

Green champion Rebecca wins Zoo date with First Minister

Environmental Geography student Rebecca Barclay celebrates after winning a place in the final of a national environmental competition.

The 21-year-old from Alyth qualified for the Scottish final of the Environmental Placement Programme 2009 (EPP), organised by the Business Environment Partnership (BEP), after finishing top of the Tayside heat.

Rebecca, who is studying at Stirling University, received a cheque for £100 and goes on to compete in the Scottish National Final, in which prizes will be presented by First Minister Alex Salmond at Edinburgh Zoo next Thursday (10 September). She will be joined by six students from other Scottish regional heats, each competing for the £500 first prize.

During her eight weeks Summer placement at Tayside Contracts, which provides logistical support and construction-based services to the Councils of Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross, Rebecca helped the company incorporate several satellite recycling centres into its existing Environmental Management System. Not only has this allowed Tayside Contracts to see exactly what it needs to do at different sites to improve its environmental performance but it will also help the company attract more customers and promote its environmental commitment through gaining the ISO14001 standard.

Gavin Ramsay, Technical Assistant (Quality and Safety), at Tayside Contracts, spoke highly of the programme, commenting: "The EPP provided us with a good opportunity to bring an outside eye to lay the groundwork to expand our environmental management system across our operations. Rebecca did excellent work and Tayside Contracts would be very interested in participating again in the future".

Rebecca was delighted to win the regional heat, commenting: "The EPP is a very good programme and I feel very lucky to have had a paid placement. I'm very surprised that I won."

Councillor William Dawson of Dundee City Council was one of the judges. He added: "The presentations were all excellent and it was very difficult to choose a winner. The EPP is extremely beneficial for the companies involved. Rebecca's project stood out because she provided a good range of improvement options for her company. The EPP is a very innovative programme which gives students the chance to get workplace experience".

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

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