***The Personal Statement is an opportunity for you to provide additional information that may aid the selection committee in evaluating your preparation and aptitude for graduate study at UCLA.***

***Please respond to one or more of the following prompts. Your statement can be up to 500 words in length (approximately 1-page, single spaced, using 1-inch margins and 12-point font). To be considered for a Cota-Robles or Graduate Opportunity fellowship, be sure to describe your contributions to diversity. The University of California Diversity Statement can be found online***

* ***Are there educational, personal, cultural, economic, or social experiences, not described in your Statement of Purpose, that have shaped your academic journey? If so, how? Have any of these experiences provided a unique perspective(s) that you would contribute to your program, field or profession?***
* ***Describe challenge(s) or barriers that you have faced in your pursuit of higher education. What motivated you to persist, and how did you overcome them? What is the evidence of your persistence, progress or success?***
* ***How have your life experiences and educational background informed your understanding of the barriers facing groups that are underrepresented in higher education?***
* ***How have you been actively engaged (e.g., through participation, employment, service, teaching or other activities) in programs or activities focused on increasing participation by groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education?***
* ***How do you intend to engage in scholarly discourse, research, teaching, creative efforts, and/or community engagement during your graduate program that have the potential to advance diversity and equal opportunity in higher education?***
* ***How do you see yourself contributing to diversity in your profession after you earn your advanced degree at UCLA?***

One cannot determine their starting point. However, one can choose their life’s objectives and learn to deal with their limitations to reach such objectives. Born and raised in a middle-class, conventional Indo-Chinese family who believes women cannot become successful entrepreneurshas somewhat limitedly predetermined my future paths. This is a conventional mindset both my dad and I decided to go against.

Living in a household with all women except for my dad, he dreamed of having at least one son to continue his legacy. Nevertheless, he decided to raise me assuming that I would be his business’s successor. He would always give words of wisdom related to business, suggest reading more business books, teach logistics and operations (his field of business), accompany him to meetings, and visit his office since college. There were countless moments where I had to make emergency decisions, or needed to attend business meetings when my dad was out-of-town. However, this only applies to me and not to my sisters—the road to changing cultural beliefs is slow.

During my frequent office visits, it is not uncommon for me to hear discouraging comments from his male employees, underestimating the ability of women. They would only respect my dad or their male supervisors. I saw how they would subtly undermine women staff, asking them to do menial tasks such as preparing beverages or making photocopies despite these women’s high working aptitude. I addressed the issue to my father, even rebuke these people involved. While I have the ability to speak out since I am in a privileged position—I understand other women may have difficulty in fighting against this issue.

I know that gender inequality is still a big issue in Indonesia. While international organizations have taken efforts to tackle the issue in the workplace, it seems that the conventional cultural upbringing in Indonesia still outweighs these efforts. As a part of my intention in reforming gender equality, I believe being a leader in the business, or even the industry, is one way to reform conventional mindsets because it helps to get your voice heard by society.

Obtaining an MSc in Business Analytics not only will help me pave my path towards a leadership position, but also realize my dream to succeed my father’s legacy. At the end of the day, I want to advocate for gender equality so I can empower other women and strengthen the general workforce.