

## LIFESTYLES

# Wen earns top honours

**Jennifer Lang**

MetroValley News

A young entrepreneur has earned a spot in the Top 20 Under 20, a scholarship program celebrating Canada's future leaders.

David Wen, a Grade 12 student at Elgin Park Secondary, wins an all expense paid trip to Toronto May 9-13, when he and other recipients meet prominent business leaders during a four-day leadership summit and awards ceremony.

The award comes with a \$1,500 scholarship. For Wen, the best part is he will be matched with a mentor of his choice for eight months. He can choose anybody he wants.

"When they said, 'Do you have someone in mind?' I said, 'Oh, I can pick? How about Michael Jordan?'" he joked.

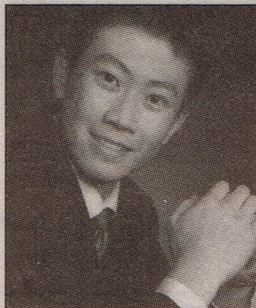
At the moment, he still hasn't decided who it will be, but it will definitely be someone from the world of commerce — hopefully, a prominent business leader.

"I was thinking, like, Jimmy Pattison," Wen said.

But first, the Surrey Youth Orchestra member has to decide where he'll attend university in the fall. He wants to study commerce, at either Queen's University or McGill.

He's set a goal of earning \$10,000 in scholarships to pay tuition and expenses next year.

"I've basically applied for everything, and this was one of them," he said, referring to the Top 20 Under 20 award program, which recognizes youth who have demonstrated a



**David Wen**

significant level of achievement, innovation and leadership under the age of 20. Wen certainly meets the criteria.

Four years ago, he and his friends Bryan Chou and Andrew Chen started their own company, IYA (If You're Away), mowing lawns and tending yards.

They'd been inspired by the book, *Rich Dad, Poor Dad*, which revealed one of the secrets of success in business — using your money, rather than your time, to

earn money.

"We easily could have done the jobs ourselves, but we wanted to be the managers and delegate the work."

The partners rigorously reinvested their profits into other business ventures, including vending machines.

The company's biggest money-maker was a chance to translate and produce books for a school in Taiwan. Wen, who's Taiwanese, was able to perform the translation from Mandarin to English.

One day soon, Wen — he studies violin, plays sax in his school's stage band and plays softball with the White Rock Rockers — hopes to launch his own business.

"Hopefully, something to do with spacecraft," he said.

"It's just a dream, but I have an interest in that," he said, explaining he's always been into electronics, and his dad and grandpa are engineers. His uncles and an aunt are into computers.

"I guess I'm pretty technological," he said.