

2014

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/Graduands Reception. A full copy of all of the award winners is available on our web site at

<http://www.stat.sfu.ca/people/awards.html>

The Department has 5 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 Towers Watson Scholarship for students with high standing in Actuarial Science established by the Towers Watson Company.
- The Pacific Blue Cross Scholarship for students with high standing in Actuarial Science established by Pacific Blue Cross.
- R. Bruce Coles Memorial Scholarship in Actuarial Science.
- The Statistics and Actuarial Science Endowment Awards funded by earnings on our departmental endowment fund.

April Allen Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship

Chong (Tommy) Cao – Yu (Wayne) Wang

This scholarship is awarded annually to students within their first year of being admitted into one of the Actuarial Sciences programs who demonstrate excellence in academic performance and exhibit potential for success in the actuarial science field. Preference is given to students who have personally been affected by cancer and/or have demonstrated leadership and/or service to an organization involved in cancer research and care. It was established by D.A. Townley & Associates to honor the spirit of April Allen.

Chong (Tommy) Cao writes:

I am a second degree student studying Actuarial Science and I am enjoying my second term here at SFU in a family like study environment. Instructors in the department are so helpful in providing the information needed to achieve success in my field of study. I have never experienced such a helpful environment in my previous academic life. I graduated as a distinguished student in Mathematics as my first degree from where my high rankings in math competitions were recognized. I have at that time determined that Actuarial Science was the way to go because of the intense competition.

My aunt is currently suffering from extensive, multifocal bone metastases. Treatments at this time are of limited use, and my family is doing the best to let her enjoy her life. When I learned about the April Allen Scholarship, I thought it a great opportunity to do my part to help a family member who has been helping me by applying for the scholarship. I promised my auntie that upon reception of the scholarship, she can use all of it for her treatment related expenses. Now that I received the scholarship, I kept my promise and let my aunt have it all.

To me, this scholarship serves two purposes. First off, I used this scholarship directly onto matters related to cancer, which is exactly the purpose of the establishment of the scholarship. Second, I maintained a CGPA of 4.18 and I consider it a reward for my hard work. I intend to maintain a high standard on my academics in the future, where the scholarship provides me with great motivation.

I sincerely appreciate D.A. Townley & Associates' contribution to this scholarship. This fund has helped a person who is currently suffering from cancer and let me keep the promise to help my aunt. I shall also thank the instructors for their advice in the Statistical and Actuarial Science Department. Without their suggestions, I would not have such a clear vision of my future.

Yu (Wayne) Wang writes:

I am a newly admitted Actuarial Science student, and this is my third year at Simon Fraser University. I chose a double major in Actuarial Science and Business Administration with a concentration in Finance. It is a great honor for me to be the recipient of the April Allen Scholarship for the 2013 – 2014 academic year. It will remarkably reduce the financial burden on me as an international student, and allow me to fully focus on my education.

My life has been affected by cancer since I was in high school, my grandfather had been diagnosed with liver cancer at the age of 86, and after one year of a series of radiation treatments and surgery, he passed away six years ago. I can't describe how much pain and burden I went through at that time. I was even more affected by the disease when my best friend's mother was touched by breast cancer three years ago; I heard the grievous news two days before I left my hometown for university. Besides those experiences with close friends and relatives, a teacher in my high school was diagnosed with Leukemia our school held a series of activities to raise donations for her treatment; however it couldn't stop the disease from terminating her young life. Cancer cannot be dealt with by pills and surgery; patients need more attention from society. I was involved in a volunteer program at Burquitlam Lions Care Centre (BLCC) to help, not only people with cancer, but those seniors with disabilities and difficulties living their lives.

At last, I would like to send my sincere appreciation to D.A. Townley & Associates for donating the funds, which means a lot to me, and the whole SFU society. It not only allows us to focus on our education and career, but also gives us the drive to succeed in what we do, and giving back to the society one day in the future.

Towers Watson Scholarship

Braden Rustand

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.

Braden Rustand writes:

It is with sincere appreciation that I thank the Awards Committee and Tower Watson for this generous award.

In recent weeks I graduated from SFU with an Actuarial Science major and a Statistics minor. My professors and classmates continually challenged me and made my coursework much more rewarding. Working with Professor Sanders on Target Benefit plan design research was especially important for my professional progress since I am now working in pensions.

