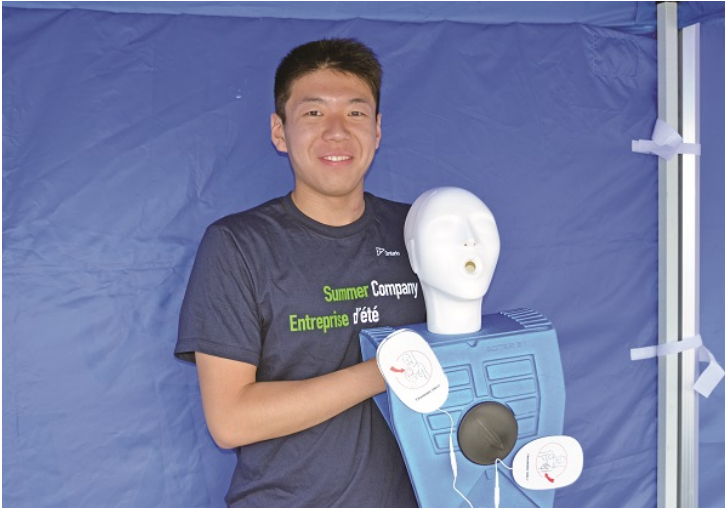


First aid is valuable in every situation, says young entrepreneur



By Brock Weir

Just last week, Aurora's Chen Liu was standing poolside in Newmarket when he was approached by a little girl with a nosebleed.

He immediately sprang into action, grabbing the requisite pair of rubber gloves and a roll of paper towels and getting right down to business.

Sure, it was probably the less glamorous side of being a lifeguard, but it was all in a day's work.

The recent Aurora High School graduate, however, is hoping for a bit of a change of pace, taking advantage of Ontario's Summer Company program for enterprising young students and putting his skills to work founding First Responder First Aid, which aims to certify people in this community in the art of first aid.

‘I stumbled upon this program after having the typical camp job in the past two years and that was not doing me justice,’ Chen says. ‘When you're young, you like to go on adventures and take risks. For me, everything fell into place because I am a lifeguard for the Town of Newmarket and, to me, First Aid was just a baby step.

‘I just needed to get a couple of certifications, buy my equipment which, thanks to the Summer Company program, I was able to afford, and just set up shop.’

When he considered what he might do in applying to the program, the answer seemed obvious. First Aid training is always a useful and handy thing to have under one's belt, no matter what the situation.

‘With small businesses that are starting out with just a little money, they don't know what regulations they need and a lot of them get fined because they don't have the proper regulations in place,’ says Chen. ‘Additionally, this is something good for mothers at home, or anyone who stays home, or goes to work. There are a lot of accidents that occur at home with kids, a lot of accidents that happen at work with co-workers, and it is just a great asset to have.’

So, enter Chen to the rescue.

When asked what first interested him in becoming a life guard, he jokes that it was all about the ‘hero aspect.’ When you get a job as a lifeguard, you don't go into the job expecting things to happen, but you have to have a level of anticipation. Nevertheless, when

something does happen, he says there is a bit of an 'adrenaline rush.'

The little girl's nose bleed may not have been enough to get Chen's own blood pumping, but he rose to the occasion.

'If my ego was a little bit smaller, it probably would have,' he laughs. 'The joy lasted for about 10 minutes before I would let her go back into the pool.'

His \$1,500 grant secured, he used this seed funding, along with \$1,000 of his own money to get the company off the ground. While there was a cost to go the extra mile and get his own certifications as a standard first aid instructor and a life-saving instructor for emergency first aid and all levels of CPR, so far his biggest expense has been equipment, such as mannequins for demonstrations.

While he says he enjoyed every second taking the requisite courses, he needed to keep his eye on the end goal because, as far as courses go, the possibilities are practically endless. The biggest challenge was deciding when to stop.

'When you're just starting off with your own business, you have to do everything from marketing, to creating your own courses, and there was also a lot of website building,' he says. 'After spending 20 hours on my website, I probably could have paid someone off for it, but these are the regrets you can only have after you're done and you realise how much time you have spent on whatever.'

'I think entrepreneurs these days have these great ideas and I think it is very gracious that Summer Company is able to help those entrepreneurs actualize their ideas. I know a number of them are successful, some of them are not successful, but then again, I think anyone can agree with me when I say experience is the greatest way to learn.'

If you would like to learn first aid through Chen Liu's First Responder First Aid, visit his website at frfaservices.com, email him at chenliu@frfaservices.com, or give him a call at 647-535-2766.