

Address by Ms Sarah Lee Wai-sze, BBS, *Honorary Fellow*

Dear Council Chairman Professor Frederick Ma, President Professor Stephen Cheung, Council Members, professors and students, guests of honour, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great privilege to express our gratitude to The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) for conferring Honorary Fellowships to Ms Amy Chan Lim-chee, Mr Chu Tsz-wing, Mr Fok Woo-ping and myself. I believe I speak for all of us when I say that we are extremely honoured and thankful.

I have indeed spent more time in cycling venues than on campus. Therefore, I feel very fortunate that despite frequent trips abroad to compete in different races, I attained my degree at this University in 2017, and today I am named an Honorary Fellow of EdUHK. The joy and sense of pride and achievement standing here on this stage are by no means less than the feeling I have when I stand on the medal podium representing Hong Kong.

Time flies. It has been 15 years since I became a professional racing cyclist on the Hong Kong Team. My family, coaches, athletes senior to me and my friends have supported me through many ups and downs. I am extremely pleased to have this opportunity to share with all of you how important coaches and teachers are.

I believe life affects life. Teachers deserve our respect as they do not teach solely from textbooks but live by example. I lost my coach Pu Linjun in 2016, yet I remember so vividly and profoundly our journey together. We shared incredibly happy moments as well as times of great pain. He was a wonderful role model who taught me that no matter how many times we get knocked down, we have to bounce back up. If I had dwelled on the sadness of failure, I would not have lived up to the expectations of my profession. Coach Pu said I had fulfilled his dream of winning an Olympic medal, but for me, he was the one who fulfilled my sporting career. He is still my strongest source of strength in every race.

Another important person I would like to sincerely thank is Coach Shen Jinkang, who has led the team for over 20 years. Not long after I joined the Hong Kong Team, I suffered a serious injury. I ignored Coach Shen's advice and kept on training, and we had quarrels now and then, but he is the one who made me realise that I can be stronger than the rest and I am tougher than I thought. He has helped me develop into the person I am today. I am very fortunate to have supportive and caring coaches and teammates. When we underwent training in Guangzhou and Kunming, cycling day and night, they kept me company. I knew I was not alone in the pursuit of my dream.

Many people say Sarah Lee is a 'tough lady' but I was actually a 'cry-baby'. It is the training for racing cyclists that taught me perseverance. This is a skill that has rewarded me with countless precious moments. Life is really hard, full of confusion and dilemmas. When I lose heart and self-doubt creeps in, I cast my mind back to when I started and experience anew my initial passion and enthusiasm.

I believe all guests here today regardless of their chosen profession, be it in sports or education, must have held firmly onto their beliefs and reached where they are today step

by step. With an unfailing zeal, they have spared no effort in making contributions, lovingly and caringly.

It's not enough to reach our personal best. We have to help others reach their potential too! For this reason, I have full respect for all coaches and teachers, and definitely for the University that focuses on teacher education. On behalf of the four new Honorary Fellows, I salute The Education University of Hong Kong. Thank you for giving athletes a chance to fulfil their dreams of further studies and for nurturing generation after generation of educators.

As an athlete, I will continue to promote the spirit of sport. It is my hope that I too can help strengthen others in my capacity of coach or mentor someday.

Thank you.