In addition to achieving my targets at Mercer, my professional goals for the coming months are to obtain my ASA designation by completing the FAP FA and the APC. Concurrently, I will also begin the FSA retirement track modules.

Pacific Blue Cross Scholarship

Shuai (Alex) Yang

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

Shuai (Alex) Yang writes:

Firstly, I would like to give my appreciation to the PBC (Pacific Blue Cross) insurance company for funding this scholarship. In addition, I am so glad that for the second time my hard work is recognized. I am delighted to be the recipient of the PBC scholarship for the year 2014.

Three years ago, I came to SFU as an international student to start my undergraduate studies. At that time, I made my decision to pursue actuarial science, which is closely related to mathematics, both highly applicable. Two years ago I was admitted to the actuarial science program. Like others, I joined the actuarial science group full of ambition and curiosity. After two years of hard work I find actuarial science more and more fascinating and attractive. More importantly, I met many brilliant professors who gave me countless amounts of help, especially Dr. Cary Tsai and Dr. Gary Parker. I keep saying to myself, I made the right decision to study actuarial science at SFU.

With everything I have learnt I have successfully completed all of the preliminary exams offered by the SOA. This is a relief for me, but only in the short term; moreover, it indicates a new start. I am going to the University of Waterloo to do my graduate study in actuarial science this coming fall. Besides graduate school, my plans for the coming year are to start and finish the FAP (Fundamentals of Actuarial Practice) Modules, and then get the ASA (Associate of the Society of Actuaries) credential. With the PBC scholarship I will be able to pay for the FAP fees myself.

Last but not the least I would like to say thank you to the donor of this scholarship, PBC, that recognized my academic performance and provides me with this financial support. I will keep working hard and I believe my interest in actuarial science will keep growing!

R. Bruce Coles Memorial Scholarship

Evan Thompson – Jing Wang

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.

Statistics and Actuarial Science Endowment Awards

Award to Recognize the Statistical Society of Canada

Sonja Surjanovic

This award is offered to an undergraduate student who is a declared major/honors in Statistics and/or Actuarial Science and who is promoting Statistics and Probability. The criteria for selection for the award are academic merit and a commitment to the mission of the Statistical Society of Canada (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.

Sonja Surjanovic writes:

Growing up in a mathematical family, I always valued the importance of quantitative reasoning. I counted everything, from the number of steps it took to get home from my elementary school, to the proportion of hours per week that were spent learning mathematics (it was never enough). Mathematics was always my favourite subject, and when I was young I dreamed of one day “learning all of math.”

I first encountered statistics in an introductory course at SFU. Due to its quantitative nature, I enjoyed it from the very beginning. I found the combinatorics and probability problems particularly fun. Learning about the different applications of statistics helped me to see its significance in the world. I was amazed to find out about all of the fields in which statistics was of vital importance. This is what inspired me to pursue statistics in my undergraduate career.

Throughout my four years at SFU, my enthusiasm for statistics has grown exponentially. Having a group of friends who are equally passionate for the subject has been very important to me; I remember the excitement that stirred our entire row in the lecture hall when we first saw the proof of the Central Limit Theorem. The beauty of a proof seems to increase tenfold when others are equally fascinated by it.

I have enjoyed two NSERC USRA research terms in the Statistics department at SFU, working with Dr. Derek Bingham. I found research to be extremely interesting; it was both fun and challenging (perhaps those two

words are synonyms of each other). The two terms provided me with the opportunity to experience graduate student life, and have motivated me to pursue graduate studies.

Although I no longer count the number of steps between home and school, I have the privilege of being surrounded by statistical thinking in my academic life. I look forward to expanding my knowledge and understanding of statistics in the future. The elegance and potential of this field are what keep me so keenly interested.

Academic Merit Award

Hao Chu – Hongshi (Jenny) Li – Mengyi Li – Yufeng Qi – Lu Yi

This award is offered to students who are registered honors or major students in Actuarial Science or Statistics. The primary criterion for selection is academic merit.

Hongshi (Jenny) Li writes:

My name is Hongshi Li, an international student from China. This is my first semester studying the Actuarial Science program in the Statistics and Actuarial Science department. I was determined to major in Actuarial Science since the day I entered SFU. After taking the course of Mathematics of Compound Interest, I discovered that I liked this field and set being an actuary as my career goal. So now, besides the coursework, I am also studying for the Society of Actuaries professional exams. I will write the Probability test in two months.

