

on 17 October 2012



UNIMAS, a handicapped-friendly university

KOTA SAMARAHAN: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) is known for its diversity in students which can clearly be seen through the university's fourth session of its 16th convocation at the campus here yesterday afternoon.

For Finance graduate Cindy Yeo Siaw Hui, being wheelchairbound did not stop her from achieving her goals in life.

"I have had a lot of encouragement from my family members and friends, especially my mother who is always there and sacrificed a lot for me," she said.

She also revealed that when she was younger, doctors found out that she had a slow learning skill and advised her mother to put a lot of efforts and time to take care of her.

"I used to feel different from other children because I always felt I was always one step behind compared to the other children and I have to work harder than them," she said.

She said that although she was teased in the past it was her mother who became her pillar of strength and advised her to just look forward and ignore the teasing.

"My mother always told me that only I myself know who I am and that I should not take the teasing personally," she said.

When asked about her feelings upon graduating, she said she felt happy and proud.

"Studying in UNIMAS has been a good experience for me because not only do I get support from my family, but from my friends as well who help me to get around and accompany me to classes," she said.

She also said that the facilities for handicapped students in UNIMAS are good as it makes things such as moving around and borrowing books much easier.

"There are ramps around the campus and even a hostel with facilities for handicapped students like me. The library even allows me to borrow books online so that I don't have to make frequent trips to the library," she said.

When asked about her future plans, Cindy said she plans to become a lecturer as it is a more convenient profession for her, especially with the advancement in technology.

"I am currently working in the private sector as a management trainee to gain some experience," she said.

Another graduate, Robert Jeno an Industrial Economy graduate is also grateful to his parents who were the ones who pushed him to secure a good education.

"My parents always told me to pursue the best that I can when it comes to education," he said.

Jeno from Belaga is of Punan, a minority ethnic group under the Orang Ulu community. He wanted to study at UNIMAS since he went on an educational trip to the university in 2007.

"I was impressed with the facilities and atmosphere at UNIMAS.

It was a challenge for me to gain entrance into the university.

UNIMAS and studying economics have always been my first choice and I am glad I managed to gain both," he said.

He added that he would like to venture into entrepreneurship and start with a franchise and work his way up.

UNIMAS also has its mix of international students, as shown by International Economics graduate Li Yingxian from Beijing, China.

"When I first came to UNIMAS I was lonely but as time passed by, I met a lot of people I am proud to call my friends," she said.

She said during her first semester, she faced the language barrier as she was not proficient in the English language.

"It was tough for me, so I worked extra hard by downloading videos to help me improve my English," she said, adding that after graduation she will be going to Thailand for an internship programme.

For twin sisters Sandra Tan Chia Chia and Jena Tan Ting Ting, they are going to continue with their Masters degree at UNIMAS.

An Industrial Economics graduate and Social Service Studies graduate respectively, the Tan sisters are considered a minority as the number of twins studying in UNIMAS is very few.

"Many people cannot tell the difference between us except for a few close friends. Just like everyone else, we are happy to finally graduate and it is a relief for us," said Jena.

Source : Sarawak Tribune