

## **2007-2008 April Allen Undergraduate Memorial Scholarship**

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.

### **Xiaokang Sheng**

I have been studying at Simon Fraser University for more than one year. This is my fourth term and is also the first term that I was officially accepted into the Actuarial Science program. I'm really excited about being a member of this team.

I'm a second degree student. I finished my first degree at Nankai University in China and majored in Information and Numerical Science. The first time I heard the word "actuary" was in a Financial Market class in Nankai. The professor introduced this new concept to us and told us a lot of information about how to become an actuary. After that class I was very interested in actuarial science. I began to think of my future plans, especially my career and talked to that professor in person. He gave me more details about taking the SOA exams and suggested that I continue my study abroad.

After becoming more informed about actuarial science, I found that being an actuary is a fantastic job that totally matched my interests and expectations. I have been strongly interested in mathematics since primary school and I am pretty good at it. To be an actuary can also give me various choices, because actuaries can not only assess the risk of events occurring and help create policies that minimize risk by exercising their knowledge of mathematics, statistics, accounting, organization and analysis, but also can play an important role in other areas such as finance, investment management, economics, and demography.

Using the mathematics knowledge I had gained, I was able to handle the first two SOA exams, but I needed more professional knowledge to challenge the upper level tests. Ultimately, I decided to come to Canada to pursue my dream. I found that SFU is the only university to offer an actuarial science program in Vancouver. Last Spring I got admitted to SFU and began to take STAT, BUS and ECON courses to meet the VEE requirements. I have continued to maintain an excellent academic record during the last three terms.

This term I began to take ACMA courses. Compared with other courses I took before, they are more difficult and challenging. I need to put more effort in those courses. According to my performance in the previous terms, I am really confident of my further study in actuarial science. I am planning to take more SOA exams before I graduate from SFU. I hope to complete my Bachelor's degree over the next year.