***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 one’s limitations to reach their objectives. Born and raised in a middle-class, conventional Indo-Chinese family who believes women cannot become a successful entrepreneur because they don’t possess business instincts, this culture has somewhat limitedly predetermined my future paths; a conventional mindset that my dad and I decided to go against.

Living in a middle-class Indo-Chinese household with all women except for my dad, he obviously dreamed of having at least one son to continue his legacy. Nevertheless, he decided to against his own belief, raising me assuming that I would be his business’s successor. He would always give his words of wisdom related to business, suggest reading more business books, teach logistics and operations (his field of business), accompany him to business meetings, and even make frequent visit to his office since college. There are countless moments where I had to make emergency decisions, or needed to attend business meetings when my dad is out-of-town. It only applies to me and not to my sisters; they have the freedom to do whatever they want, whenever they want. Yes, he expects me to gain as much business experience as possible, but I have personally grown to enjoying this situation, and ended up loving it wholeheartedly.

During my frequent office visits, it is not uncommon for me to hear discouraging comments on how his male employees would underestimate the ability of women: they would put their “respect” label only to my dad or their supervisors, who are male, and I could feel how they would subtly undermine women staffs, asking them to do menial tasks despites these women’s high working aptitude, such as preparing beverages or making photocopies. I’m more surprised by the women’s willingness to do those ludicrous tasks. I addressed the issue to my father, even rebuke these people involved. Deep down, while I have the privilege of being able to speak out loud since my dad owns the company, other women in other offices may have difficulty in expressing the insults that they encountered.

At this point, I knew that gender inequality is still a big issue here. While international organizations have taken efforts to tackle the issue, 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 in getting your voice heard by the society, and pursuing higher education is my first step to gain this top spot in the organization.

Hence, pursuing an MSc in Business Analytics not only will help me with my path towards my future leadership position, but also realize my dream to succeed his legacy. At the end of the day, I just want to be among the few females in the society who work hard in gaining the top spot, and using her position to advocate gender equality as a remembrance of where she came from; just the way my dad did, does, and will encourage me.