

Issue 3



# Te Aka Taurira

Inside:

A passion for medical equality  
Barriers to discovering tertiary life  
Surviving meningitis



# MENTAL HEALTH AT OTAGO

Tertiary Mental Health Day >  
Wellbeing at Otago



This year multiple departments got involved to host an event called At Your Service where students could learn more about services at the University which support mental health and wellbeing while studying.

Melanie Piri a Student Engagement Coordinator from Te Whare Tāwharau was a main organiser for the event.

"We decided to make the most of Tertiary Mental Health Day with a new event. The focus is on opening up a conversation about wellbeing. We don't want students to feel like they are on their own. There is an amazing community here that so many of them don't know they have access to."

Te Whare Tāwharau provides a service where students can drop by for support with incidents of sexual violence both recent and historic and talk to peer volunteers and trained social workers.

## Support Services at Otago:

- Social Impact Studio
- Mental Health and Wellbeing support
- Student Development
- Unipol
- Te Whare Tāwharau
- Student Health

## May News

### This issue:

Cover Image "Hoiho" by Oscar Thomas

- » Tertiary Mental Health Day
- » Sustainable Flat Hacks
- » A 127 year old tradition
- » Pics of the month
- » Changing medical inequality
- » Surviving Meningitis
- » Barriers to discovering tertiary life
- » Energy for the future

### In other news:



- » Prince of Wales Prize
- » Sophia Crestani Scholarship
- » The Teddy Bear Hospital
- » Ones to Watch: Sam Merton

# 127 year old tradition

Earlier this month the Dunedin campus hosted the comedy skit show, The Capping Show. It's the longest running student revue in the world. This year featured a Harry Potter parody theme and a new creative team.

Martha Teleiai was one of the film directors and said the show was a highlight of the year so far.

"It is such a cool event because it's written by students, produced by students and for a student audience. One thing I love about the show is that anyone can audition and you get to know people from across different degrees."

The entire show was made up of over 30 sketches and had an enthusiastic response from this year's audience.

Bachelor of Law and Arts (Politics) student Ruby Anderson co-directed the stage component of the 2021 show.

"The scripts were all written by our ensemble. Last year we had six months to work on it as COVID-19 restrictions postponed the show. This year we had two months from writing the show to putting it on stage."

Martha says it's been an experience she has loved.

"As a director you pour your heart and soul into your vision for the Capping Show. It came together as we planned and I couldn't be prouder."



"One thing I love about the show is that anyone can audition and you get to know people from across different degrees."



Food Waste Flat Hacks organisers Stephanie McLeod, Teilah Ferguson and Hannah Morgan.

To find out more on reducing food waste at home, visit [foodwaste-otago.org](http://foodwaste-otago.org)

## Food Waste Flat Hacks

Every year New Zealand homes throw away 86kg per household. We caught up with the organisers of the recent Food Waste Flat Hacks Market to bring you their top tips for reducing food waste in your flat.

- » Keep a night free to eat leftovers for dinner: thrown out leftovers is the biggest contributor to food waste in the country after bread.
- » Correct storage: make sure you cover your food over properly when storing it in the fridge. Food which isn't stored correctly won't last.
- » Keeping bread in the freezer: take slices out as you need it to avoid loaves going mouldy before they can be consumed.
- » Don't go to the supermarket hungry: hungry shoppers are more likely to impulse buy.
- » Plan your dinners: plan your week in advance and try to plan for meals that share ingredients.
- » Get rid of your peeler to prevent waste: the skin of your vegetables often have the most nutrients.
- » Be flexible with the best before: if it's an expiration date you can't be lenient but a "best before" is a guideline.



