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## **Youngest engineer heads for graduate school--at age 18**

Contact: Marianne Meadahl, Media/PR, [Phone removed]

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At an age when most students are just beginning their university studies, Burnaby resident Paulman Chan is graduating, with honours, with a bachelor of applied science degree. At 18, the youngest student ever to graduate from SFU's school of engineering science, he is set to begin his master's degree at SFU in the fall.

Chan entered SFU at age 14 after compressing five years of high school into two at the Vancouver School Board/UBC university transition program for academically gifted students. His current research interest is biomedical engineering because, he says, "it's a tangible way of making a difference in people's lives." During his graduate studies he will continue his undergraduate thesis research into optical tomography--a method of x-raying through human tissue with nothing more than light.

Engineering science professor Glenn Chapman, Chan's thesis supervisor, says he only encountered one problem with having such a young student. After a hard day of work in the lab, engineering students and professors often like to relax at a local establishment. Says Chapman, "We could never go to a pub because Paulman is a minor." He won't reach legal drinking age until August this year.

Chan says he didn't encounter any difficulties as the youngest student in engineering science because he grew up with much older siblings; a brother, Berman, nine years older who is also an SFU engineering science graduate and a sister, Shermeen, seven years older, who is an SFU kinesiology graduate currently studying medicine at McMaster University.

Despite his heavy course load, Chan found time to join SFU's hockey club and the SFU quiz bowl club, whose members compete with other universities in trivia competitions. He is also active with the Campus Crusade for Christ club, an organization which may ultimately affect his career aspirations. "I'm not entirely sure I want to be an engineer as a lifelong career," he confesses. "I think of myself first as a Christian and then as an engineer. If God calls me, I don't know what that call may be. But I'm still young and have lots of time to figure it out." (digital photo available)