

Campus

Making their mark

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PUBLIC speaking is usually a daunting task for most people, but not for UCSI University graduate Suzanne Ling Sook Shian.

The Chancellor's Gold Medal Award recipient was eager to take to the stage to deliver her speech during her convocation last weekend – all for a good cause.

Ling, co-founder of the Picha Project - a social enterprise that helps uplift refugee families by providing them with a source of income - grabbed her opportunity to reach out to those attending the UCSI 30th anniversary convocation.

One of 2,373 students who graduated, she spoke on how a kind deed was able to change a person's life, and subsequently, a community.

"I was so excited not because I was graduating, but because I got to share this message in front of such a big crowd ... to send a message that they should know about," said the 24-year-old, after the ceremony ended.

"The purpose of my speech is to let people realise that we are not entitled to all the good things we have.

"If we have them, we should also reach out to those who need it, instead of just thinking of ourselves," she added.

The first-class honours psychology gradu-



Ling receiving her scroll from Dr Abdul Rahman during the ceremony while Ng (seated) looks on.

ate, said finishing her degree meant she had “completed a level in life” and had made her parents proud.

“However, there are a lot more levels to go,” she said, after thanking the university for providing a good platform for her studies as well as her parents’ unconditional support.

Ling said that she was appreciative of all the valuable lessons she learnt during her time at the institution.

“It is okay to fail. I learnt to explore and tried as many things as possible and maximised every opportunity I received, such as events, talks and networking with others.

“University is the time to do all these things as we might not do so after we start working,” she shared.

Ling who plans to pursue a Master’s in Clinical Psychology, added that graduates had to be better people when they left varsity.

Valedictorian Soh Wei Ming, 25, graduated with first class honours in chemical engineering.

His proudest achievement was when he was one of a few Malaysians selected for a cutting-edge research programme at the prestigious Imperial College London.

He worked in advanced research on functional particles together with world renowned scientists.

His research on optimal production of cenosphere from coal fly ash – a by-product of coal combustion – has had wide-ranging implications for reducing environmental pollution from coal-fired power plants.

“I used to have poor grades during secondary school, but once I found my interest, I decided to focus.

“I wanted to improve, see results and pursue science-related studies,” he said.

His advice to students who wanted to



Wei Ming’s research has wide-ranging implications for reducing environmental pollution from coal-fired power plants.

achieve great things was to find out what their interests were and to tap them.

“Set a realistic goal. Challenge expectations and surpass them,” he said.

Soh is now working as a remote operations centre engineer with the Linde Group, the world’s largest industrial gas supply company, where he oversees the supply systems and processes and resolves technical problems.

UCSI chancellor Tan Sri Dr Abdul Rahman Arshad and vice-chancellor and president Senior Prof Datuk Dr Khalid Yusoff congratulated the graduates at the ceremony.

“Do not be one of the many, be one of a kind.

“Your thirst for knowledge must never end. Knowledge keeps expanding.

“What is relevant today, may not be tomorrow,” said Dr Abdul Rahman.

He added that a university degree was just a starting point and students needed to explore their next phase.

Quoting Winston Churchill, Prof Khalid said: “Success is not final, failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts.”

UCSI founder and group chief executive officer Datuk Peter Ng who is university council chairman, was also present at the ceremony.