



Collegiate Life Annual Report 2025



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Contents

Foreword	3
Collegiate Communities	4
192 Castle College Te Kāreti o Castle	4
Aquinas College Te Kāreti o Akuinahi	6
Arana College Te Whare o Hato Rāwiri	9
Carrington College Te Kāreti o Carrington	11
Caroline Freeman College Te Kāreti o Caroline Freeman	13
Cumberland College Te Kāreti o Cumberland	15
Hayward College Te Kāreti o Hayward	17
Knox College Te Kāreti o Knox	19
Salmond College Te Kāreti o Salmond	22
Selwyn College Te Kāreti o Selwyn	25
St Margaret's College Te Kāreti o Makere Tapu	27
Studholme College Te Kāreti o Studholme	29
Te Whare Whakamaru o Te Rangihīroa	32
University College Te Kāreti o Te Whare Wānaka	34
University Flats Ngā Whare Riti o te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo	36
College Catering	38
Homestay	39
Inter-College Competition	41
Sustainability	44
Uniprint	45



Foreword

2025 was another very enjoyable year in our residential college system. The taura (students) were fantastic and well engaged in all aspects of college life. The Inter-College Competition (ICC) was once again at its best and was topped off with the return of the ICC Gala Awards Dinner held in late September at the Auahi Ora student lounge on campus. This outstanding event was attended by both the Vice Chancellor, Hon Grant Robertson and the University Council Chancellor, Trish Oakley (herself a proud alumnus of Studholme College).

The year started with a new leader for Hayward and 192 Castle Colleges (Luke Lovegrove) as well as familiar and experienced faces now leading Aquinas College (Amber Robertson) and Caroline Freeman College (Christina Watson-Mills). These opportunities followed the retirement of long serving wardens Chris Addington and Rosemary Tarbotton. Over the summer break Cumberland College was closed and underwent stage one of its three-year compliance upgrade project. This saw a significant amount of compliance work undertaken in a compressed timeframe. At other colleges there were new roofs, kitchen upgrades, fire compliance enhancements and a whole host of other property maintenance and capital works that improved and developed a number of colleges over the summertime.



We were delighted to welcome new recruitments for several vacant Deputy Warden / Tautiaki Piki and Assistant Wardens/Tautiaki Kaiāwhina positions across the colleges. The calibre and experience of these new leaders is exceptional, and their potential contribution over the coming years will be both impactful and exciting — certainly, something worth watching.

Towards the end of the year Ruben Katigbak returned to lead Arana College having served in the role of Senior Warden for two years. Ruben did an awesome job in that role and carries with him my personal thanks and gratitude for his most capable assistance. A special mention for Johnny Nu'u who lead Arana for its reopening and in 2025, and Liz Bergantino Mitu who was Acting Warden at Studholme College for the year.

Dr Sean McCallaghan was appointed late in the year as the new permanent Senior Warden of Colleges to commence that role at the start of 2026. Dr McCallaghan offers extensive international experience from serving in a comparable role in South Africa.

Union and College Catering was awarded 2 out of 3 stars from Food Made Good, a global food process and sustainability award. This was an unprecedented achievement for an institution to get even one star let alone two in their first year. An awesome achievement by our catering team. The Union catering team on campus continued to trial pop-up food offerings in the Link, bringing a variety of interesting ethnic cuisines to enrich the campus experience for staff, students, and visitors alike.

Uniprint underwent a leadership change with the retirement of the long serving Ian Hobson. Martin Jones held the fort as acting General Manager until the new GM, Keith Newdick, was appointed. Keith came from a similar role at the University of Queensland.

All permanent and key staff completed Health and Safety induction and training, and all key college staff undertook first aid and fire warden training as part of our ongoing commitment to keeping our taura and kaimahi (staff) safe and well.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the passing of Andy Walne, former Warden of Caroline Freeman College and University College, who also served as Acting Senior Warden for a year.

