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2017 CONVOCATION STAR - ANDY ZENG

June 09, 2017

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Andy Zeng makes it look so easy. His laid back and affable manner belie his rock star academic record. His final transcript shows a whopping 31 A pluses with his lowest grade being an A-. The grades, along with his significant volunteer activities earned Zeng the prestigious [Schulich Leader Scholarship](#) in 2013 and this year's [Gordon Shrum Undergraduate Medal](#).

Zeng will be continuing his studies at the University of Toronto this fall where he snagged one of only 17 MD/PhD spots in Canada.

Zeng explains that an MD/PhD allows him to work with patients as a clinician as well as research the disease as a scientist. It's an ambitious program in scope and commitment - it takes a minimum of eight years to complete, not including residency, and the competition for entry is fierce.

Zeng says that he was already interested in a career in medicine when he was in high school and that he became passionate about cancer research through his stints as a research student at the BC Cancer Agency and the Universite de Montreal.

Zeng's physician grandmother recently passed away from cancer and he's hoping that that experience will help him become a compassionate clinician. "I had to fly to Beijing and could only stay for 48 hours because I had to get back for midterms," Zeng says. "It gave me a glimpse of what it's like to be a family member of a cancer patient. It tied the research and humanitarian aspect of being a physician together for me."

Surprisingly, the biggest contributor to Zeng's personal growth and his greatest investment in time at SFU came from his volunteer efforts. Zeng is President and Founder of the SFU Red Cross Club, Director and Founder of the Red Cross Student Movement and is a volunteer Disaster Management responder for the Canadian Red Cross. "Teamwork, leadership, public speaking, budgeting, organizing and the privilege of meeting and learning from a variety of people gave me a lot more insight than if I had just focused on academics" Zeng says. Zeng also works as a lifeguard for the City of Coquitlam, his hometown.

Zeng graduates this spring with a Bachelor of Science, Honours, and a major in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry. Well-honed study habits, like taking six-hour walks with his tablet and reviewing slides, will serve him well as he enters one of the most challenging post-graduate programs in the country.

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