



12 September 2017

Winning students have the write stuff for a cleaner future

Winners of the CRC CARE High School Essay Competition are mingling with researchers at the CleanUp 2017 global forum tonight on their journey to a safer, cleaner environmental future.

Dozens of students in Years 7 to 12 entered 1000-word essays about contaminants in the environment. An expert judging panel awarded prizes to 15-year old Edith Spiers, 14-year old Thulani Mananduwa Arachchige, and 13-year old Tessa Quinlan.

'I'm really excited to have been selected as a winner,' said Edith, winner of the Dr Roneal Naidu award for writing on chemical contamination and its effect on food quality and human health. The award honours the late Dr Roneal Naidu, who as a medical doctor acted to inspire others through his passion for the environment and the potential impact that pollutants may have on human health.

'I wrote the essay on my school bus over a couple of mornings,' said Edith, 'so I really wasn't expecting much to come of it!'

She thanked the CRC CARE for providing students with such a wonderful opportunity. 'I didn't know a lot about the issue of chemical contamination before I wrote the essay, so it turned out to be a great way of learning about a pressing environmental problem.'

Tessa Quinlan won 2nd prize in the Dr Roneal Naidu award category, and Thulani Mananduwa Arachchige won the CRC CARE award for writing on contamination of our planet: how can we ensure a clean and safe environment for future generations?

Professor Ravi Naidu, Managing Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE), said he was pleased with the range of topics covered and depth of research demonstrated by the students. 'All entries were well written, but the winning entries stood out by exhibiting excellent expression, interesting topics, and scientific accuracy.'

The CRC CARE High School Essay Competition aims to inspire young students to recognise the importance of a clean environment to our wellbeing and to understand how easily human activities can jeopardise environmental sustainability.

CRC CARE, which does scientific research to help stop or clean up contamination of our soil, water and air, is hosting CleanUp 2017 – the 7th International Contaminated Site Remediation Conference – in Melbourne from 11 to 13 September. The conference program is available at www.cleanupconference.com/program.

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High school students entered essays on a range of topics about our environmental future