James Lindsay JP
Director Campus & Collegiate Life Services

Collegiate Communities



192 Castle College | *Te Kāreti o Castle* *Luke Lovegrove - Warden/Tautiaki*

192 Castle College charged into 2025 with a fresh Warden, a swift change of staff and a new, two college model. This year being the first where 192 Castle College and Hayward College joined hands as siblings. Gamely, the staff and residents met the challenges presenting from this exciting turnaround and by so doing highlighted some of their best qualities.

Supported by an excellent Kaiāwhina team, 192's community of scholars, hailing from all corners of the earth, formed tightly bound friendships and navigated their first year of academic acquisition with dogged determination, warmth and intelligence.

192's Study Centre was used well throughout the day and night, however, the cohort's academic focus did not detract from their social life. This Jack Russell of Colleges snapped at the heels of competitive titans, always present at the ICC competitions worrying the opposition and, on occasion, returning home with some big wins, most notably first place in Badminton.

2025 also saw the cohort of 192 sharing space with Hayward College by combining their social and cultural events. The two Student Committees working well together to provide an excellent 'Under a Million Lanterns' themed ball at the University's Auahi Ora venue which was a great success and a truly memorable occasion for all that attended.



Hayden Marshall, 192's Student Committee President for 2025, proudly noted in his farewell to the cohort that whatever they were doing throughout the year 192's residents, "all stuck together and had the time of their lives."



On Sport

As a first year Kaiāwhina, it was awesome to experience my team and to see the competitive nature and wholesome cheers of the College. Our spirit spurred us on to do our best with each competition. This was evident when our teams placed first in the men's competitive division for badminton and first in the men's pool competition in second semester. Further, our debating team were worthy opponents against Carrington College's winning streak coming in a mighty 2nd in the finals. 192 Castle College is made of the strong stuff for sure!

Personal Highlights

Our first formal dinner themed International allowed our residents to explore the different tastes and textures of food inspired by a selection of global dishes. The last formal dinner was warmer and more meaningful as it was one last time to gather around as a college. As the WHOSCO Awards were announced, the atmosphere became one of laughter and I looked on with pride at how far our residents had come in just a year. How close they had become with their peers and knowing our College was a source of friendship and cheer.

Overall, we had an amazing cohort of residents in 2025. The first-year residents had so much to give. What an experience it was to see them giving new things a go, and what an honour to be included in their updates, their achievements and life aspirations.





Aquinas College | Te Kāreti o Akuinahi

Amber Robertson - Warden/Tautiaki

“Kotahi te aho ka whati, ki te kāpuia e kore e whati”

One strand of flax is easy to break, but many strands together will stand strong.

This whakatauki is what best represents 2025 at Aquinas. With a new team arriving bit by bit in the first few months, we are very grateful to have built strong connections with our incoming taura despite the challenges of being new faces in new spaces- navigating a lot of unknowns. Very much like an incoming rangatahi, we were all a bit homesick and had to adapt together, and with the help of some great friends, we had a ripper year!

Aquinas College was proudly involved in a wide range of intercollege events this year, showcasing the talent, enthusiasm, and competitive spirit of our residents. Students participated in numerous sporting competitions including volleyball, netball, badminton, and Ki o Rahi, as well as a series of cultural and recreational events such as board-game night, quiz nights, and the intercollege art competition.

The year culminated in the Cultural Performance Evening at the end of Semester One, where our residents represented Aquinas with creativity and pride. A particular highlight was the outstanding achievement of two Aquinas residents who placed first and second in separate arts categories, reflecting the diverse strengths and vibrant cultural presence within our community.



Throughout the year, Aquinas College delivered a vibrant and diverse program of events that brought our community together and strengthened the unique culture of the College. We kicked off with a lively Orientation period, featuring classics such as College Sports Day and the ever-popular Toga Night, both of which helped new residents settle in and feel part of the Aquinas whānau from day one.



As the year progressed, students enjoyed a range of creative and memorable events, including the high-energy Food Fear Factor challenge and the classy Gatsby Gala, each contributing to an engaging, supportive, and memorable residential experience. These events not only entertained but also fostered connection, belonging, and lasting memories for all who took part.

