2006-2007 Statistical Society of Canada Endowment Award

Feng Gao

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.

Feng Gao writes:

Two years ago, I made the decision to pursue my second bachelor's degree in actuarial science rather than seek a master's degree in computing science, which was the major of my first degree. The past two years turned out to be the most important period in my life; I have found not only where my strength is but also a career to which I can devote myself.

Along with being exposed to a number of subjects in actuarial science and statistics, I have also taken two Society of Actuary (SOA) exams, P and FM, and completed the economics and finance courses that satisfy the SOA's Validation of Education Experience (VEE) course requirements.

I have a strong intention to work toward a PH.D. degree in actuarial science after my graduation. In terms of a long term career goal, I would prefer doing research and teaching in an academic environment. In the fall of 2006, I was granted a teaching-assistant work term at Simon Fraser University, which helped me value this career goal more. I enjoyed the discussion with people on statistical issues. More important, I found out that teaching is not only about how to explain the concepts and theories but also based on the understanding of other people's thoughts.

While school has taken much of my time, I had been working as a part-time waiter and occasionally on a second job until the end of last year. That has enabled me to improve my time-management skills and provided valuable life experience. Also, for this spring semester, I have been doing a co-op work term in the Household Survey Methods Division at Statistics Canada, where I am familiarizing myself to the practical statistics tools and application and horning my interpersonal skills.