In my spare time, I often tutor high school and college students to help them with their math and statistics courses. I have a good academic standing and a natural ability to answer questions clearly, and I really enjoy helping others.

I know I still have a long way to go before becoming an actuary, but I will try my best to make my dream come true.

Lu Yi writes:

My name is Lu Yi and I am an international student from China. It's a pleasure that I can be one of the members in the Actuarial Science program. It has been a long journey since I first decided to get into the program. In order for this to happen, not only would I have to demonstrate passion, but also a competitive grade to show my ability. There were many difficulties on the way but I felt so encouraged when all my efforts had finally led me to my goal. I will keep studying hard and make sure my understanding of the discipline is as concrete as possible.

This is my first year in the Actuarial Science program. The upper division Acma and Stat courses are more challenging, however, under the guidance of the professors I believe these courses can also be rewarding as well. I am really interested in what I am studying. I've had a strong interest in mathematics since I was in elementary school. After I came to SFU, the respected professors made me more interested in the area of both mathematics and statistics. When I was taking STAT 270, Dr. Tim Swartz had demonstrated the fascinating power of using data and probability to analyze and solve practical problems. Although some of the problem sets were difficult, I found it indeed interesting to work on. I am very grateful that I can study actuarial science in a way that I can combine my interests in mathematics and statistics with my future career.

In my following studies, I will keep working hard to maintain a high GPA. I also plan to take the exam P and FM this semester, and finish the ASA tests before I graduate. I hope I can be a professional actuary in the future.

Department of Statistics & Actuarial Science Awards/Graduands Reception
June 11, 2014, 1:30pm, K9509

Undergraduate Awards

Undergraduate Open Scholarship:

Bo Chen 1137
Xuheng Chen 1137
Mengting Ding 1134,1141
Yee Wai Kwan 1141
Jiarong Li 1134,1137,1141
Mengyi Li 1137,1141
Zachary Monteith 1137
Braden Rustand 1137,1141
William Ruth 1137,1141
Evan Thompson 1137
Jing Wang 1134,1141
Yu Wang 1137,1141
Yueren Wang 1134
Di Wu 1141
Xia Xie 1134
Suai (Alex) Yang 1137,1141
Yushu Ye 1137,1141
Jason Yee 1137
Lu Yi 1134,1137
Di Yu 1141
Weiran Yuchi 1134,1137,1141
Yuwen Zhai 1141

IB Entrance Excellence Scholarship:

Yeon Kyung Park 1137,1141

International Summit Transfer Scholarship:

Hongshi Li 1134,1137
Di Wu 1134

International Academic Excellence Scholarship:

Arthur Gichinga 1137

International Co-operative Education Award:

Jingjiao He 1134
Dan Qing Li 1134

Wes Sydor Memorial Co-op Award:

Sonja Surjanovic

**First Prize-Undergraduate Poster Competition at the
2013 SFU Symposium on Mathematics and
Computation:**

Sonja Surjanovic

The Ken Caple College Scholarship:

Yufeng Qi 1134

The Gordon M Shrum Scholarship:

Sonja Surjanovic 1137,1141
Philippa Swartz 1137,1141

SFU Alumni Scholarship Fund:

Hao Chu 1137
Braden Rustand 1141
Shuai (Alex) Yang 1137,1141

Dean of Science Award:

Shuai (Alex) Yang 1137

April Allen Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship:

Chong (Tommy) Cao
Yu (Wayne) Wang

R. Bruce Coles Memorial Scholarship:

Evan Thompson
Jing Wang

Pacific Blue Cross Scholarship:

Shuai (Alex) Yang

Statistics & Actuarial Science Endowment Award:

Sonja Surjanovic (SSC)
Hao Chu
Hongshi (Jenny) Li
Mengyi Li
Yufeng Qi
Lu Yi

Towers Watson Scholarship in Actuarial Science:

Braden Rustand

Graduate Awards

Special Graduate Entrance Scholarship:

Bingying (Doris) Li

Xinying (Serene) Liang 1141,1144

Xiang (Ivy) Luan 1141,1144

Kanna Nirmalkanna 1141

Randy Sitter Annual Graduate Scholarship in Statistics & Actuarial Science:

Jack Davis 1141

Jennifer Parkhouse 1144

Nate Payne 1144

Pulindu Ratnasekera 1141

Chenlu Shi 1144

President's PhD Scholarship:

