

Third time a charm

Witana Petley ^{BPhy} | SOUND KNOWLEDGE & EXPERTISE IN PHYSIOTHERAPY

NGĀI TE RANGI

Noted for interviewing well, this Putaruru High School Old Boy finally realised his dream of becoming a physiotherapist

Kia Ora Hauora (KOH)

I registered with the Midland Kia Ora Hauora programme in 2014 when I first got into the School of Physiotherapy. Their scholarship help was great. The Tū Kahika scholarship through the University of Otago allowed me to study towards a health degree. It not only offered financial assistance towards my tuition fees and accommodation costs, but also helped me gain the necessary skills to study in Otago's Health Science First Year (HSFY) programme.

Scholarship Opportunities

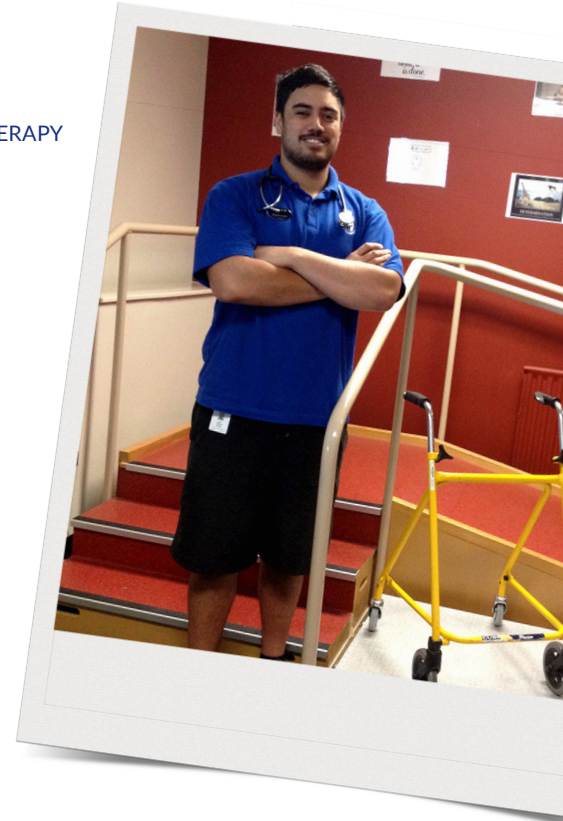
I applied for and received several scholarships that helped me financially and academically. The University of Otago Māori and Pacific Peoples' Entrance Scholarship helped with accommodation costs so I could focus on my study requirements in HSFY. I also received support from the Māori Health Workforce Development Unit and the School of Physiotherapy to attend conferences and be part of the Ambassador programme to promote the University and School of Physiotherapy to my high school in Putaruru.

The Rural Waikato Undergraduate Health Scholarship through the New Zealand Institute of Rural Health and the Hauora Māori scholarship for physiotherapy students allowed me to manage the difficulties of having several clinical placements in different parts of the country.

Support And Guidance

None of these financial opportunities would have been possible without the direct and indirect help of the many Māori student support services offered by the University of Otago. I owe every respect and acknowledgment to Te Huka Mātauraka and the Māori Health Workforce Development Unit who aided me in every academic need I had with regular tutorials and support groups.

“ I failed UE twice ”



High School Achievements

I grew up in Putaruru and I was a student who took pride in the way I presented myself and how well I played rugby instead of my studies. That did negatively impact my marks. I failed University Entrance twice (even when repeating 2nd year 7th Form) and ended up taking a gap year in Hamilton.

I went on a Level 4 bridging course for literacy at WINTEC in Hamilton, and during this time I successfully applied for the University of Otago Tū Kahika Scholarship, which prepares you for your first year of tertiary study in the all-important health science.

Fast forward four years and I successfully applied for the rotational physiotherapist role at Dunedin Hospital. I attribute this to the programme offered at the University of Otago School of Physiotherapy, which allowed me to have placements in the hospital.

Future Plans

For now, I just want to be a solid physiotherapist with sound knowledge and expertise and maybe shoot for my master's degree. But I have one goal and that is to return to the South Waikato and use every ounce of skill I have to help my community, whether it's in a health-related way or whether it's just a push to get more Māori interested in learning to become the best version of who they want to be.