

Stories from 2 ex-Challengers now at university

Two university students who did the NZIFST/CREST Student Product Development Challenge whilst at school, share their stories.

Madison Franks did the Challenge in 2016, when she was in Year 12 at Carmel College. Her team was mentored by Juliet Clarke from Tasti. She's now in her second year at Massey, doing a Bachelor of Food Technology with Honours, majoring in Product Development.

Madison says "The feeling of accomplishment I got after finishing the Challenge after all of the hard work has inspired me. As well as meeting all of the people in industry and seeing all of the amazing and crazy things that people can create.

In my final year I worked closely with my school for my year 13 project, in particular Mrs Henden, Mrs Seedall and Mrs Goonan. This significantly contributed to my success in achieving good grades for this project, as well as other scholarships and awards. Having this support, which has been ongoing through my university experience, was so important in encouraging me to go ahead and study Food Technology at University, and I thank them very much for their support."

Both Tasti and Sherratt Ingredients hosted Madison for work experience when she was at school. "Tasti's product development department, in particular Juliet Clarke, showed me what they could do in the industry in the limited time I was with them. Again, this support from Juliet has been ongoing through my university years, and is greatly appreciated.

The Challenge helped me in many ways: the processes we went through to design our final product I have used in my course numerous times; also learning how to work in a team and correspond with a professional in the industry.

I am enjoying product development the most, in particular my project course in the first semester of the second year. I enjoy all of my project papers, as I like working towards a final outcome."

Madison has realised that it is important to keep your options open when studying at University, as there is such a wide range of careers available. "Studying Technology, whether it is engineering, food technology, etc. is a way to learn skills that are applicable to so many careers. Whilst my degree is challenging, I do love what I am doing and the food technology community are so supportive and encouraging when it comes to students."



Madison (second from right) with her Challenge team mates

Emily Doughty did the Challenge in 2018, when she was in her final year at Diocesan School for Girls. Her team was mentored by Isabel Buerschgens and Elise Waddell from Sensient Technologies. Emily is now in her first year at Otago, studying consumer food science.

Emily says “I have always been interested in and set on studying something related to food, such as nutrition or consumer food science. Doing the Challenge really interested me, and made me sure I wanted to study consumer food science.

The Challenge required a lot of work and a big report. My course has a bit of report writing, so the Challenge has helped me with writing reports and knowing how to structure them and be able to write about food.

I chose consumer food science, not just food science, as I really enjoy the marketing side of food, instead of the more chemistry side of food. I would like to work in the food marketing industry, so I am really enjoying learning about food marketing.”

Emily advises current Challenge students that University is a huge step up from high school, “but I remember the CREST Challenge was a huge challenge for me, but I was very grateful that I took part in this.”



Emily (far right) with her mentors and team mates