



## About Otago

Mō Ōtākou

# Taking an exciting new leap is one student with a story of perseverance.

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Sean Prenter is getting ready to take on a sky dive to raise money for BIAO.

Taking an exciting new leap is one student with a story of perseverance.

Politics and Environmental Management student Sean Prenter's life was changed not long ago when an accident left him with a disability.

"Three years ago I fell 15 metres from a balcony. On that fateful day, I sustained my traumatic brain injury, now a proud part of who I am."

While a brain injury can cause various life-long challenges, this isn't holding Sean back as he prepares to sky dive in Auckland in late April to raise money for Brain Injury Association Otago (BIAO).

"A significant part of my journey with brain injuries has been the support of the BIAO. This service does an extraordinary job, straddling both community support and

advocacy. For individuals with brain injuries, this mahi has a profound impact on our lives, helping us to navigate the new world we find ourselves in.

“For me, BIAO ignited my passion for amplifying the voices of my disabled whānau. This began with me educating students at the Otago Medical School on my lived experience with brain injury. Fast forward three years and I am proud to represent the Otago Disabled Student's Association (ODSA) as Co-President, connecting and representing the disabled student community.”

ODSA linked Sean in with others experiencing life with a brain injury which he says was a big part in removing some of the isolation that comes with the territory.

“They had social events and quiz nights where you could meet others at various stages in their journey and it made things less lonely.

“I was in my first year of law when I had my accident. I had to cut down my workload to one paper per semester which meant I had to choose something else to study. Brain injuries present different challenges to other disabilities and taking it slow is important in those early days. Studying politics means I can study still learn about legal things I was interested in such as policy and research.”

Brain Injury Awareness Month finished at the end of March and Sean had spent time organising events to raise awareness with a friend who works for SkyDive, Auckland.

“He mentioned a deal they had going at the time and I thought it could create a cool opportunity to give back.”

Sean is getting ready to take the plunge on 20 April in Auckland. Donations in support of his jump and BIAO can be made to the Go Fund Me page set up for the event.

*Kōrero by Internal Communications Adviser, Chelsea McRae*