

## Graduation Speech by Margaret Hsieh

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, faculty, staff and fellow graduates, my name is Margaret Hsieh. I'd like to begin today by extending a special welcome to the President of Upper Iowa University, Dr. Alan Walker for being here with us today.

This afternoon, I am going to tell you the story of my journey to UIU, and what this online learning experience has meant to me.

After completing my undergraduate degree, I always knew I would someday achieve a MBA degree, but I had no idea if I could juggle my busy work and school schedules. So, I began to contemplate enrolling in an online degree programs. As I started to look into graduate programs a couple of years ago, I found UIU.

I talked to a few people before I actually registered with UIU, and a few of them questioned my seriousness in pursuing a higher education just because I picked an online program over a traditional one, and I got bombarded with these subsequent comments about online degrees.

With a big question mark on my head, I went to see Ray Cheng, the UIU/ CEG Program Representative. Ray patiently explained the myths about online degrees to me and gave me an informative background briefing on UIU. And after a few days of careful consideration, I decided to go for it and signed up for the program.

In the past two years, I am amazed at how the world could be reduced to such a dynamic and interactive virtual classroom. UIU has some of the best instructors that I have ever had. They provide high quality information which is current and relevant to today's business environment, and they are committed to being present in an online classroom, not just a ghost who appears to remind us assignment deadlines. Also, I had the opportunity of exchanging ideas with my classmates who were living in different areas, such as Macau and Taiwan. Our studies were a great opportunity for exchanging ideas and cross learning. Besides the high level of course material, UIU online program allows us to participate in problem solving and discussions as we would in a traditional classroom. Moreover, thanks to the flexible learning environment, I have experienced a high quality of education while not having to give up my career and family life.

Completing the UIU's online MBA program has had an important impact on me. My confidence has grown and it continues to drive my professional and personal success. Having a master's degree from a well-respected institution has equipped me for opportunities and challenges in the future. Completing my online MBA at UIU does not give me superior money earning power right after graduation, yet it has given me a broader perspective and it has allowed me to see business situations and

strategy in a different way than before.

I would recommend the UIU to every friend, neighbor or colleague considering an online MBA program. And for those who are still skeptical about online program, I will tell them that UIU's online MBA degree program is not for everyone. I believe it is harder than traditional school because you have to write and contribute a lot more. It is designed for those who can motivate themselves independently, for those who are computer literate, and for those who can contribute significant ideas only.

Two years ago, I dreamed of becoming a MBA graduate. Today, it occurs to me that anyone can dream but only a few can match our determination. Thank you all for two of the best years of my life. Fellow graduates, we did it! Congratulations!