One of our last events of the year was the infamous “AQ gut buster” which was in its 20th year and although the weather was wet and windy, it didn’t stop competitors from other colleges coming to compete. It was a great show of support for an event that has been unique to Aquinas College since 2005.

Our End of Year Awards Dinner was a standout occasion that beautifully capped off the year at Aquinas College. Residents were treated to an exceptional meal, with the kamahi delivering

a menu that was widely praised for both its quality and presentation. As impressive as the food was, it was the company that elevated the evening—taura and kaimahi came together to celebrate the friendships, teamwork, and resilience that defined the year.

The awards segment of the night was a highlight, with each category thoughtfully presented to acknowledge the diverse contributions residents made to college life. Our major awards carried particular significance, recognising individuals who consistently demonstrated leadership, positivity, service, and commitment to the Aquinas spirit. Overall, the event not only celebrated success but also reinforced the strong sense of belonging and pride that makes Aquinas College unique.

Rosemary Tarbotton retired from the Tautiaki role in early January, and Amber Robertson arrived in the role at the end of January. Luke Lovegrove, the Aquinas Deputy left for Hayward College and Mike Mata’afa filled his spot soon after. Long standing Assistant Warden Tim Cossens moved to Auckland in January, and we didn’t fill his position immediately. Pip Falloon joined Luke at Hayward in March, and Calum Stewart became our new administrator. “Ka mate kāinga tahi, ka ora kāinga rua” When one home is lost, another is found, highlighting that endings can lead to new beginnings.

We extend a big thanks to Stewart Noguer-Blue and Dasha Joseph Fernandez for diversifying their roles to jump in to help us to fill the gaps. We are also grateful for our North Star friends who always gave on-call support. Lastly, we were super excited to welcome Kalani Rawlinson in November as our permanent Tautiaki- Kaiāwhina/ Assistant Warden. Look out 2026!



Community Award Winners

Cullen Fagan & Brook Nilsen



Cullen was the recipient of the AQ Community Award for his outstanding contribution to the AQ community, always being positive and was heavily involved in the intercollege events as well as AQ events. We wish him the best of luck for the rest of his tertiary journey here at Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka.



Brooke was awarded the Cultural Award for her contribution to both AQ in-house events, Intercollege events and was also a part of the Te Roopu Māori cultural group. Brooke was always willing to give anything a go, and she was always doing it with a smile on her face.





Arana College | *Te Whare o Hato Rāwiri* *Johnny Nu'u - Warden/Tautiaki*

What an amazing 2025 it has been for Arana College. The re-opening marked a return to the collegial scene that was sorely missed for a year. Orientation Week has always been a raw mix of different ways taura can settle into their new space. In the accurate words of our co-presidents "O-Week kicked things off hard, and when we say hard, we mean too hard." The fun and frivolity that ensued over the year was poignantly set up through those first few weeks. Sports Day was the first reminder for all collegians that Arana was back! Our 2025 taura would say that Arana brought some real main character energy.

As the first semester rolled on, we rolled out the red carpet for one of Arana's tried and true occasions, the Oscars. It was an opportunity to get glammed up and shine the limelight on some of our more light-hearted moments from the early part of the year.



"The real fun came during the acceptance speeches. A few people were a little tipsy, which led to the occasional slurred word or forgotten line, but it only made them more entertaining. Little thank-yous, random shoutouts, and the occasional stumble had everyone laughing, proving that while we could clean up nicely, we could still have a good time doing it." – Co-presidents

It is in these early occasions and moments that really make collegial life special. Our Arana taura really giving things a go and getting involved, having a laugh and enjoying each other's company. These special memories are what foster and strengthen those friendships and connections.



We set the competitive foundation with our 'Tuesday Night Sports' inter-floor competition. Needless to say that the frocks and costumes were more exciting than the games themselves. Congratulations to Rawiri 2 for taking it out.

We participated in all but one of the Inter-College Competitions. We walked away with Ki O Rahi trophy and the Women's Netball. Not a bad way to kickstart our return to College competitions. With that being said, a real highlight for us was the Friday Friendlies. This is where we challenged individual colleges to some friendly competition outside of ICC events.

