

NINJA SKILLS

LEAD TO STUDY SUCCESS

Matiu Sollis

KĀI TAHU | KĀTI WAEWAE

I'm from the West Coast. I was born in Greymouth and grew up in Arahura, which is about twenty minutes south. Mum and dad lived in Arahura and my pouā and taua across the paddock.

I went to Hokitika Primary and Intermediate and then Christchurch Boys' High. I really loved school and pushing myself to achieve. I did art all through school as well as science, biology, chemistry, maths and English.

When I was on the West Coast I did martial arts and got my black belt when I was thirteen just as I left to go to high school. It taught me self-discipline, self-motivation and focus.

Light bulb moment

My decision to do medicine came about during a conversation with my aunty in her car. She asked me what I liked doing and I told her – food, exercise, Tae Kwon Do, art. She said it sounded like hauora and I should be a doctor. I just laughed, but then I saw the Careers Advisor at school and we looked at the Health Science Programme at Otago University. I decided to give it a go and if I liked it, maybe I could be a doctor. When I passed and got into medicine I couldn't believe it.

Kia Ora Hauora

I was in Year 12 when I came across Kia Ora Hauora during a Tāne Ora Conference in Blenheim. After that they kept in touch with me and hooked me up with resources to look for scholarships.

Handling stress as a student is huge. I remember at one point feeling really bogged down by everything so I went into Te Roopū Māori and I saw a counsellor who gave me some pragmatic advice. Having that tight whānau of other taurira Māori also helped me get through my second year in medical school.

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Aspirations

I'm currently applying to go home to the West Coast to do the Rural Medical Immersion Programme in my full fifth year. You apply and then they ballot you out to one of six rural centres in New Zealand – one of which is Greymouth. It's so important for me to go home and reconnect with the whenua and my people.



At the end of that year, I'll return to Christchurch and sit my final year as a trainee intern where we learn how to be a House Officer or a newly graduated doctor.

Top three study tips:

- Find a space that makes you feel good e.g. the top floor of a library with a mean view, looking out into a nice bit of open garden or greenery. Rather than the corner of a sterile room.
- Use colour, mind maps and pictures to help you remember your notes
- Exercise. Do yoga, stretch, go to the gym and then hit the library. Sitting down is depressing, it's like the new smoking and we sit so much.

Tips for applying for scholarships:

- Keep a diary and write down dates of when scholarship applications are due
- Put all forms and important documents such as bank deposit slips or papers signed by a Justice of the Peace into a folder so it's easy to find