



Ladies, You Can Do It!

by Ir. Choo Kok Beng, FASc

"I do not wish women to have power over men but over themselves."

– Mary Wollstonecraft

As I have always said, I'm always open to discussion and brainstorming. Talk to me anytime if you want to. But don't doubt yourself. You can do it! ■

THE contributions of women in IEM have been remarkable to say the least. Strangely, it was not until the last two years that IEM set up the IEM Women Engineers Malaysia (IEM WE) section. However, my heart beats for something more.

On a larger scale, female participation in national development has been taken for granted. At the recent 2013 UMNO General Assembly, the Prime Minister pledged that Wanita UMNO was the backbone of the party. He also sent a clear message that women in the country should no longer be ridiculed and marginalised, but must be appreciated and respected.

I think we should do the same in IEM, if not more. Take, for instance, the presidency of IEM. We have never had a woman as President of IEM – yet there is no rule that prevents a woman from assuming the role.

Personally, I believe that if someone is capable of being the President, then that person should be the President – regardless of whether that person is a man or woman!

What I'm trying to say is that I believe women in IEM can do so much more if they set their hearts and minds to it. Take the lead where you can and speak out more. Participate in all IEM activities and demonstrate your capabilities.

As President of IEM, I want to honour and celebrate the female power and talent in IEM. I know there is much unharnessed talent in our women engineers.

Put your heart to it. The possibilities are endless!

You only need to look around you to see how other women have proven public perception wrong.

Look, for instance, at the Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova. She is the first female to head UNESCO. She is the motivation for all women to aim for the skies.

Closer home, we have AirAsia Berhad CEO Aireen Omar who was passed the torch by Tan Sri Tony Fernandes. She may only be 39 years old but she's a strong, iron lady who helms Asia's leading budget airline against many other players in the region. Had she thought that she was incapable, had she hesitated in her dreams, she would not have been where she is today.

So ladies, I urge you to go forward. You are doing an amazing job in IEM but you can do so much more.