This included hockey, indoor cricket and Battle of the Bands. Hockey, in particular, was an exciting night out on the turf! We walked away with some stunning successes, but more importantly the rallying behind the teams and the vocal support was something that will be treasured for years to come. There was also a sighting of a duck involved in many of our sporting and social events.



We cannot reach the end of the year without a quick shoutout to all our performers for the annual Arana drag race. 2025 revealed a bit too much and also saw HUGE! Try to bring sexy back (probably should have stayed in 2006).

For our kaimahi (staff), it was a welcomed return to something familiar, something that was needed and could not be delayed any further. Through some hard work and effort, we managed to keep our whare clean, keep taurira warm, provide kai throughout the year and share in the experience of Arana College 2025. We did it because we love what we do and have a deep care for Arana College.



It is to this end we extend gratitude to all those that were involved with our Arana College 2025 year. Thank you for always being kind, saying hello, hyping up our DJ ambitions and letting us be everything and anything we wanted to be or try this year! Go well to all our 2025 taurira. All in all, it's been a year of highs, hangovers, and perhaps a bit of study. From outrageous O Week allegations to end of year dinner delights, we've laughed, made new friendships and continued the legacy of Arana College. Here's to a year we'll never forget and to the stories we'll definitely deny ever happened.



Carrington College | *Te Kāreti o Carrington*

Ali Norton - Warden/Tautiaki

The year 2025 was extra special for Carrington, as our beloved college turned 80!!

Our taura quickly embraced the Carrington spirit on Sports Day, rocking their 80th t-shirts with pride as our mascot, Irwin, cheered on our newly minted Crocodiles. Their good cheer continued into our whānau group competition, where they formed new bonds and happily dressed in their assigned team colours (hello, fluorescent pink!) to play dodgeball on the tennis court.

Our love of sports and games continued throughout the year, as we started a new tradition of 'Friday Night Sport' (which could be volleyball, spotlight, sardines or video games depending on the weather and vibes) and entered teams in the Inter-College Competitions. Adding to an already historic year for Carrington, our Men's Competitive Basketball team – the 'Dunkin' Donuts' – made it to the final for the first time in ICC history, missing out on glory by just five points. We also loved our games and quizzes, starting a 'Social Club' to play board games with hot choccy, hosted quiz nights and finished 4th in ICC games overall.

However, we wouldn't be Carrington College without bringing up our ICC cultural win for the 600th time (according to the ICC final stat cards), with a first-place win overall and six wins in total across Literary Arts, Visual Arts, 48 Hour Film and Debating. Our winning streak continued against our sister college, Arana, as we claimed both the Stuart Shield and the King's Cup.

We embraced Carry Clubs this year, with our enthusiastic Kaiāwhina Whare team running book club, Queeringtons, knitting club, gaming club, Goodnight and Good Sleep Society (smores and bedtime stories), choir, baking club and art club. Running Club, sadly, did not run, but we did run many laps at Relay for Life, with two of our Kaiāwhina raising funds with the promise of a bleach and tone of their hair – posted on Tik Tok, of course. We were delighted to capture the Spirit Award at Relay for Life once again!





Art Club in particular really popped off in 2025, working in conjunction with our talented Ball Committee to create decorations for our Interstellar theme, including painted lantern planets, star garlands and a huge shooting star (which was stolen in a Carry heist at 4am, but recovered again in the morning). Although the Ball is always the shining star of the year, we also hosted two Carry Raves with great themes (a hoedown and 90s dress up). As a result, we now own too many cowboy hats and somehow still seem to be finding bits of hay throughout the college!

To celebrate our 80th birthday, we hosted a carnival day on perhaps the hottest day of the year in Semester 2. Our beautiful choir opened the ceremony, and our college band 'Monkey Do' played for the entire event. The day was stunning, with bouncy castles, candy floss, a popcorn machine and lots of party foods for our residents to enjoy.

