

2009

Statistics and Actuarial Science Awards

The Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science is pleased to honor its students, staff, and faculty every year during our Annual Awards Reception. A full copy of all of the award winners is available on our web site at <http://www.stat.sfu.ca/programs/awards.html>

The Department has 6 major awards:

The April Allen Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship for students with high standing in Actuarial Science established by T.A. Townley & Associates to honor the spirit of April Allen.

The Watson Wyatt Scholarship for students with high standing in Actuarial Science established by the Watson Wyatt Company.

Tommy Yip writes:

My name is Tommy Yip and I am honoured to be a recipient of the April Allen Memorial Scholarship. I am starting my third year at Simon Fraser University and I have completed my

Watson Wyatt Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded annually to a student in an approved Actuarial Science program who has completed ACMA320. It is granted on the basis of academic performance.

Xiaokang Sheng writes:

I am a senior Actuarial Science student at Simon Fraser University. This will be my second degree. I received a Math degree at Nankai University in China. The first time I heard the word “actuary” was during a Financial Market class in Nankai. Prof. Zhang introduced this new concept to us and gave us information about how to become an actuary. After that class I was very interested in this field and talked to Prof. Zhang in person. He gave me more details about taking professional exams and suggested that I continue my study abroad.

After collecting more information about actuarial science I found that being an actuary is a fantastic job that totally matched my interests and expectations. Being an actuary can give me various choices in my future career as actuaries can not only determine the price and reserves of insurance products by exercising their knowledge of mathematics, statistics, finance and analysis, but actuarial skills are transferable to any industry or job that requires financial or risk modeling and management. This profession has consistently been rated as one of the top five jobs in the United States.

During my two years of study at Simon Fraser University, I took almost all the actuarial science courses and some useful business and statistics courses. I passed three SOA exams and plan to write more in the future. I have been admitted to the Actuarial Science Masters program at the University of Waterloo. I am very excited about doing research in this fascinating area.

Pacific Blue Cross Scholarship

One Pacific Blue Cross Scholarship in Actuarial Science will be made available, based on academic merit, to a 3rd or 4th year student with a declared major in Actuarial Science.

Phillip Jang writes:

I am currently in my third year at Simon Fraser University majoring in Actuarial Science with a minor in Mathematics. The minor in math is for enriching my learning experience, and use down the line for graduate school if I should ever need to go. I have so far completed the first two exams from the Society of Actuaries (P and FM) in 2008, and plan to take exam MLC this May.

I came across the actuarial career late in high school when my counselor introduced me to the subject. Thinking the career was a good fit for my skills, I decided to go to Simon Fraser University to give it a try. The deeper I went into the Actuarial Science program, the more I was intrigued to become an actuary. I would like to thank the people of Pacific Blue Cross for their generous sponsorship of my education. I am able to better progress with my education without worrying about my current financial situation.

The year 2008 was a profoundly challenging and colourful experience which began with Gary Parker's infamous ACMA 320 in the spring, which alone required well over 100 hours of

R. Bruce Coles Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded annually to a student in an approved Actuarial Science program who has completed ACMA320. It is granted on the basis of academic performance.

Christine Lee writes:

Whenever I mentioned that my two older sisters also studied in Actuarial Science in SFU, almost everyone would think that mathematics was my family's genetic strength. However, my interest in the actuarial science field was dramatically enhanced when I took my first fundamental Actuarial Science course, ACMA 210. After a solid start from ACMA 210, what followed was the most challenging course I have ever taken, ACMA 320. Frankly, I was panicked during the first midterm, but I knew it could happen from the moment I decided to be an actuary. I must commit to this field and face the challenges. At the end, it turned out to be an impressive and promising result.

Education has always been an important aspect of my life. With my keen enthusiasm in this field, I have passed the SOA Exam P, FM, MLC and MFE. My pursuit for educational excellence has also helped me achieve the high grade in various actuarial and statistics classes.

Although education plays a significant role in my life, I considered practical experiences to be just as important. In the past two years, I have been working as a co-op student at four prominent Actuarial companies in Toronto. My employment experience includes working at Mercer and Towers Perrin, where I worked in the Health and Benefits department and Retirement department, respectively. I also worked in the Affinity Markets Valuation team at Manulife Financial and the Actuarial Consulting Group at Sun Life Financial. Finally, I was employed as a statistics workshop teaching assistant and marker in summer 2007. During the fall 2008, I worked as a teaching assistant and marker for ACMA 210. Although it was a busy semester, because I was taking five core courses at the same time, I enjoyed helping and assisting students who faced the same challenges as I did two years ago.

The main goal throughout my educational endeavours is to keep learning to learn well. Upon the completion of my Actuarial Science undergraduate degree, I would like to pursue a Masters degree in this area. It is my pleasure to be selected as a recipient of the R. Bruce Coles Memorial Scholarship. This award gives me a strength to face future challenges. I am confident that my actuarial knowledge, extensive job experience, strong academic background and commitment to this career will lead me to a successful future as an actuary.

(Tracey) Ying Yuan writes:

I first heard about Actuarial Science from a friend majoring in Statistics. She described Actuarial Science as the most challenging major in SFU which triggered my curiosity. So I took ACMA 210, the introductory course for Actuarial Science, and enjoyed the course. To be honest, actuarial science isn't easy for me. I have to study harder than ever, but the sense of accomplishment is worth the hard work.

Currently I'm working at UBC iCapture Centre with the Canadian Obstructive Lung Disease Research as a research assistant. I use my background in statistics to analyze research

much information. After my immigration to Canada I was finally able to step into the world of statistics. I took all the statistics courses and advanced math courses offered at Langara College and obtained impressive grades. Because of this, I received the Ernest E. Livesey Memorial Mathematics Scholarship in 2007. Further, the knowledge I gained enhanced my decision in working in the field of statistics.

I transferred to SFU in 2007 to work on my big dream. Although not sure what exactly Actuarial Science was, I took STAT 330, 350 and ACMA 210. These courses opened my eyes. I never thought about applying what I had learned to real life cases could be so much fun. How much money I can borrow now for buying a house? How did ICBC calculate my insurance? I helped my parents to understand 'study' reports in newspapers could be misleading without revealing their assumptions. I helped my friends understand what the role of insurance in an investment is. I found it extremely fascinating to use my knowledge to help people around me.

I am taking STAT 402, 410 and ACMA 320, 315 this semester to gain deeper understanding in both Statistics and Actuarial Science. Starting from summer this year, I am planning to apply to be a TA or become a tutor. I would like to help more people understand data and enjoy using data to improve their work or life.

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Undergraduate Awards

Graduate Awards

Faculty of Science Teaching Assistant Award:

Ryan Lekivetz