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March 5, 2007

*Questions from Allyssa:*

- (i) *How did you get interested in mathematics?*
- (ii) *How long were you a professor, and do you love your job?*

Dear Allyssa:

Thank you, Allyssa, for your questions.

I was born in Sri Lanka and grew up there. Solving puzzles was my favorite past time, and geometry was my subject of interest in high school. Besides, I loved mathematics because it is a science of precision. I had great teachers who inspired me to get into the field of mathematics. I read for B.Sc. in Mathematics/Statistics in a university in Sri Lanka. I always wanted to be a college/university professor. Therefore, I earned a M.S. in Actuarial Science from the University of Iowa and a Ph.D. in Statistics from the University of Windsor, Canada.


Before joining the Illinois State University as an Associate Professor in Actuarial Science in August 2002, I worked as an Actuary in Lincoln National Life and Swiss Re insurance, two insurance companies. In my actuarial work, I learned that the insurance industries can not function without the involvement of actuaries. Actuaries calculate the costs to assumed risk: how much to charge policyholders for their life insurance, for their health insurance, etc. This is called the cost of premium. The actuaries also calculate how much an insurance company can expect to pay for claims of losses due to fire, hurricane, floods, etc. Since actuarial work touches major social issues such as health, life and security, I became interested in the field.

As an actuarial faculty in the mathematics department at Illinois State University, I utilize my knowledge and experience gained in the insurance industry to assist students to become successful actuaries in the future. I enjoy teaching, advising and helping students in the department.

With my liking of mathematics, education in statistics, and teaching of actuarial science, I enjoy my life.

Thank you again for your questions. More information on ISU actuarial program can be found at [www.math.ilstu.edu/actuary/](http://www.math.ilstu.edu/actuary/).

Sincerely,

  
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