

# 2004

## Statistics and Actuarial Science Awards

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

The Department has six major awards:

- The Watson Wyatt Scholarship for students with high standing in Actuarial Science established by the Watson Wyatt Company.
- The Statistical Society of Canada (SSC) award established by Canada's professional society.
- The Statistics and Actuarial Science Endowment Awards (four awards) funded by earnings on our endowment fund.

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### Watson Wyatt Scholarship

**Natalia Lysenko**

This scholarship is awarded annually to a student of high merit. The student must have completed ACMA310 to be eligible.

Natalia Lysenko writes:

I came to Vancouver with my family almost three years ago. Shortly after that, I began studying at Langara College. It was then, just two weeks since the classes started, that I first heard about the actuarial profession and Actuarial Science program at SFU. After making some more enquiries about what the profession has to offer, I applied to SFU. While I was taking courses at the college and then university, studying for and writing SOA exams, coaching gymnastics and tutoring at the Langara Math Activity Centre, practicing for and entering ballroom dancing competitions, learning English and still adapting to Canadian culture, a quick two years have elapsed since my first day at Langara in January, 2002.

Now, I am in the middle of the fourth year, completing a double major in Actuarial Science and Statistics. This term, I have been the TA for ACMA 320. Next semester, I will be working as a co-op student for

SunLife Financial in Waterloo, Ontario, and then returning to finish my degree in the fall.

I have always enjoyed being at school, learning new subjects and discovering the depth of ideas. My next destination may be a graduate school, or professional work, or a mix of both.

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## Statistical Society of Canada

### Ruowei Zhou

The **Statistical Society of Canada** Award will be presented to an undergraduate student who is a declared major/honors in Statistics and/or Actuarial Science. The criteria for selection for the award are academic merit and a commitment to the mission of the SSC. The SSC is a national organization representing statisticians from across Canada. Its mission is to encourage the development and use of statistics and probability.

To achieve this, the Statistical Society of Canada:

- helps to develop a public awareness of the value of statistical thinking and the importance of statistics and statisticians in Canadian society;
- works to ensure that decisions affecting Canadian society are based on appropriate data and valid statistical interpretation;
- promotes the highest possible standards for statistical education and practice in Canada;
- promotes the development of statistical methodology;
- promotes a sense of community among all statisticians in Canada;
- provides a forum for the exchange of ideas between theoreticians and practitioners of statistics.

This award was generously endowed by the Statistical Society of Canada using proceeds of the net revenue from the SSC Annual Meeting held at Simon Fraser University in 2001.

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Ruowei Zhou writes:

My first degree and PhD degree are in computer science. After graduation, I spent

several years doing image processing and pattern recognition related R&D works in Singapore. In 2003, when my family immigrated to Canada, I found that it was the time for me to replan my future and rethink my career. After some researches, Actuarial Science seems a good choice for me. It involves a lot of mathematics and statistics. It also plays an important role in people's every day life: insurance, pension, finance, and other areas. The study in Actuarial Science is challenging and fascinating. It convinces me that the program I choose is what I want.

My goal is to be a fellow in Actuarial field. I'm confident that I will excel in my study and future works.

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## **Statistics and Actuarial Science Endowment Awards**

This awards are presented to students in the major/honor program with high academic standing.

### **Dong Chen**

I got my first degree ten years ago and worked in the financial investment field in China. When I learned about the actuary profession from the newspaper five years ago, I knew immediately that was the career I was looking for. It could integrate all my knowledge and skills. But frankly I didn't know what the actuary actually doing besides setting insurance premium at that time, and there weren't much programs and FSA or ASA in China.

After an Internet search, I found that North America was the best place to study actuarial science and develop my career. So I immigrated to Vancouver three years ago with my wife. I have no relatives and friends here. I encountered tremendous challenge as a new comer in this totally new environment.

Fortunately, I was accepted by SFU in the fall 2001 and back to school again. I directly took the actuarial course because of my previous education background and found it fascinating. I like to deal with number and solve problem with uncertainty. One year later, I got a co-op job in a pension administration company. This co-op experience strengthened my confidence that I have chosen the right career path.

After this eight-month co-op, I was immediately accepted by another pension consulting company on a part-time basis. Although it will postpone my graduation, I think it is worthwhile to accumulate more work experience.

I will graduate this April with passing the first 4 SOA exams. I'm busy in preparing the course 6 for May. I just hope I can become ASA soon after graduation.

### **Yanna Hu**

I emigrated to Vancouver 2 years ago. Having some background knowledge in computer science, I started to find jobs just after I had settled down in Vancouver. It did take me some time to find a job since I had no idea about the demand of the local labor market. Fortunately, I got my first job in a trading company as a clerk after 2 months. But later, I found this job wasn't what I want. I like a challenge one!

