

# 63rd Convocation and Honorary University Fellowship Conferment

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## You've Got Talent

Welcome all of you to the 63rd Convocation of Hong Kong Baptist University.

Dear students, welcome to HKBU.

This is the first time I talk to you. You can consider this your first lecture at HKBU. For this first lecture, there are only two *takeaways* – two things I want you to remember.

The first is – I want you to know ***You've Got Talent***.

I want you to ask yourselves “*What kind of a talent am I?*” What kind of talents does the world need? What kind of talents will ensure success in life? And more broadly, how many different kinds of talent are there?

Let me begin with myself. When I was about your age in secondary school, there were only two kinds of talent in the world, Type A talent and Type B talent. Type A is arts talent, and Type B is science talent. There was no other type of talent. Or, I should say, no other types of talent were recognised. I believe I belong to the third type. Type C talent – which is neither arts nor science. I was not arts talent. Nor was I science talent. That is, I didn't know what I was good at. I was Type C.

The education system at that time narrowly defined our future. The system had concluded that I have no talent. I didn't even have a chance to apply for admission to any university in Hong Kong. Today, our system recognises diversity, makes different pathways possible, and values talents of all types.

Today almost 50 years later, I stand here addressing an audience made up of individuals who are certainly more talented than I was. So, I want you to know: You've Got Talent.

This takes me to the second point. ***The diversity of talent***.

What kind of talent are you? Today in this lecture hall we have more than 1,000 students. Each and every one of you is unique. So, we have at least 1,000 talents. Some of you are Type A talent, some Type B talent, some Music talent, some Business talent, some Sports talent, some Creative talent, some Story Telling talent.....

Yes, many of you are Type A talent and Type B talent who passed the examinations with flying colours and will succeed in many professions and careers. But there are also among you many Type C, D, E, F, G talents. In addition, many of you are multi-talented, with more than one narrowly-focused talent. Multiple and diverse talent is the future. If you are unsure what your other talents are, don't worry now, you'll know when you discover it. So, keep exploring until you find it, and your professors will be by your side on this fascinating journey of discovery.

Let me highlight a few examples of young talent at HKBU who are a few years older than you.

Year 2 student **Leung Hin-yan** (梁顯恩), who dares to chase her dreams, broke away from the conventional, safe and popular path. She quit a popular law degree programme two years ago and is now pursuing her dream at HKBU's Department of Music.

Your fellow student, renowned Olympic cyclist **Sarah Lee Wai-sze** (李慧詩), is now studying Creative Writing and at the same time preparing for the Track Cycling World Cup and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

**Chan Hung** (陳葦), a 1992 graduate in China Studies, quit his well-paid job as a secondary school principal in order to establish a free tutorial school for underprivileged school children. By matching up thousands of volunteer tutors with 10,000 needy children in Hong Kong, he has changed the lives of many.

A 2010 graduate of Physical Education, **Wilson Cheung** (張偉賢) is the first Asian to become a licensed guide in Antarctica, the Arctic and the Swiss Alps. While studying in HKBU, he won 11 scholarships for outstanding academic performance. He also did three internships abroad, went on international exchange and volunteered overseas three times.

Chinese Medicine alumnus **Dennis Au** (歐卓榮) who founded *Chinese Medicine for All* (also known as *Chinese Medicine without Borders*) is delivering free healthcare to impoverished regions in countries such as Nepal, Cambodia and the Philippines.

**Cathy Lui** (雷雅萍), a BSc and PhD graduate in Biology, pioneered a new nanotechnology which could be used to treat neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. She co-founded a startup, and is now CEO of the company. The team also won a gold medal in the 2016 International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva.

The above six are just a few examples of the great diversity of talent at HKBU. None of them are more talented than you. None of them are less talented than you. All of them, like all of you here, have a unique set of talents.

This is the second key takeaway. In this world of diverse talents, explore your own talents, discover and develop them to the full. Don't settle for anything less.

The diversity of talents leads to the diversity of opportunities. Let me put it another way. The diversity of opportunities in today's complex world demands the diversification of talents. New talents lead to new opportunities. And new opportunities drive the growth of new talents.

This is what sets HKBU apart from other universities. It is not just the diversity of talents at our university, but also our belief that talents come in all shapes and forms. This philosophy guides our education. We know that the talents each of you bring to HKBU are unique. When your diverse talents blossom and interact and cross fertilise, you find new insights, you develop new solutions to complex problems, and you create new opportunities. Most importantly, you make a difference.

So, this is HKBU. I wish you all an enjoyable journey of learning and discovery in the next four years. This journey will open your mind, nurture your critical thinking, and develop your talents. Diverse opportunities and exciting challenges await you in year 2022 when you graduate.