

WISE PROGRAM STUDENT PROFILE

Georgia Free

Bachelor of Science (Advanced) (Chemistry) with Distinction, 2015 – 2017

Georgia joined the WiSE Program in 2015, during her first year of a Bachelor Science (Advanced) (Chemistry). She was an active participant in the program throughout her entire degree.

In her first year, she completed a number of online activities related to career planning, researching future employers and occupations. Due to her interest in further study and research, she was paired with Professor Thomas Millar in the Mentoring Strand. In her first Mentoring Report, she said, “Thomas is incredibly knowledgeable and willing to share his experiences as a science professor. He gives fantastic study and career advice.”

Georgia and Professor Millar were interviewed on video at the 2015 WiSE Program Wrap Up. Georgia said she would recommend mentoring to other students. She said it was an opportunity to gain insight into the world beyond their degree with someone to give advice encouragement along the way. Professor Millar explained that he encouraged Georgia to attend events that she had not realised she had access to, such as scientific presentations, to expand her professional network (Interview: https://youtu.be/nn-WGdCuB_4?t=179).

In her second year, Georgia worked on many of the new WiSE Program online activities with a common theme around developing a professional presence. Her activities included researching appropriate workwear, creating a LinkedIn profile and having a professional head shot taken. Georgia also gained credits in the WiSE Program for reporting her community work in the service club Rotaract, since the program encourages students to volunteer to build employability skills.

Georgia was mentored by Andrea Sosa-Pintos, the Nanosensors Team Leader at CSIRO Manufacturing and a WSU graduate. Georgia met Andrea at her workplace at CSIRO Materials Science and Engineering Laboratories and was given a tour of the facility. She saw Andrea’s current work - the making of chemisensors with gold nanoparticles, which are used for a variety of reasons such as the testing of bacteria in water and tuberculosis medical testing.



Georgia Free and her Mentor, Andrea Sosa-Pintos

Georgia said of Andrea, “She is a wonderful scientist with so much knowledge and passion. She was very understanding of the challenges of undergraduate students and was willing to share advice and help me improve as a scientist and employable graduate.”

Georgia had the opportunity to develop her public speaking skills as one of the student speakers at the 2016 WiSE Program Wrap Up where she shared her experienced from the year.

In her final year of study in 2017, Georgia attended WiSE Program Workplace visits to a Sydney Water Recycling Plant, Fire and Rescue Research Facility, Penrith Observatory and the Ingham Medical

WiSE PROGRAM STUDENT PROFILE cont.

Research Institute. She was also one of eight women selected for the WiSE Program Waste Management Study Tour to Fiji in June.

Reflecting on her degree, Georgia says, "I have thrived under the tutelage of the staff in the chemistry department. I have loved all my subjects, and the practical experience offered within my degree. I completed three projects in chemotherapy and presented my own paper and poster at the end of the degree."

Shortly after finishing her final exams, her studies and experience in the WiSE program came to a head, and she embarked on a three month scholarship to work in research at the CSIRO in Newcastle. Georgia said, "I learnt so much during my time there and it has reinforced how much I love science and research."

Georgia has now enrolled in a Masters of Research degree at WSU. "Eventually, I want to run by own research team at a university or medical institute, focussing on new chemotherapy medicine."

Georgia says, **"I cannot wait to continue immersing myself in all that this university has to offer as I start my research career."**