

2014-2015 Statistics & Actuarial Science Endowment Award

Award to Recognize the Statistical Society of Canada

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).

Mengyi Li writes:

First of all, I would like to thank the Statistical Society of Canada (SSC) for having the generosity of providing this scholarship. Being selected as the 2014-2015 recipient of the award is an honour.

In 2013, I returned to Vancouver from my four-month formal exchange in Kansai Gaidai University, Japan. The journey gave me “buffer time” to make up my mind and step into the world of actuarial science after business school. ACMA210 was the first course I took in the actuarial program, and it was also the first course that made me feel like the workload was twice the usual amount. Not only did the material cover the intricacies of mathematics and finance but also economics and business, which totally opened my eyes to this discipline.

In 2014, I finally understood how insurance companies price their life insurance products after taking ACMA320 with Ms. Barbara Sanders. I would like to thank Barbara for patiently explaining the concepts to me in her office (many times!) as well as for her generous help as the reference and consultant for my professional career. Many things have happened in the summer of 2014. I was selected as one of the 12 students to assist professor J.F. Williams with a summer project for Fraser Health Authority. This project helped me develop my statistical analysis skills and strengthen my “nerves” to do the presentation in front of the executives of the institution. My team received the first place undergraduate project award at the Symposium on Mathematics and Computation organized by SFU. Here I would also like to thank J.F. for all his help during this past summer and for his help towards my professional life over the years. Even more exciting, I passed Exam FM and P and was selected as one of the two actuarial students to fly to Chicago to represent SFU at the SOA 2014 CAE Summit. After this experience, I began another journey and went to the capital city of my home country, China, to do my first co-op with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

A big year for both my professional and academic career was 2015. In the Spring, I was elected as the president of SASSA. The SASSA executive team worked its best to serve all students by creating a friendly and positive community, providing networking opportunities between the faculty and industry. We did a great job, and I had the pleasure to serve students in the Statistics and Actuarial Science Department this year. I was taking two ACMA courses, 425 and 315 with Professors Yi Lu and Cary Tsai this spring. I want to thank both of them for helping me understand actuarial science in depth thanks to their excellent professional knowledge and patience. Apart from the homework and extracurricular activities in SFU, I also collaborated with three other smart and enthusiastic actuarial students in the program to participate in a national case competition with Munich Re. From this three month case, we have learnt how to

analyze a problem and create models like an actuary, and we finally went to Toronto and presented our project to the executives of Munich Re. Lastly, I would also like to thank the program coordinator, Dr. Gary Parker. Thank you for encouraging me to keep on working when I was taking ACMA320, which gave me a great amount of confidence to continue working very hard to become a good actuary.

My small achievements would not have been possible without the help of excellent fellow students and professors along the way in the past two years. I am now working on my third co-op term with Bank of Canada as research assistant. By working alongside with these brilliant economists, their enthusiasm and professionalism inspired me to become a professional who is truly enjoying and skilled at what she is doing.

My final year in the actuarial program will be 2016. I will keep on working and honing my skills to become a great actuary like the people who have inspired me.