

2006-2007 Statistics & Actuarial Science Endowment Award

These awards are presented to students in the major/honor program with high academic standing.

Victoria Laan

I was born and raised here in the Fraser Valley, in Maple Ridge, and educated within the public school system. I spent the majority of my high school years believing I would become a high school teacher, preferably in mathematics and English. Everyone agreed that it was a very unique combination, but I enjoyed the challenge available in mathematics and the ideas and creativity encouraged in English literature studies. I also carried with me a love of teaching and sharing ideas, which led naturally to the role of educator. However, as I neared graduation, my mathematics teacher mentioned a good friend who was an actuary, and described briefly what it was that they did. I was instantly hooked.

I went home to do some research, and the more I read, the more I loved the possibilities of the profession. My greatest interest in mathematics came from the probability, discrete math, and applied calculus problems; anything that had an immediate real-world answer and consequence fascinated me. The chance to pursue those types of solutions as a lifelong career, while working in a dynamic, team-oriented environment, had infinite appeal.

My journey through the actuarial program at SFU has pushed me far beyond what I thought I was capable of. I have met amazing people, many of whom are so intelligent and talented that I sometimes feel daunted just talking with them. I have made solid friends among my classmates, and spent many hours sharing ideas and celebrating personal triumphs, while constantly looking towards the next challenge (or three) on our agendas. The material itself, with the incredible attention to detail and depth of understanding required to be successful at it, never fails to captivate and demand excellence in me. I am a more disciplined and capable person because of this program.

Now that I look forward to graduation, I am excited to explore the opportunities available to me in the actuarial industry. After studying pension theory here at SFU, I am particularly interested in the areas of pension administration and life insurance. It is my hope to find employment in the North America and to continue to build on my skills through exams and practical experience. I have a long road and much study still ahead of me, but with the continued support of friends and family, and a good employer to help me grow, I know that I will succeed.