

# Technology scholarships: a springboard to success



As an approved subject for university entrance, Technology provides students with scholarship opportunities, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding of the subject and high levels of analytical skills and critical thinking.

In 2009 over 30 students received a New Zealand Scholarship in Technology in a variety of technological areas, such as Digital Technologies, Electronics, Soft and Hard Materials Technology, and Food and Biotechnology.

Technology students find innovative and practical solutions to 'real life' issues. Through interaction with business, industry,

and the community they are encouraged to identify and find solutions to real opportunities and needs.

As well as monetary support, scholarship students gain recognition, a strong sense of achievement, and confidence in their ability to succeed. This encourages students to be lifelong learners and can lead to rewarding roles and career paths.

To celebrate such achievement, Techlink has profiled three scholarship recipients from 2009 who talk about their projects, how they feel Technology has benefited them, and what the future holds.



## Christy O'Brien

Christy developed a wearable arts garment for display in the Te Papa window to celebrate the World of Wearable Arts event in Wellington.

Christy designed and created a strapless butterfly dress from a range of materials such as netting, organza, calico, sequins, feathers, and gum wrappers.

Christy's technological practice included seeking advice from a local sculptor, gathering feedback from her client and consulting with two classmates who had done a similar project the year before.

The former Wellington High School student found studying Technology a very rewarding experience. "Technology gave me the experience of working with a client and working through a variety of processes, from research, designing, trialling and testing, to create something in a hands-on manner."

"Technology at scholarship level has allowed me to understand the underlying aspects which are the same across all technologies. Aspects such as trialling and experimenting, extensive research, in-depth client meetings, and using appropriate materials are processes that all technologists work through to produce something to fit their given criteria."

Christy is now studying at Massey University, Wellington, majoring in Fashion Design. "My focus now is to finish my degree then after that I guess I will take on the world!"



## Abhilash Kamineni

Abhilash solved an ongoing issue for his client who enjoyed sharing files with friends via a USB drive but was becoming increasingly frustrated waiting for them to return the drive after using it.

To address this problem, Abhilash engineered a portable device with a full-colour touch screen which allowed his client to quickly transfer data from one USB drive to another without the need for a computer.

For Abhilash, who has a real interest in modern consumer electronics, being able to study Technology at school was "an amazing experience".

"Technology gave me the opportunity to use components such as LCD screens and touch screens. I learnt from playing around with them and that has been invaluable as it gave me a taste of what's done in the industry."

"Since I started Technology my research and problem-solving skills have improved. I find that everything I learnt in Technology is popping up all the time at university so it's definitely given me a head start."

Abhilash, one of four Mount Roskill Grammar School students who received a 2009 Scholarship in Technology, is currently studying Computer Systems Engineering at the University of Auckland and wants to get into the field of robotics.



## Tom Maguire

Former Kavanagh College student Tom Maguire is an enthusiastic off-road motorcyclist. A common risk with off-road motorcycling is that riders can get their hands caught in the hand guards, increasing the risk of wrist injuries. So Tom designed and constructed a hand guard which provides all necessary protection but releases the rider's hand in the event of an accident.

During this project, Tom worked closely with a mechanical engineer, a radiographer who helped him understand what bones would be affected by different forces in different situations and, for assistance with aesthetics and function, a product designer.

"I have learnt a huge range of skills in Technology this year. I have discovered how much work is involved in taking an idea through to a workable prototype and to think 'outside the box' and consider different ways to approach problems."

Studying Technology at scholarship level has provided Tom with a deeper understanding of the subject. "After the work I did last year I see this subject as a design process, where anything goes and you're not stuck with one type of material. You can use plastics, rubbers, metals, and wood and combine them to solve a problem."

Tom is currently doing a diploma in Mechanical Engineering at Otago Polytechnic and plans to gain on-the-job experience before furthering his study at university.

To find out more about what's happening in Technology in schools today please visit [www.techlink.org.nz](http://www.techlink.org.nz)