

2007-2008 Statistics & Actuarial Science Endowment Award

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

Yinlai Meng

Before I stepped into SFU to study statistics, I worked as a high school math teacher for five years and then as a market research and analyzer for three years. After immigrating to this beautiful and peaceful country, I decided to pursue a more successful career and happier life. I found Statistics a good study choice which is able to combine my previous academic foundation and various working experience perfectly.

I started my statistics study in the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science at SFU in January 2006. The first term was difficult and the two 300 level courses required lots of review of my previous math and probability knowledge. But on the other hand, this term helps me refresh my knowledge and prepare well for future study. I always keep communicating and discussing with the professors and TAs about the academic questions and their extension to the real world and got lots of invaluable ideas, comments and suggestions from them. I did very well for each course I took during that year and was admitted into the statistics major after the first term. At the same time, I started to apply for Co-op and planned to get some ideas about the application of statistics in the real world.

My first Co-op term is 2007 spring at a human resource management company as a research assistant. I was so happy that I have a chance to support the famous “50 Best Employer Survey Study” and learned how the survey is revised, collected, conducted, analyzed and published.

My second Co-op job is 2007 winter at a lung cancer research organization in Vancouver. I assisted the data analysis manager to get the data from its database and perform data and image analysis. I also compile data from multiple databases or other sources. The most valuable experience is programming and developing software tools for analyzing data. Based on this job, I gained experience with statistics in experimental testing and the experimental process. No doubt, this job makes me more familiar with experimental research and leads me to the right career field I like.

I go back to school and take two 400 level courses this term with the rough picture of how statistics is used in the real world which I got from my last two jobs. I feel different when I study, more insightful and more confident. I still work for my last employer part time to keep my exploration of the application of my knowledge and keep learning more practical skills as well.

Now I try to explain some statistical results from the newspaper to people on the bus with simple words and to tell them how wonderful and valuable my statistical job is.

Yinlai Meng
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