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Students receive coveted scholarship for academics, community service

August 23, 2016

Two students who show promise as outstanding scholars and young leaders are this year's recipients of the prestigious Schulich Leader Scholarships as they enter their first year of studies at the University of Victoria.

Created in 2011 by entrepreneur and philanthropist Seymour Schulich, the scholarships are awarded annually to 50 students in Canada pursuing undergraduate studies in STEM subjects: science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The scholarship for engineering studies is \$80,000 and \$60,000 for the other areas of study and are the highest value scholarships offered to undergraduate students entering UVic directly from high school.

Robert Lee, recipient of the Schulich Leader Scholarship in engineering, won national honours for his science projects and enters UVic with a 98 per cent average. During his Grade 11 year, Lee obtained perfect marks across all of his subjects and, as a result, a 100 per cent average. In 2014, he was national champion in the Michael Smith Science Challenge with a 97.5 per cent, the highest among the 1,753 students selected to compete that year.

But Lee isn't all about hitting the books; he serves on community committees such as the Victoria Public Library's Teen Council and the City of Victoria's Youth Council. His volunteer leadership was recently recognized by Oak Bay city council with a supporting grant for his development of a program to help seniors use computers.

Rebecca Hansen, recipient of the Schulich Leader Scholarship in science, consistently excelled across all academic subjects with a 96 per cent average entering UVic and, at the national level, finished in the top 10 per cent in the Michael Smith higher-order thinking competition.

Her community leadership reflects a deep commitment to environmental issues, whether through hundreds of hours volunteering at the Shaw Ocean Discover Centre, organizing candidate debates for the federal election, or by using a grant that she obtained from the Capital Regional District to develop a hydroponic garden at her school that supplies greens for the cafeteria.

Hansen's leadership has also had a global reach. Using donated goods she obtained from local businesses, Hansen led a team of 20 volunteers that prepared a charity dinner raising \$2,100 for a village in Ecuador.

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