

Feedback from Gold CREST Recipient Roseanne Coulter

“The most important thing is that doing CREST gave me the opportunity to learn outside the classroom. I was able to undertake hands-on research that was real. This meant I was learning important geology principles because they were right there in front of my face. I took this process for granted until I completed that process and looked back to realise all the new ideas I had learned. I did all this and still had FUN!”

So what is different about CREST?

“It is self-motivated and you get involved with a great bunch of people who are really interested and keen in what you are doing. Completing this project is one of my most satisfying achievements.”

Consultant...

“My consultant was Dr Clel Wallace. He was very enthusiastic about geology and always made time to see me and discuss issues. It was his friendly manner, his wonderful way of teaching, and the fact that he respected my desire to learn that gave me a really solid base for this project.”

Supervising Teacher...

“Dr Heather Meikle was my support. She was there to help when things did not go right the first time. She helped me learn new skills, such as how to write a scientific report. Her sense of humour and patience and her belief in my ability to finish were all important to my successful completion of the CREST project.”

Expert Assessor...

“Dr Julie Palmer was a great secondary source of support. She provided important contacts when needed and then put me through a rigorous examination. I was learning right to the end and the fact that she treated me like a real researcher at the final assessment, rather than a school kid, was great. I felt like I really had something to offer.”

Why Roseanne thinks others should get involved in CREST...

“Get involved in CREST so that you can have the experience that I have had. This is a challenge and a chance to share your knowledge with someone who really wants to learn. Don't think of it as something that is going to use up your valuable time but something that is going to enrich it. Give it a go – you will never regret it.”

The Expert Assessor - Julie Palmer

Soil and Earth Science Group, Institute of Natural Resources, Massey University

What the Expert Assessor said about CREST...

“What impressed me about the whole CREST process was the opportunity that the students have to develop real skills that will be helpful throughout their lives. Firstly the student needs to design and plan a project. During the course of the project they have to develop a realistic time frame and manage their time to achieve the goals in a timely fashion. Lastly, CREST develops communication skills of various forms, from being capable of presenting information to a small discussion group; to writing and compiling a comprehensive report; to presenting the study in a public seminar.

Why did the Expert Assessor become involved in CREST?

“Science plays a crucial role in our day-to-day lives, from the vehicles we drive to work, to the food we eat, to the music we relax to. Unfortunately, too many young people are shying away from science. They have yet to see it as the key to the future – their future – the nation’s future, the future of this planet and beyond. However, every so often a young person comes along who wants to delve more deeply into some aspect of science. This is how I became involved with CREST. Doctors Heather Meikle (Palmerston North Girls High School) and Clel Wallace (Institute of Natural Resources, Massey University) were working with a student who was fascinated by geology and the secrets the rocks held. She was busy in her ‘spare time’ mapping an area of rocks near Palmerston North. I was asked to be the project assessor.

What was it like to work with such a young student?

“The guidelines used by the CREST students are designed to help the individual student develop planning, time management and organisational skills as the project progresses. Confidence is built up with the requirement of the student to present an outline of the project orally with support documentation. I came away from my first meeting with Roseanne Coulter feeling positive about the student and her approach to the project she had chosen. We met on several occasions throughout the project. On one occasion, Clel and I accompanied her into the field to take a closer look at the rocks she was working with. This provided the opportunity for me to assess her comprehension and familiarity with her field area. It was also an invaluable opportunity to have a discussion about what might be happening in the rock succession and make suggestions about where she could go to find additional information that might prove helpful. Roseanne was very receptive to input into the project. She also showed initiative, such as seeking professional assistance when it came to identification of the numerous fossil assemblages she collected.”

“The project was finally written up as a comprehensive report and a science fair poster display, the first of which was circulated to her assessors and supervisors prior to her final assessment meeting and the public oral presentation. Needless to say Roseanne did an outstanding job of each stage of the project and thoroughly earned her Gold Science CREST Award.”

Why the Expert Assessor thinks others should get involved in CREST...

“The CREST Science Award Scheme is a very valuable way of promoting and encouraging high school students to further an interest or fascination in science. It is a great way to meld the knowledge and skills of scientists with the enthusiasm and energy of youth.”

[Provided by Dr Heather Meikle, Palmerston North Girls High School]