I learned about Actuarial Science from one of my friends in US. He advised me being an Actuary is one of the top five jobs in North America. However, he also warned me that studying actuarial stuff need painstaking. As an aggressive person, I decided to take this challenge. After an Internet research, much information about Actuary popped up: "it's challenging, and at the same time, very rewarding", "it's a place to applying math in a business context" All of these wording attracted me deeply and made me insist on the decision to be an actuary.

There would be some hard time for me to overcome on the way to be an actuary. However, I have promised to myself I would try my best to do well in Actuarial major and SOA exams. I am sure all of these can make all the differences.

### **Xiaolu Wang**

I came to Vancouver as an international student two years ago. I learned about Actuarial Science from one of my parents' friends when I was in high school in China. To me, this career is like a surprise of joy. I like mathematics since I was young and my high school education is highly

math concentrated. I was always trying to get information about any kind of math related job. When I heard about Actuarial Science, I think it is quite a fit for me. Finally I decided to come to Canada and complete my undergraduate degree in Actuarial Science. After searching online, I found out that Simon Fraser University is the only one in B.C. offering this program. Fortunately, I passed TOEFL after a short period and got admitted by SFU.

Currently, I am a third year student under the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science. During the study of most of the ACMA courses in SFU, I found that I am quite interested in the Life Insurance part. My goal is to go to the insurance industry after I graduate. I have finished SOA Course 1 and Course 2, and will write Course 3 this May. Hopefully, I will be able to pass both Course 3 and Course 4 before I graduate this coming December.

I am 21 years old now. The world is still so fascinating to me. I believe that I will learn as much as possible and use all my potentials to be a good actuary after my studies and trainings in the future years.

### **Clement Wu**

This summer, a good friend of mine is graduating from the UBC Sauder School of Business, and I was invited to attend his graduation dinner last week. During the course of the dinner, I was asked time and again by commerce students regarding what my major is. "I study actuarial science at SFU", I replied politely. The response varied greatly from one person to another. Some were unsure about what actuarial science is, but have heard it involves difficult math, some recalled gurus about actuaries making big money upon graduation, some, however, have profound understanding in the subject. I was really excited that I no longer hear the rhetorical question, "Did you just say you study 'actual' science? What is it?" Although English is not my mother tongue, I am fairly confident that I can pronounce the word 'actuarial' correctly, so it can't be my pronunciation after all. In such occasion, I would explain the differences between actuarial science and 'actual' science, but only if I first find out what 'actual' science actually is.

It has been two and a half years since I made the decision to transfer from the faculty of computing science to the faculty of actuarial science.

During this period, the faculty expanded rapidly, more and more students are aware of the opportunities in this field and are trying to enroll in the program. I still remember when I took ACMA 310, an introductory actuarial science course; there were less than 100 students in the faculty. For the next two years, I was the teaching assistant for ACMA 310, and therefore witnessed the growth of the program in just two years. While excited about the soaring interest in actuarial science, I also tell fellow students that they should be ready to make long-term commitments. It takes a lot more than a bachelor degree to become an actuary; one also needs to pass a series of why-are-they-so-difficult professional exams. Apart from writing exams, I believe that co-op experience is also invaluable. Students are offered the opportunity to work in different fields of actuarial science such as pension consulting, health and life insurance, property insurance, and re-insurance, etc. Personally, it helps me to draw out my own career path.

Having completed two co-op work terms at Watson Wyatt Worldwide, and currently working on another eight-month work term at Pacific Blue Cross, I expect to graduate in the spring of 2005. In terms of actuarial exams, I have completed the first four. However, I am now on a short break from writing actuarial exams, as I would like to enjoy my last summer of my university life. Many of my friends are graduating this summer, and a number of them are permanently leaving Vancouver after their graduation. As much as I like to get ahead in the exams, I cannot afford to miss out this time. We are already planning the group activities, and we want to make this summer memorable for the rest of our lives.

**Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science Awards Reception**  
**12:30 p.m., May 27, 2004 - K 9509**

**Graduate Awards**

**NSERC Post-graduate Scholarship**  
**2004/05**

**PGS Masters**  
Suman Jiwani

**PGS Doctoral**  
Eric Sayre

**2003/04**

**PGSA**  
Amy Summers

**PGSB**  
Crystal Linkletter  
Wendall Challenger  
Linnea Duke

**Special Graduate Entrance Scholarship**

Crystal Linkletter (03-2)  
Amy Summers (03-3)

