



Sharing as the Recipient of S Leung Postgraduate Scholarship 2013

Heidi Ho

Ms Heidi Ho, a 2012 graduate in English Studies and English Language Education Programme, received the S Leung Postgraduate Scholarship 2013. Ms Ho will pursue her Master of Philosophy in Education (Arts, Creativity, Education and Culture) at the University of Cambridge in United Kingdom.

As the recipient of S Leung Postgraduate Scholarship 2013, I wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Mr Stephen Leung, Scholarship donor, to thank the relevant United College (UC) staff, and to share my academic pursuit and dream with fellow UC students.

Having been an English teacher in a local secondary school for a year, I realize the significance of emphasising and incorporating arts and culture in education. In fact, when we look at the society we live in today, we notice that people seem to be more detached when compared with those of the older generation, in which our parents and grandparents lived in more extensive families and they maintained better relationships among siblings, with neighbors, distant relatives and colleagues. Nowadays, people put more emphasis on pursuing and fulfilling their self-interest and gaining instant and measurable rewards, such as grades and money, rather than on cultivating humanity and social values for the benefits of the society.

Under the more goal-oriented education system, students' development tends to be bound by external assessments and their shrewd expectations. Although many students excel in examinations, only a few manage to think differently and step out of the comfort zone, because they are held back by their inertia and fear. For instance, in the public examination of English writing, most



students tend to choose writing genres which are more structured and controlled, such as argumentative essays, instead of creative writings because the presentation structure and the marking criteria are more concrete and explicit. This shows students prefer walking on the safe side to taking risks, to perceiving things from new perspectives and to creating their own styles and thoughts. Such an attitude may hinder the growth of the society, as the development of many sectors and industries has already saturated.

In order to facilitate the society to break through the current situation and to advance, I believe aesthetic education can play an important role. In the arts field, students are encouraged to develop their originality and innovation through appropriate acknowledgement and assessment. For example, instead of simply assessing the end product, we should equally value and evaluate the creation process of an art piece, so that students can develop their competences, such as creativity and critical thinking, and acquire the courage to leap out of the social norms and routines in real life. For this reason, I would like to help promote and expand aesthetic education in Hong Kong. I have enrolled in an MPhil programme at the University of Cambridge, specialising in Arts, Creativity, Education and Culture (ACEC).

In the ACEC programme, relevant concepts and contemporary issues such as creativity, social justice, assessment in arts education, and other controversial debates in arts education will be examined from various perspectives and in diverse ways, which include seminars, onsite visits, workshops, and so on. Through the intellectual and cultural exchange with excellent instructors, professors and classmates, I aspire to broaden my knowledge horizons and academic experience in the coming year, so as to be able to contribute to the education field of Hong Kong in the future.

Indeed, studying at Cambridge has always been one of my childhood dreams, and this dream would not have come true without the support of different people. First and foremost, I would like to express, once again, my gratefulness to Mr S Leung, the donor of the scholarship. His dedication and enthusiasm, mission and vision in nourishing and nurturing the younger generation I deeply appreciate, and his generosity certainly helps me take another step closer to my goal of contributing to the improvement of the education system in Hong Kong.

My sincere thanks also go to the United College. Throughout the four-year university study, the College constantly provided me with a range of opportunities to enhance my exposures and develop me into a better person. These experiences include taking part in the UC mentorship programme, organising college activities, participating in thought-provoking talks and assemblies, experiencing hostel life and meeting



people from all walks of life. Hence, I would like to take this occasion to thank every member of the College I have come into contact and interacted with for making my university life fruitful and memorable. With the motto 'Ming De Xin Min' (明德新民) instilled in mind, not only will I pursue academic excellence, but I will also endeavor to serve the Hong Kong community and help create a better world.

Besides, I would like to extend my gratitude to Professor Eunice Tang, who is my referee for this scholarship. Eunice is more than a teacher to me; she is also my mentor and my friend. She was always beside me during the happy or difficult times in my undergraduate study. I would like to acknowledge her inspirational teaching, incessant guidance, unflinching support, as well as lifting me uphill at this phase of my life.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my parents, whom I have always been feeling indebted to. They have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and realise my own potentials. The love they have extended to me over the years is the greatest gift no one else has ever given me.