# PICS OF THE MONTH



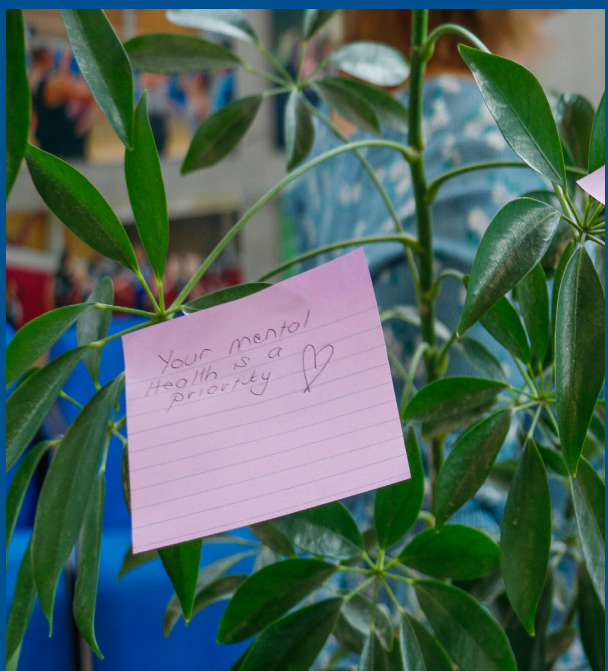
The Teddy Bear Hospital earlier this month



Relay for Life students raised more than their goal in a new record



Graduation ceremonies earlier this month featured bold fashion statements

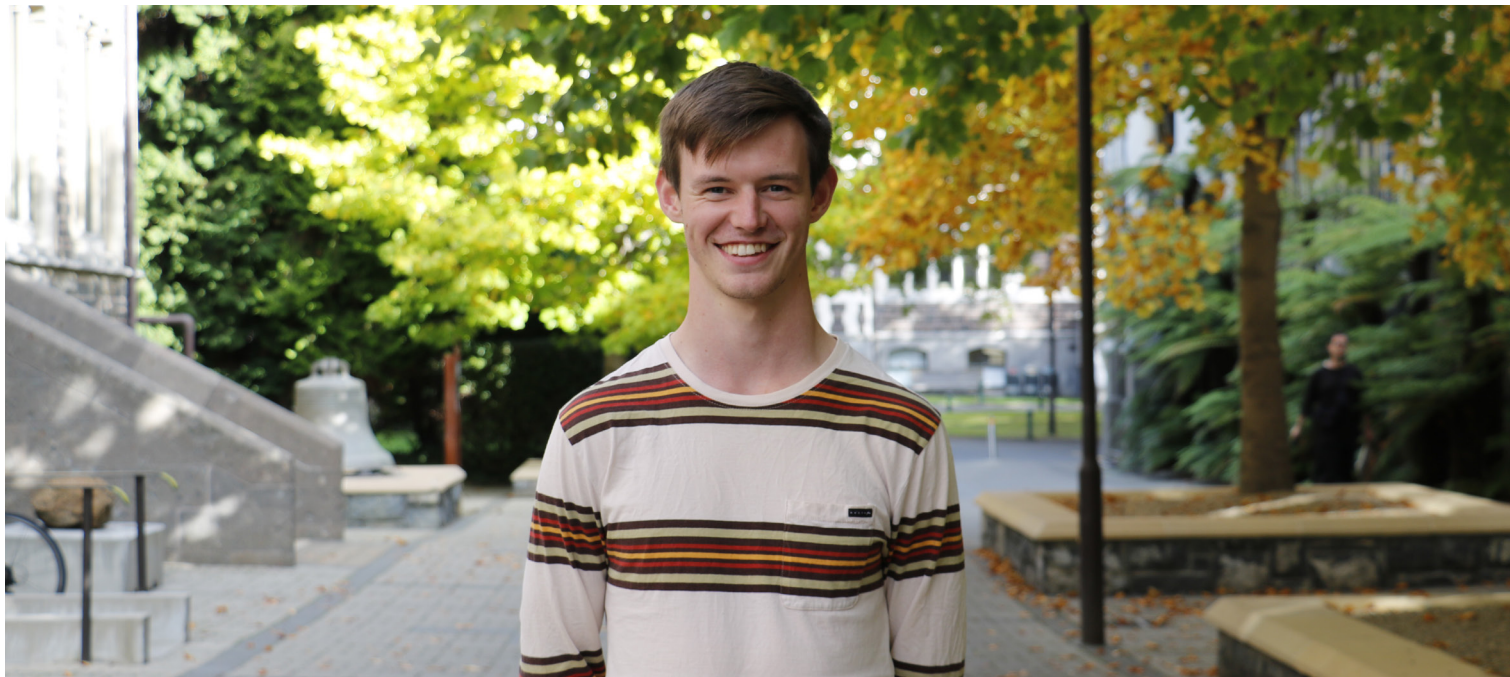


"At Your Service" - Tertiary Mental Health Day 2021

**Have an image to show off?**

Send it to:  
[communications@otago.ac.nz](mailto:communications@otago.ac.nz)





## “He had a 10% chance of survival.”

A 10 percent chance of survival was the only hope left for a student fighting for his life.

