

Earth student Victoria reaches for stars in green final

Earth sciences student Victoria Longhurst celebrates after winning a place in the final of a national environmental competition.

The 19 year old student from Partick, Glasgow qualified for the Scottish final of the Environmental Placement Programme 2009 (EPP), organised by the Business Environment Partnership (BEP), after finishing top of the Central Belt heat.

Victoria received a cheque for £100 and will go on to compete in the Scottish National Final, in which prizes will be presented by First Minister Alex Salmond at Edinburgh Zoo on 10 September. She will be joined by six students from other Scottish regional heats, each competing for the £500 first prize.

During her eight week summer placement at Knowetop Community Farm in West Dunbartonshire, she worked to establish a system for recycling and raise awareness of environmental issues in the local community. Through surveys, workshops and practical steps such as introducing a wormery, Victoria improved on-site recycling and demonstrating the ease of it to staff and visitors.

She commented: "The placement was a very worthwhile experience. It has shown me what a difference can be made in deprived areas with some hard work and creativity. I'd definitely be interested in going down the environmental line as a future job."

Judge, Councillor Tom Buchanan, head of Edinburgh City Council's economic development committee, commented: "It was difficult to choose a winner. All the students were so enthusiastic and the projects really interesting. Sustainability and environmental improvements are vital to us all and these students are able to make a huge difference to the environmental agenda in years to come."

The EPP is sponsored by Shell U.K. Limited, the Scottish Government and SEPA.

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