

14 March 2010

Dear Class of '55,

Huge U-shaped valleys carved into the mountains by ancient glaciers.
The Southern Alps of metamorphic schist rising along the length of the island like a backbone.
One of the Earth's remaining Quaternary glaciers nested between rugged peaks.
The active Alpine Fault shifting the island's underlying Pacific and Indo-Australian Plates.

With the assistance of your wonderful generosity, the sights of these remarkable geologic features have become a reality for me. For the financial support you graciously awarded me, significantly easing the means behind my off-campus field course in New Zealand, I thank you. Your aid has helped alleviate a portion of my concern for the course.

College is a time in life when students are presented with extraordinary opportunities, and I am very grateful Cornell provides such prospects by offering off-campus classes. In addition, the corresponding contributions from scholarship benefactors such as yourselves are equally as important, and appreciated. Before this class, I have never been out of the country. The chance to travel internationally while studying global geology in the field will remain one of my most memorable college experiences.

My geology course in New Zealand enabled me to discover knowledge in a manner quite unlike any course on campus and gave me an opportunity from which to grow as a student and as a geologist. The skills I acquired by working in the field and studying the physical, geologic terrain in person, versus through lecture and lab in the classroom, have deeply enhanced my understanding in this field of science. By having this background, I now feel more competent in and enthusiastic for my area of study. I expect this boost in confidence and dedication will assist in my upcoming geology courses at Cornell College as well as those at graduate school, and will even extend into my occupational success.



While in New Zealand, the course provided several scenarios unavailable through on-campus study. As a class we investigated unique terrain, determining the geological significance, and pieced field observations together to understand, in a broader context, the relationships of succinct geographical regions, the island of New Zealand as a whole, and global geologic activity. In numerous small-group, independent mapping projects, I practiced and perfected my geologic mapping skills. I now feel quite confident in acquiring field data and applying it to produce geological maps of a region. Being able to apply knowledge previously acquired in the classroom at Cornell as well as gain additional, locality-pertinent insight, my study of geology in New Zealand proved to be a remarkable and unforgettable experience. The intensive field work has certainly prepared me for future field research, including my field-based honors research thesis project that I will begin this summer in Curacao with Professor Ben Greenstein.

Once again, thank you. I appreciate all your support.

Sincerely,
Chelsea Korpanty, '11