers, whom he found very learned and
accomplished in their respective fields.

To the lecturers’ credit

He shares how he has influenced a new
generation of “Human Typists” by telling his
juniors that five minutes of listening to the
lecturers was more important than five hours
of merely reading a textbook.

Sciences were another factor that Foo cred­
its for the successful completion of his medi­
cal degree.

In addition to being knowledgeable, he
revealed that the lecturers did not maintain a
distance between themselves and the students.

“They were more like our parents than lec­
turers, taking a genuine interest in our studies
and well-being,” he says.

The university’s medical community was so
close-knit that the lecturers would often treat
the students to a nice dinner in town and eve­
ryone added each other on their Facebook.

This was particularly good for the students’
academic performance as they could just
drop in the dean’s office and request for extra
classes or coaching to be arranged, if they
need it.

As a result of the helpful lecturers and sup­
portive medical community, it is no surprise
that Foo’s batch of Doctor of Medicine gradu­
ates had a 100% passing rate.

Currently waiting for his housemanship
posting, Foo is a happy Doctor of Medicine
graduate. While he has plans to pursue a spe­
cialisation programme in the future, for now,
he wants to focus on the task at hand.

“I think, for now, it is important for me to
be able to do all the small things well and be
a good doctor,” he says.
Most of all, he knows that whatever the future holds, his past encounter with failure has shown him that he would be able to face challenges and come out an even better person, and doctor, than before.

This is why UCSI University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences took a chance on him – and the chance paid off.

To find out more about UCSI University's Doctor of Medicine or other Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences programmes call 03-91018882 or e-mail www.ucsiuniversity.edu.my/onlineenquiry. You can also drop by its Open Days on July 27 and 28 (9am – 5pm).