2007-2008 Statistical Society of Canada Endowment Award

Jervyn Ang

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.

Jervyn Ang writes:

I was born in Singapore, but I moved to Canada nine years ago at the age of ten. At this time, I was already extremely interested in Mathematics and wanted to study it a lot more. This held true while I went through secondary school.

Having completed Mathematics 12 at age fourteen, I was anxious to learn more Mathematics as I continued my schooling. I considered pursuing a degree in various subject areas, but I eventually narrowed down my choices for post-secondary education. Having been advised on many occasions against doing pure Mathematics in favor of practicality, I set my sights on pursuing a degree in Actuarial Science. This led me to the program at Simon Fraser University.

At SFU, I took some courses in Economics, Statistics, and Mathematics, and my interest in these subjects grew. Being at or near the top of all my classes, I thought I would end up breezing right through my University career. This idea changed while I took ACMA-210; and after that, ACMA-320 and ACMA-315.

Even combining my proficiency in Mathematics and Statistics, the challenge of these courses surprised me quite a bit. I found my performances not nearly as stellar as they were in my previous courses. However, I did not allow myself to get discouraged.

My desire to learn, fascination with the subject, together with my determination to succeed, eventually allowed me to learn a tremendous amount from my Actuarial Mathematics and Statistical courses. I gained a deep understanding of various topics in Actuarial Science and Statistics, and I knew I wanted to one day work as a consultant or as a researcher in either of these fields.

Finding myself wanting to try my hand in research, I spent the summer of 2007 as a research assistant in computer experiments after having been awarded an NSERC USRA. The experience has taught me a lot about research, and has positively affected my decision to pursue a masters' degree in Statistics.

Now, I am in my final semester of my undergraduate degree and I look forward to graduating just before my 20th birthday. I wish to thank my parents, who have been very supportive of my decisions and allowed me the independence that I needed to thrive. I am also extremely grateful to my professors for all the challenging and fascinating courses that they have taught and for their continued support as I continue my academic career. With this, I am confident that I will learn enough to succeed in a job as a consultant, or in any other job in Statistics or Actuarial Science.