

TIC Scholarships: Making a Difference

In 2016, Ryan Vetro was in his second year of Human Kinetics at the University of Guelph when his uncle, president of McLean Hallmark Insurance Group, told him about the TIC Scholarship Program.

The idea of entering the insurance industry has always been in the back of Ryan's mind. Beyond his uncle, most of his family has worked in the industry for decades now. His grandfather, Fred McLean, was the founder of Moore-McLean (now McLean Hallmark).

Before blindly following his family's footsteps, Ryan first wanted to explore his interest in biomechanics and injury prevention. "My mom and dad didn't want me to fall into insurance just because the rest of my family was in it," Ryan says, "so they encouraged me to do my undergraduate degree in something that I really enjoyed." As they explained to him, insurance is an industry that allows you to learn as you go. You don't necessarily have to study insurance at university in order to follow a career in that industry.

That summer of 2016 was when Ryan started to think about merging his field of study with a career in insurance. His experience working at Reeds Insurance the summer of 2015 gave him some insight into how insurance worked, but it took him until that next summer to realize the variety of possibilities within the industry.

As Ryan puts it, "I never really thought about all the Craft breweries and how there could be an insurance department dedicated to them, or how you could specialize in large dealership insurance or racetrack insurance." As this awareness grew, so did his understanding of just how brokers recommend various coverages and mitigate risk for clients.

After applying for and winning one of the three \$5,000 TIC scholarships in 2016, Ryan was able to focus on his studies rather working to pay for tuition. As a result, his average increased each semester and he finished with a seven per cent higher average than the previous year.

"Had I needed a job," he says, "I'm almost certain that I would not have achieved this. I take my school seriously and don't think that I would have put as much time and energy into it as I did."

Moving forward, Ryan plans to enter his third year of Human Kinetics at the University of Guelph and, again, work as a summer intern at McLean Hallmark Insurance Group. In doing so, he hopes to broaden his knowledge of the industry. "The more I learn and experience," he says, "the more I'm drawn to the idea of being an insurance broker."

He would like other students to know that the insurance industry offers a variety of opportunities. An undergraduate degree in something other than insurance doesn't mean that insurance cannot be a career option in the future.



Ryan also reminds other students what a difference a scholarship of this size can be. “It’s a great opportunity,” he says. “It takes the pressure off of trying to scrape money together for tuition and other expenses, and allows for focus on what you are there to study.”

To find out more about the TIC scholarship program, visit <http://www.ticonf.com/tic-scholarship-program/>.