Michael Moncur was in his first year of his studies and living at Studholme College when a sudden illness took the otherwise healthy 18-year-old by surprise.

“Earlier that week I had been out playing rugby and kicked the winning goal against Arana,” the student boasts proudly. “A few days later I had a headache. I text a friend of mine who suffers from migraines to see if it might be something like that. The Retro Party was on that night and I let one of the Studholme College staff know that I wasn’t going to be there and went to bed.”

What Michael had wasn’t a headache, it was Meningococcal B and the following hours would be the most critical in saving the teenager’s life. Studholme College Deputy Warden Rachael Carson remembers the events like it was yesterday.

“When Michael told us that he wasn’t coming to the party I thought that was a bit strange for him. We kept an eye on him that evening and the following morning it became clear to the staff that he needed an ambulance.”

“During the wait for the ambulance he went downhill rapidly. He started vomiting and choking. Then he went yellow and rigid, his arms were fixed at right angles. By the time the paramedics arrived we had the defibrillator set up as we thought he might be dying in front of us.”

Rachael immediately speculated meningitis. A few weeks earlier another student at the college had been hospitalised by the infectious virus. The vaccine that most young people receive is important in the preventing certain strains of the virus but even then does not provide lifelong protection.

Michael has no recollection of what unfolded that morning and can only go on the words of the staff who were there that day. Cumberland College Warden Ziggy Lesa was one of those staff members.

“He didn’t have any spots like what you would expect to see. He was yellow and rigid and had a very high temperature. When we got him to the hospital we were told that he only had a 10 percent chance of survival. We were encouraged to have students prepare memories to pass on to his parents in case he passed overnight.”

By miracle chance, Michael survived. If it wasn’t for letting staff know that he was unwell Michael may not have.

“I messaged some people when I wasn’t well and that’s what saved me. You might think it’s a harmless headache but at least that way people are aware. I wouldn’t be here if I hadn’t told a few people that I was feeling unwell.”

Since his recovery, the 21-year-old has gone on to become a Sub-Warden at Studholme College which he is loving every moment of. He is now in his final year of his Bachelor of Applied Science (Physical Education and Geography) and is enjoying University life.

Michael was one of three students to fall ill with Meningococcal in 2018 and Michael’s advice to other students is simple but important.

“Get your vaccines, including your MMR one, everything. When you live in a hall or other communal environment it’s easy to pass illnesses on. If you’re feeling unwell you have to stay home and you also need to tell someone you trust that you’re under the weather so they can check in on you.”

For more information visit the [Ministry of Health website](#).

# CAREER TIPS FOR NEWBIES

May Career Tips

My Career Space

What does it really mean to be an employable graduate? In short, employability is about possessing the skills, attributes and attitude that will help you secure employment and thrive in the role.

The team at the Career Development Centre have a new tool available to students to help you make sure you're ready for the professional world from securing an interview to succeeding in your chosen field.

Access to the site is free for students using your student login details. Benefits include:

- CV building tool
- Customised interview practise
- Advice on finding the perfect job
- International job search
- Employability assessment
- Professional development courses and e-Learning

For more information, visit Otago [My Career Space](#).

To find out more from students who have used the tool, read the full story at [Te Aka Tauria](#).



## The future of energy

Bachelor of Science (Honours) student Aleida Powell has been using her studies to contribute to wider research which impacts her community.

"Over summer I did a summer studentship with Aurora Energy. I worked with them to investigate how Electric Kiwi student customers in the North Dunedin region impact the local network."

Electric Kiwi offer customers a daily hour of free power for customers which can be scheduled for any off-peak time each day.

"Peak electricity is expensive and less sustainable so using power off-peak should be encouraged. What's happened though is by moving customers off the peaks they've created new ones."

"It's been cool to be helping with this research as a current student. It affects students so I think it's important to have us involved."

"Being wise with energy isn't only the amount of time you use electricity for but also the times when people use it. If we all need it at the same time then things such as fossil fuels are required to meet demand."

