

CHALLENGES MAKING LIFE INTERESTING

Wiremu McFater ^{MBChB}

GENERAL SURGEON

I tupu ake ahau ki Tamaki no Wanganui. E mahi ana ahau kei Hohipera Middlemore, he rata ahau. I went to Penrose High School things change and it's now One Tree Hill College.

The challenge

I chose medicine because I saw it as a challenge, where I'd never be bored. To be a doctor looked like a dynamic job, one that offered me lots of options.

First year

First year was tough, because it's so competitive. You have to pass 70% or more of your Health Science papers. People say it's easier for Māori to get in but at the end of the day, you still need to show that you're academically strong enough to be a doctor.

My first year, I didn't do well in one of my tests. It knocked me. I thought if I'm not doing well in that test I might not get in. I talked to one of my mates about giving up. He took me for a feed, we sat down and talked about it. After that I thought 'I can do this.' Support and friendship makes a difference.

Surround yourself with like-minded people. who will help you when you get to the end of the year.

Kia Ora Hauora Programme

I was already in Med. School and Kia Ora Hauora programme helped with scholarships information/funding and events. They were the major sponsor for our annual wānanga which brings about 70 Māori medical students together from all over the country.

Like many of the Māori students we talked to secondary students about getting into health. KOH have online resources that we would utilise. Online clips to play to the students so they could experience health professions from a Māori perspective.

On the job

When you finish, you become a house surgeon or a house officer. There's a lot of work on the Wards, following your team around, taking notes, following up on jobs, making sure the patient is okay.

Then you progress to being a Registrar, where you're working within a specialty, say surgery, orthopedics maybe general medicine. I was a Surgical Registrar and now I'm doing research. The reason I did that was because of the way the medical profession is progressing. I need to understand the research so I can make the best possible decisions for my patients.

Whānau

My older brother did a teaching degree first, and now, he's about to become a doctor. Then my Mum, she's a podiatrist and my old man, he's a teacher.

Best part of the job

At the end of the day, especially when you're involved in a big operation you leave the hospital feeling good about what you do. It's good to know that every day you help someone. It's a challenge I'm glad I took on, it makes life interesting.



“Support and friendship makes a difference”