



**Media release from the Southern Wood Council  
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## **Central Otago woman first recipient of Southern Wood Council Forest Products Scholarship**

**The first recipient of a new scholarship from the Southern wood Council believes forestry is the career of the future.**

Sarah Naylor has been awarded the inaugural annual Southern Wood Council Forest Products Scholarship, set up this year to encourage young people into a forestry career in Otago and Southland.

Twenty year-old Sarah grew up on her family's 283 hectare farm in Becks, Central Otago, and attended St Hilda's School in Dunedin. She is currently in the second year of a Forest Science degree at the University of Canterbury.

She will receive a total grant of \$4,500 through the Council's scholarship over the next three years, \$1500 for each year of her studies.

The annual scholarship is the biggest in the forestry industry New Zealand-wide, and is open to second-year students of Forest Science, Engineering, or for those completing a Wood Processing related degree, who come from Otago or Southland. It was set up by all of the major forest and wood processing organisations in the region, working closely with the School of Forestry at the University of Canterbury, to entice skilled forestry professionals into working and living in the region, and to take up forestry as a career.

While she hasn't yet made up her mind about career options after graduation, Sarah says she loves the many opportunities that forestry presents. "It's a good mix of indoor and outdoor, and there are such a wide range of different jobs in forest management and in wood processing. I'm really enjoying it."

She particularly enjoyed economics and forest growth and measurement studies last year, the latter introducing students to techniques and technologies associated with single tree and stand measurement, surveying, GPS and GIS.

She put that to good use over the last summer break, working for Southwood Export Limited in Invercargill – the country's largest *Eucalyptus* plantation manager - on processing of pre-harvest forest inventory data from several of the company's Southland forests.

The job also introduced her to *Eucalyptus* seed collection methods, as well as beetle pest management.

Studying in earthquake-damaged Christchurch this year has given Sarah an invaluable on-the-ground appreciation of the future needs of the building industry, and she's keen to play her part in this future.

"I believe that timber buildings are the way of the future – it is clear that buildings made of wood were very stable, and timber processing is also a lot kinder to the environment. I want to pursue a career in forestry to help encourage this move towards more timber based structures."

Southern Wood Council Chairman Grant Dodson is thrilled the first scholarship has been granted, and believes Sarah is an excellent example of a young person with a bright future in forestry.

"We see providing on-going scholarship funding for Sarah and for others in following years, as a very positive way of ensuring young people understand there is a strong future in a career in forestry in Otago and Southland. "It's an investment in youth, in skill development and in maintaining and growing the economic contribution that forestry already provides for the region.

This sponsorship is in addition to the Southern Wood Council sponsoring an annual award for the region's outstanding Modern Apprentice as part of the FITEC Regional Training Awards Programme.

*The Southern Wood Council was set up in 2001 to promote, encourage and coordinate the sustainable economic development of the forest products industry in the Otago and Southland regions of New Zealand. It includes all the major forest owners within the region, the larger wood processing and manufacturing companies, the port authorities and each of the three economic development agencies from local councils. SWC member companies own or manage the majority of the larger plantation forests within the region. The Council is one of few truly independent groups of its type that have been set up and currently is one of only two active regional forestry groupings operating in New Zealand.*



**For further information contact Grant Dodson on 03- 467-7722.**