Other notable events included our infamous 'CarryVision' song competition where the 'Health Sci Musical' performance easily took out first place with a funny and heartfelt song about finding yourself at uni. We also hosted a very successful open mic night that went on for so long, the residents sadly had to be told to stop karaoke so we could all finish work for the night. Our Senior Staff and Kaiāwhina Whare team shed tears at our Wine and Cheese goodbye dinner in October, as we thanked our staff and residents for being part of the 2025 cohort. We had a wonderful year and wish all of our taura the very best for their bright futures – we hope you loved being a part of Te Kāreti o Carrington as much as we loved having you!

Resident Profiles:

Sarah Yeo & Jed Alcayde



We could not choose between these two exceptional residents, who jointly received our Magda Marx Atawhai Award for 2025 for embodying the Carrington values of atawhai, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga. Sarah and Jed both came to Te Kāreti o Carrington from Christchurch to study Health Sciences First Year as many of our residents do. Sarah was involved in so much at the college it was hard for her to pick a favourite memory, but she said that the Health Sci Musical performance

for CarryVision (which Jed was also in) came out on top. (She especially enjoyed beating the Kaiāwhina team!) Sarah's highlights of the year were the Mid-Winter Christmas dinner, art club, book club and Goodnight and Good Sleep Society, being on the Ball Committee, karaoke night (where she learned the worm) and surviving exams.

Jed was always keen to join in with whatever was happening around the college and to lend a helping hand wherever needed. Jed placed second in the Visual Arts Competition with his exceptional photography, and his favourite memory of Carrington was a midnight chat with a friend outside of Jenkins where he was convinced to ask out "the pretty girl downstairs". His Carrington highlight reel included: midnight walk #2, singing (off key), tiramisu and beating expert mode in Minesweeper. Sarah is currently studying a BSc majoring in ecology and minoring in aquaculture and fisheries, and Jed is currently studying Physiotherapy. We thank them for all of the joy they brought to our whare in 2025!



Caroline Freeman College | *Te Kāreti o Caroline Freeman* *Christina Watson-Mills - Warden/Tautiaki*

This year marked an important chapter for Caroline Freeman. We celebrated our 25th anniversary, welcomed new colleagues, and farewelled others, all while reinforcing the community culture that is built on collaboration, reciprocity, and support.

Our namesake, Caroline Freeman, left us with a remarkable legacy. To honour her and mark our milestone birthday, we adopted the kea as our symbol. Known for its intelligence, curiosity, and resilience, the kea embodies our willingness to explore new ideas, adapt to change, and support one another in challenging environments. It reflects the spirit we've shown throughout the year and the mindset we carry into the years ahead.



Our residents have continued to bring vibrancy and energy to life at Caroline Freeman. Orientation Week was a highlight, and the offering of a rich variety of events and activities throughout the year were designed to help everyone feel a sense of belonging within our community.

With the beginning of lectures, our academic support programme came into play. Designed to enhance learning beyond the lecture theatre, through subject specific reviews, clarification sessions, and general academic guidance, residents strengthened their knowledge and built confidence to thrive on campus.

With the beginning of lectures, our academic support



Participation in co-curricular activities remained high. Our Māori Pasifika performance group, joined by our North Star friends at Aquinas, delivered unforgettable performances that showcased our passion and talent. Residents also contributed to the wider community, including a strong showing at Relay For Life, demonstrating the same spirit of commitment and community that defines life at Caroline Freeman.



Whether in tutorial spaces, the library, courtyards, or any of our many indoor or outdoor spaces, our residents consistently embraced opportunities to learn, connect, and support each other bringing the kea spirit to life every day. 2025 has been an exciting year for Caroline Freeman, with countless highlights and memories. We're a community that's stronger and more vibrant than ever.

Kaiāwhina Whare Profile

Jonty Robertson

Kia ora, I'm Jonty Robertson

Coming from Invercargill, I wanted a college with a strong sense of community, a place to truly feel at home and Caroline Freeman offered me that and more in my first year of study. Caroline Freeman isn't just somewhere you live; it's somewhere you belong. So it was a natural choice to come back and work here to help create the same sense of support for others new to Otago.