Shirin Golchi 1141

Harsha Perera 1141

Gerald Smith 1144

Elena Szefer 1144

Fei Wang 1144

Jiaying (Vicky) Weng 1141

Travel Minor Research Award:

Rajitha Silva 1144

Yi Xiong 1144

Guang (Annie) Yu 1144

Bin Zhao 1144

SSC Travel Award 2014:

Audrey Beliveau

Abdollah Safari

Shaoze Zhou 1144

Won Actuarial Science Poster Session at SSC 2014:

Luyao Lin

PhD Graduate Fellowship:

Jack Davis 1144

Biljana Jonoska Stojkova 1144

Luyao Lin 1144

Harsha Perera 1144

MSc Graduate Fellowship:

Yang Bai 1141,1144

Michael Grosskopf 1144

Botao (Bobby) Han 1141

Bingying (Doris) Li 1141

Mengyun (Monica) Li 1141,1144

Wijendra Premarathna 1144

Abdollah Safari 1144

Rajitha Silva 1144

Huijing Wang 1144

Faculty Awards

Jack Youden Prize for Best Expository Paper 2012:

Derek Bingham with Vijayan N. Nair

Elected Fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS):

Richard Lockhart

2014 NSERC Discovery Accelerator Supplement:

Derek Bingham

Richard Lockhart

Graduands 1134-1141

Undergraduate Graduands:

Actuarial Science Honours:

Yongtao Chen

Actuarial Science Major:

Brendan Engle
Sina Goshayeshi
Best Chen Guo
Astrid Hamilton
Botao Han
Conor Hoekstra
Shi Jin
Michael Hoi Kam
Jinwan Kim
Hsien Yang Lee
Han Wai Lim
Yunbo (Eric) Lu
Braden Rustand
Diana Sirotic
Xiaomeng (Sophia) Wang
Yueren Wang
Herman Chi-Hang Wong
Ryan Yeo
Ka Yan Yiu
Yuwen Zhai

Actuarial Science Certificate:

Yuefeng Ji

Statistics Major:

Zijiang Cai
Jen Chang
Bo (Jacob) Chen
Bowen Chen
Jingyuan Fu
Yun Gao
Yuan (Ivy) Gao
Beini (Nicky) Ge
Wenbo Guan
Xiaoxiao He
Yijun (Helen) Jiang
Shao Peng (Sean) Jiang
Andrew Kochergin

Statistics Major (cont.):

Marshall Law
So Min Lee
Lisa Leung
Dan Qing Li
Jing Yi (Janny) Li
Shi Yu (Carol) Liao
Han Lin
Yi Ning Liu
Chenxiao Mao
Yuanyuan Mo
Calvin Ng
Jeanseong Park
Catherine Peng
Xiaoxi Qi
Mei (Echo) Qu
William Ruth
Yunyi Shi
Xuhao Shu
Koon Nam So
Xiaoqi (Cloud) Sun
Jianbo Wang
Jingshu Wang
Tzu-Huai (Victor) Wang
Xuan Wu
Shuo (Stephy) Xia
Xian Yang Xu
Haishan Xu
He Qing (Christine) Yang
Na Yang
Chang Zhang
Yali (Lilian) Zhen
Wei Yan Zheng
Lingyuxiu Zhong
Hui Juan Zhuang

Statistics Minor:

Siwei Cai
Richard Chea
Farhad Deboo
Jin Du
Lauren Erdman
Chunyan (Sinby) Feng
Best Chen Guo
Meng-Lun (Sherry) Harn
Hsien Yang Lee
Jiarong Li
Hung-Hsuan (Scott) Liang
Han Wai Lim
Ying Liu
Zachary Monteith
Shraddha Ramesh
Tingfang (Flora) Ren
Braden Rustand
Shi Tang
Ryan Yeo
Fenlei Yu
Yuwen Zhai

Graduate Graduands:

Oksana Chkrebti - PhD
Shirin Golchi - PhD
Ruth Joy - PhD
Dilinuer Kuerban - MSc
Zhenhua Lin - MSc
Rachel Lipson - MSc
Maria Santiago - MSc
Zheng Sun - PhD
Lu Wang - MSc
Qian Wang - MSc
Tingting Wen - MSc
Yuanyu Yang - MSc
Meng Yu - MSc