"This is how we go about creating sustainable and efficient energy practises. Lower carbon emission in the future comes down to how we use our energy."





## “The tragic reality of ethnic health inequality really hit home for me.”

Sophie Papalīi is the newest student representative on the Otago Medical School Academic Board.

A trainee intern from Porirua, Sophie is of Samoan, Māori and New Zealand European descent along with affiliations to the Ngāti Whātua and Ngāpuhi iwi.

Outside of Medicine Sophie is also a busy Mum to three sons who are aged 11, 8 and 5.

“After having children I really didn't think becoming a doctor was a possibility. My husband Fau knew it was a dream of mine so encouraged me to go for it. I was also motivated by the example of my incredible mum. She became a lawyer after having us kids and although this was difficult she excelled in her studies.”

“The final push to apply for medical school came in 2015 after I witnessed my Dad have a cardiac arrest. Thankfully he survived but the tragic reality of ethnic health inequalities really hit home for me.”

“I absolutely love medicine with a passion and being a doctor is the only job in the whole world I would ever want to do. My children are also very proud of me and I'm happy to have set a good example for them.”

For other students looking to head down the medicine avenue, Sophie has some words of wisdom to express.

“Don't be deterred by obstacles in front of you. You can overcome those and we need doctors who come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and life experiences. This will allow the medical workforce to best reflect and therefore serve the New Zealand population.”

In 2019 Tane Whitehead a then Year 13 student at a Taranaki High School was thinking about university but had not yet decided where to pursue his studies. Like many students from small North Island towns, a trip to Dunedin was an unlikely event. Tane was a recipient of the Poutama Scholarship which helps students make the trip to Hands-On at Otago.

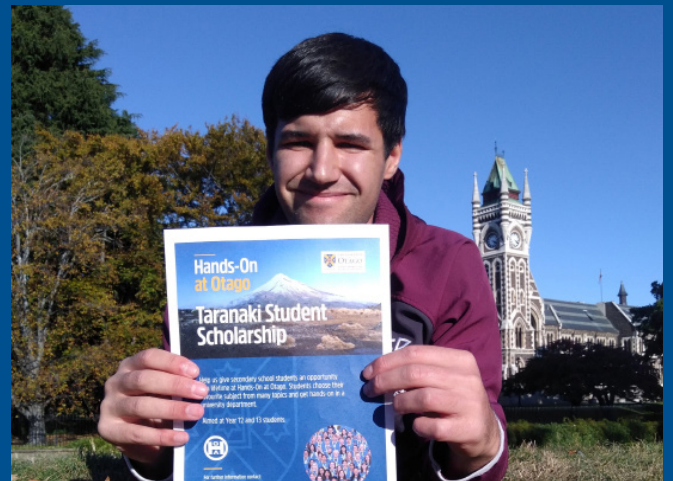
“Without the scholarship I wouldn't have been able to make it. I did Physiology for the week and it helped me to realise this was what I wanted for my future.”

Once Tane had settled into his new life in Dunedin he spoke with Schools' Liaison Officer Prajesh Chhanabhai about setting up a scholarship to help other students like himself experience Hands-On at Otago. So far three businesses have come on board for the scholarship.

“The focus is on students who are heading into year 13 in the Taranaki region and come from a low-decile school,” Tane says.

“We plan to get the first scholarship student down in January and the long-term goal is to expand this to have scholarships for other regions too. I hope it will help other students to see what University life looks like and think about the kind of career they might want when they leave school.”

Tane looks forward to seeing the first recipient of the scholarship make the trip in early 2022 and already has plans to get more businesses on board for the future.



## “Young people sometimes miss out because they think university is just for the academic kids but I'd like them to see that's not the case and give it a chance.”

# KEY DATES & EVENTS

## June | Piripi

04	Lectures end before mid-year examinations
07	Queen's Birthday - Public Holiday
09	Semester 1 examinations begin
23	Semester 1 examinations end

## July | Hōngongoi

01	Applications open for most entrance scholarships for 2022
12	Semester 2 begins
16	Last day to add semester 2 papers (5pm deadline)
30	Last day to delete semester 2 papers with refund of fees (5pm deadline)

## Regular Events

	Career Development Centre Events and Career Expos
	The Health Sciences First Year Integrated Context Lecture Series (ICLS)
	Diversion Day