

# No more worries, she's Happy!

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LIFE has never been easy for anyone. Some people may give up on challenges they face in the different chapters of their life, while others choose to fight till they succeed.

UCSI University's graduate Happy Hong Jia Wen is undeniably a fighter, and rightly so.

Raised by her mother, a single parent, Hong had a tough life growing up in Kuala Lumpur. Facing severe financial constraints after enrolling in UCSI University in 2010, Hong's quit her studies temporarily to find a job.

Then aged 20, Hong had Lady Luck on her side when she was recruited as a flight attendant shortly after she opted to put her studies on hold.

After two years of flying with Singapore Airlines, she saved enough to pursue her dream, but by then, her mother was diagnosed with cancer.

However, rather than being deterred by her situation, Hong was all the more determined to earn her degree and make her family proud. It was a tough juggling act – managing the household, attending lectures and

studying, and taking care of her mother – but Hong persevered to graduate with first class honours in English Language and Communication.

For her academic excellence in the face of extreme adversity, Hong was awarded the UCSI University's Chancellor's Gold Medal.

Hong was overwhelmed as she received her scroll from UCSI University chancellor Tan Sri Dr Abdul Rahman Arshad at the institution's 29th convocation in Kuala Lumpur last month.

"There were times when I had thoughts of giving up, but this journey is well worth it. It is a dream come true to see my mother proud. I would not have been able to succeed without the support of my family.

"The first step towards achieving success is recognising that life does not become easier. Each obstacle is a blessing in disguise and that makes you a wiser and stronger person," she said.

Hong's next goal is to find a job and to provide for her mother.

"I would like to be a childcare teacher, so that I could impart good values and knowledge and to guide the young ones," she said.



**Proud moment:** Hong (second from right) with Kar Lam (left), Yeoh, niece Leona Hong and Neo after the graduation ceremony.

Despite feeling unwell after completing her chemotherapy, Hong's mother Yeoh Lee Kiang attended her daughter's convocation, bursting with pride and joy.

"Every parent wishes the best for their children, and I'm glad to know my daughter has reached her goal in

this chapter of her life," said the teary-eyed homemaker, who was accompanied by her other child, Kar Lam.

Hong's boyfriend Steven Neo was just as proud of her.

"Although going through hardships, she has done well and surpassed all our expectations," he said.