

Chinese Wife First To Take Capitol Actuarial Test

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The first student to take the first of a series of actuarial examinations the first time it was offered at Capitol Campus is a slim, petite, almond-eyed wife of a faculty member and the mother of a three-year-old son.

Mrs. Hsi Sheng Nieh passed the test on her first try — which is quite unusual since the passing ratio is one out of three.

Actuarial science is in the realm of higher mathematics; the application of theories of probability and statistics and the principles of finance to problems of insurance, pension, social population and related studies.

The actuary is a mathematician, statistician and economist all rolled into one — a dispassionate speciality, its exponents say, requiring keen interdisciplinary training and tremendous application.

This doesn't frighten the soft-spoken Mrs. Nieh. Math and chemistry were her best subjects, she says, when she was a school girl in Hong Kong. Then she was Tak Wa Loo, born on the Portuguese island of Macao to Chinese parents. The Loos originally came from Canton on Mainland China and eventually settled in Hong Kong where her father was a manufacturer of costume jewelry.

She learned English in school. In fact, her teacher was from England and had much difficulty with the names of her Chinese pupils. So she asked each one to choose an Anglicized first name. Tak Wa consulted a book of names for newborn babies and so much liked the lilt of "Loretta" that this is what she is called today.

She and her brother, Chung Yin, excelled in mathematics and both came to the United States to further their education. He was graduated from Queens College and is now a research fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

She was attending Columbia University when she met her husband who was working for his master of science degree in mathematics at Adelphi College. They were married, and when his post graduate work was completed, he was given an instructorship at Capitol Campus so they moved with their son, Jason, into Pineford Village Apartments. Mr. Nieh, a native of Formosa, is in the final stages of obtaining his doctorate in computer sciences at University Park.

Loretta Nieh considers herself fortunate to be at Capitol Campus because it's one of the 25 colleges in the nation which offers actuarial science as a program.

Ruskin said, "The work of science is to substitute facts for appearances and demonstrations for impressions." His words have been adopted as the motto of the Society of Actuaries, an elite group of mathematical geniuses who must pass 10 examinations before they are accepted as fellows.

The examinations — the first and second, at least, are of three-hour duration; the remaining eight require four hours each. After passing the fifth examination, one may hang out a shingle as an actuary and be an associate member of the society. Currently there are 2,162 fellows and 1,827 associates. The majority work for insurance companies; the rest are consultants, government employees, teachers and professors.

Actuarial science was offered last September for the first time at Capitol Campus. It was a year in the planning stage. Its architect and now its professor is Dr. Barnard Bissinger, an affable academician, who has passed five of the examinations himself. A former logistics advisor to General Chennault and his Flying Tigers in 1944-45, his career also included a stint as an athletic shoe manufacturer (He presented a pair of bowling shoes to President Truman in the White House.).

Ten years ago Dr. Bissinger established a similar program at

Lebanon Valley College with the help of Conrad M. Siegel, a local actuary who passed the 10 examinations at an early age.

Mr. Siegel was also on hand to set up the program at Capitol Campus and helped establish the campus as one of the national testing centers. Examinations are offered at six month intervals and are graded by a nationally-appointed committee. The last examination was in May when 1,799 students participated and 725 passed.

Actuaries are among the best paid groups of salaried professionals. And there is a great shortage of them, according to one of the leading insurance management recruiting firms.

There are 30 substantial positions available for each individual looking for more opportunity. This is expected to increase even farther with the life insurance business growing and diversifying into many fields.

Many feel the future of the actuary is tied to the recent movement of life insurance companies to become broad-based financial service companies.

If so, actuaries might some day be in private practice like doctors, and be multi-disciplinary specialists in financial services . . . businessmen (and women) who use mathematics to analyze and solve practical problems.

I.E.E.E. Holds Organizational Meeting

by Wendell R. Leppo

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers held their organizational meeting here in E-330 last Wednesday night on September 27.

Over sixty people came to the meeting and heard about the benefits of joining the I.E.E.E. Student Branch. The advantages explained included the educational purpose of advancing the theory and practice of electrical engineering, electronics, radio, allied branches of engineering, and the related arts and sciences, the monthly magazines containing technical articles and industrial news, the activities of the Student Branch in fulfilling its purpose, and the contests open to all members. Activities scheduled for the club include speakers, tours and refreshments at every meeting.

The club received its official charter in December of 1971, through the major efforts of Mr. Wesley Houser. Acclaiming the Electrical Engineering Society here on campus as a Student Branch of I.E.E.E., the national charter was a big step forward in recognition of the many dedicated members.

Striving to advance the knowledge of its members, the I.E.E.E. Branch here on campus helps them "grow professionally" in their related fields of study. If you want to "grow professionally" through the educational and informative activities of I.E.E.E., come to the meetings and join the many

members now enjoying the advantages (Benefits!!!) of I.E.E.E. Get involved! Members can help, too, by dedicating themselves and then dedicate a friend!

In addition, Mr. Gleason, the Chairman of the Susquehanna Section of I.E.E.E. which sponsors the I.E.E.E. Student Branch here on campus, spoke about the activities of his section and how student members may come to those meetings too. The meeting closed with refreshments and a social get-together.

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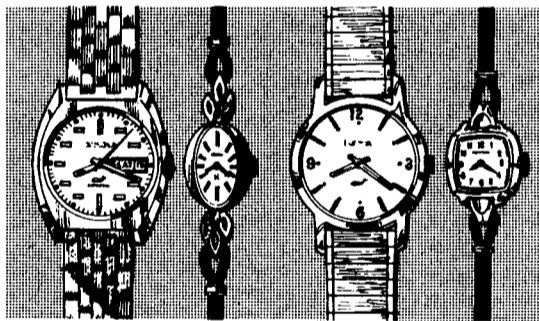
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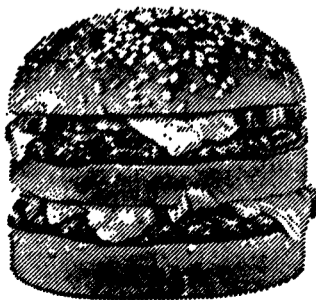
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