**PIMS Postdoctoral Fellowship**

**2004/05**  
Wen Lu

**NSERC Postdoctoral Fellowship**

**2004/05**  
Jason Loepky

**PhD Graduate Fellowships**  
**04-1**

Laurie Ainsworth  
Jason Loepky  
Jason Nielsen

**MSc Graduate Fellowships**  
**03-3**

Jeremy Hamm  
Eric Saye

**04-2**

Chunfang Lin

**President's Ph.D. Stipend**  
**03-3**

Laurie Ainsworth

**04-2**

Jason Loepky  
Wen Lu  
Laura Cowen

**C.D. Nelson Scholarship**

**03-1**  
Crystal Linkletter

**Faculty/Staff Awards**

**Associate Director of IHRE**  
Charmaine Dean

**Professional Accreditation for Statistics**  
Carl Schwarz and Rick Routledge

**Appointment as the New Editor for**  
**Technometrics**  
Randy Sitter

**Architect of new Faculty of Health Sciences**  
David MacLean

**Michael Smith Scholar Award**  
Jinko Graham

**CRM-SSC Prize**  
Charmaine Dean

**Silver Anniversary of receiving NSERC**  
**Research Grants**

Rick Routledge  
Norman Reilly  
Michael Stephens

**35 Years of Service at SFU**  
Sylvia Holmes

## Undergraduate Awards

### Undergraduate Open Scholarships during 03-2, 03-3, 04-1

Andrew Balo (03-2, 03-3,03-3)  
Tyler Gray (03-2, 03-3,04-1)  
John Kowalik (03-3,04-1)  
Lai Yin Lee (03-3,04-1)  
Dawei Li (03-2)  
Julia Lin (03-2,03-3)  
Natalia Lysenko (03-3,04-1)  
Yeuk Mak (04-1)  
Eunjoo Park (03-3)  
Xiao Lu Wang (03-2,03-3,04-1)  
James Kwang Wong (03-2)  
Clement Wu (03-2,04-1)  
Kuan-Chiur Wu (03-2,03-3,04-1)  
Shih-Wa Ying (03-2,03-3,03-3)  
Zhe Zhang (03-2,03-3,04-1)

### SFU Alumni Scholarship

Dong Chen (03-2)  
Xiao Lu Wang (03-2)  
Clement Wu (03-2)  
Ruowei Zhou (04-1)

### Dr. Abe Unau Memorial Co-op Prize

Chun Kwan (03-2)

### R. Bruce Coles Memorial Scholarship

Xiao Lu Wang (03-3,04-1)

### Watson Wyatt & Company Scholarship in Actuarial Science

Natalia Lysenko (04-1)

### Management and Systems Science Graduation Award

Peter Lok Pan Mak

### Management and Systems Science Prize

Maximilian Burke (3<sup>rd</sup> year award)  
Kseniya Stepanova (4<sup>th</sup> year award)

### Statistics and Actuarial Science Endowment Award for excellent achievement in the Majors and Honors program

Dong Chen  
Yanna Hu  
Xiao Lu Wang  
Clement Wu

### SSC Endowment Award

Rouwei Zhou

### High Academic Performance in Statistics/Actuarial Science/MSSC Courses (03-2, 03-3, 04-1)

Evguenia Jane Rozina, **Acma 490** (03-2)  
Jared Van Snellenberg, **Stat 101C**(03-2)  
Heena Hee-Eun Kim **Stat 101** (03-2)  
Karen Ka Hang Wong, **Stat 201** (03-2)  
Wai Un, **Stat 270** (03-2)  
George X. Zhu, **Stat 330** (03-2)  
Tyler Gray, **Stat 410** (03-2)  
Ryan Quee, **MSSC 480** (03-2)  
Zhe Zhang, **Acma 310** (03-3)  
Lin He, **Acma 425** (03-3)  
Sandra Gillespie, **Stat 101 C** (03-3)  
Kimmy K.L. Chan, **Stat 203** (03-3)  
Albert Su, **Stat 270** (03-3)  
Ming Wai Emily Tsang, **Stat 302** (03-3)  
Kuan-Chiun Wu, **Stat 350** (03-3)  
John Bentley, **Stat 400** (03-3)  
Aaron Springfield, **Stat 430** (03-3)  
Jessica Ou Dang, **Stat 450** (03-3)  
Kai Fai Poon, **Stat 490** (03-3)  
Vincent Q.V. Nguyen, **MSSC 480** (03-3)  
Edwin Yiu, **MSSC 481** (03-3)  
John Kowalik, **Acma 320,445**(04-1)  
Saravie Brewer, **Stat 100** (04-1)  
Selina McBride, **Stat 101 C** (04-1)  
Robert Wallis, **Stat 201** (04-1)  
Fei Jiang, **Stat 270 D1** (04-1)  
Duomo Zhang, **Stat 270 D2** (04-1)  
Ruowei Zhou, **Stat 330** (04-1)  
James Wong, **Stat 380** (04-1)  
Xiao Lu Wang, **Stat 402** (04-1)  
Sean D. Weston, **Stat 403** (04-1)  
Natalia Lysenko, **Stat 410** (04-1)  
Aslam Jamal, **MSSC 480** (04-1)  
Xiaoming Shi, **MSSC 481** (04-1)