Raaj Chatterjee

Nancy Lum

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Scholarships recognize student pair for leadership

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Two first-year Simon Fraser University students—one, a young Surrey jazz musician with a passion for the environment and the other, a Burnaby volunteer who has donated more than 700 hours to community clubs—have together netted $140,000 in

Schulich Leader Scholarships.

Raaj Chatterjee, the recipient of an $80,000 scholarship, is studying mechantronics systems engineering (MSE) at the Surrey campus while Nancy Lum, who receives $60,000, is a science student.

Schulich leaders receive their $60,000 awards in eight installments over four years. They must study one of the STEM subjects—science, technology or mathematics—during their undergrad years. A second scholarship valued at $80,000 is designated for a Schulich leader pursuing a degree in an engineering program.

Chatterjee developed his interest in the environment and sustainability in high school, where he began a school composting project, and later organized a conference at Science World to link high school students on environmental issues.

Last year he became co-chair of the Surrey Youth Sustainability Network, which includes giving leadership clinics at local elementary schools and supporting environmental stewardship.

"I'm hopeful that my contributions result in strong, lasting collaborations among students across Surrey and Metro Vancouver," says Chatterjee, who also hopes to work and volunteer abroad through the UN and Engineers Without Borders to improve living conditions in developing nations.

Together with his family, Chatterjee developed a bi-weekly homemade food delivery program to distribute hot, nutritious food to the homeless in North Surrey.

He also finds time for music, earning the 2013 Best Surrey Senior Trumpet Player award at the annual Envision Jazz Festival.

Lum has both participated in and led volunteer groups for several clubs in Burnaby, including Karing 4 Kids and Christmas Cheer. Both raise funds towards annual goals for local charities, including the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Burnaby's Christmas Bureau. Lum became an executive and eventually chairperson and co-chairperson of the clubs.

"After three years of planning, preparing and hosting fundraising events I have developed the leadership skills I have today," says Lum. "Through those years of seeing people helping one another, and from being part of that community, I realized that I want to continue to help others."

Her efforts, together with fellow executives, contributed a total of $32,000 to the two charities.

"I was transformed by volunteering," says Lum, "and I hope to continue as a student at SFU."

Seymour Schulich, a Montreal-born Jewish Canadian business leader and philanthropist, created the annual awards program three years ago to cultivate the next-generation pioneers of global scientific research and innovation in Canada and Israel.

Managed by the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto in Canada, the awards go to two promising high school graduates entering 20 selected universities. They must demonstrate two of three attributes: academic excellence, social and/or business leadership and financial need.

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