Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

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Bekki heads to Beijing following scholarship win

A Northumbria University student who overcame a life threatening disease as a teenager has been awarded a prestigious month-long scholarship to China.

Bekki Ramsay was diagnosed with leukaemia at the age of 14 but her passion for learning saw her still complete her GCSEs, despite undergoing chemotherapy treatment at the same time, achieving the grades required for a place on Northumbria's Fashion Communication degree course.

Now she has beaten off competition from more than 500 students across the

world to win the CRCC Asia Global Scholarship - a fully funded one-month internship program in Beijing.

The opportunity will combine third-year undergraduate Bekki's interest in travel and fashion and has the potential to lead to a variety of exciting career opportunities in the future.

The 22-year-old said: "I have always enjoyed visiting new places and experiencing new cultures and was looking for an opportunity which would allow me to do this while at the same time gain some experience of the world of work.

"Fashion marketing is something I am really passionate about but it is a very competitive industry and having real life work experience such as this will hopefully help me build some valuable connections.

"I've heard that previous scholarship winners have even been offered permanent jobs following their internships which would be my absolute dream so who knows where this could lead."

Bekki, who is originally from North Tyneside, believes her experience of battling cancer as a teenager has given her a determination to succeed. She said: "I have always loved education and learning and never wanted to let my illness stand in the way of pursuing my career ambitions – if anything I think it has made me even more focussed."

CRCC Asia specialises in providing internships in China, working with over 600 companies in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen to give students and graduates from across the world chance to gain professional work experience in an international setting.

The organisation's annual global scholarship attracts hundreds of applications, with Bekki undergoing a written application and telephone and video interviews before being told she had been awarded the 2017 prize.

Her scholarship will include a 30-day placement at a Beijing-based business, to be confirmed nearer the time, as well as accommodation and Mandarin lessons to ensure she gets the most out of her experience.

CRCC Asia's Europe General Manager Jason Kan said: "Bekki's application and interview demonstrated strong academic achievement and clear and tangible learning objectives about why she wanted to work in China. In addition, her personal story of overcoming leukaemia at the age of 14 was truly inspirational, and as such we felt she was a worthy winner."

Cat Glover, Senior Lecturer in Fashion Communication at Northumbria and Bekki's tutor, said her success was well deserved. She said: "Bekki is a strong student on our course and her creative instinct and strategic thinking has been evident in her PR, photographic and written work produced in response to academic modules. This is a fantastic opportunity for Bekki."

Bekki is expected to graduate at the start of July and will travel to Beijing to start her internship just days later.

Northumbria's School of Design offers a wide variety of courses covering Industrial, Fashion, Communication and Innovation Design. To find out more visit https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/northumbria-school-of-design/

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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