Being a Kaiāwhina Whare has been incredible. I've met so many people, broadened my horizons, and organised or taken part in events that give the college true Caroline Freeman energy. The relaxed, friendly atmosphere makes every day enjoyable, whether I'm helping someone find support, joining in activities, or just being a familiar presence on duty, it's great to know I am contributing to making people feel seen and heard.

Having recently graduated with a BSc in Psychology, I'm about to begin my post graduate studies and thrilled to return in 2026. Entering my third year as a Kaiāwhina Whare, I'm committed to supporting, encouraging and empowering taura in the Caroline Freeman community so they too can make the most of their opportunities.





Cumberland College | *Te Kāreti o Cumberland*

Luke Morrison - Warden/Tautiaki

Cumberland College 2025 was a year of new friendships, new learning, new challenges, and a lot of fun. The year started with meet and greet activities on the tennis court on the first evening and a formal welcome with mihi whakatau on a sweltering Cumberland tennis court the following afternoon. Over the ensuing week residents got to know each other through a College party, sports day, pre-toga party, paint and sip event, inter-floor volleyball and a relaxed end to the week with the Cumberland-Hayward-192 Castle College carnival on the lawn between Hayward and Cumberland. The positive vibes of the 2025 cohort were obvious right from the start of the year.



Resident participation continued throughout the year. Cumberland participated in most 2025 inter-college events, with placings in kī-o-rahi, netball, puzzle-mania, football, touch rugby and wildcard sports. Other events in which our residents participated included such diverse activities as waka ama, debating, volleyball, basketball, badminton and the Big Sing. A highlight of the 2025 intercollege programme was our Māori and Pasifika performance at the Cultural Performance evening. This was the first time in many years that Cumberland has entered a performance in its own right. The group were committed, practiced hard, and produced a confident and vibrant performance.



We are very proud of two of our 2025 Kaiāwhina Whare, Olive Pearce and Bri Bold, and a number of former residents, who won awards at the 2025 University Blues and Golds Awards. 2025 saw a revitalised floor wars competition, with a range of activities including volleyball, tik tok video making, puzzle making, pool competition, dodgeball, chicken nugget choco milk challenge and talent quest.

The annual Cumberland v Campus Watch tug of war was once again held on the Cumberland court followed by Campus Watch cooking up a barbecue, and a couple of one-off events against Arana College were enjoyed by all who took part with the honours shared apiece (Cumberland winning indoor cricket but not the hockey). During the year we had a couple of formal dinners, and in particular our Midwinter Christmas Dinner at the start of semester two was an evening enjoyed by all. There were some theme dinners along the way including Halloween. Regular



Thursday night pancakes provided by members of Grace Bible Church were consistently popular with residents, as were the periodic evening snacks.

Throughout the year there were a number of active groups within the College, in particular the Cumby runners. From the peaks of Flagstaff and Mount Cargill to the beaches of St Clair and St Kilda, they really ran through the sights of Dunedin. A large number of the Cumby runners, along with other residents, completed the Dunedin marathon in September. Other groups included the Cumby book club, Cumby golfers and Cumby surfers. April was Earth Month which residents supported with activities ranging from sunrise beach trips to bottle painting. This was followed by a number of events in May for Pink Month to support the Breast Cancer Foundation, where residents took part in activities including cookie and cupcake decorating, friendship bracelet making, bingo and the Breast Cancer Foundation Breakfast. Wellbeing month saw sunset watching and other activities, and a perennial favourite that once again took place was canine cuddles. The College Ball was held on site and as always was a highlight of the year. Many residents identified it as their most memorable memory of their time at Cumberland. The year finished with a formal dinner and the presentation of numerous awards, including the prestigious Ryan Adamson Resident of the Year Award.



Cumberland is well known for its mix of both social and academic pursuits, and once again, our residents knuckled down when they needed to and produced some excellent academic results. We celebrated academic success early in semester two with our Academic Achievers function, with awards presented to our most academically successful semester one students by the Vice-Chancellor, the Honourable Grant Robertson. Our 2024 residents had been the most academically successful for many years, and the 2025 cohort followed this up with similar levels of success. As soon as the residents departed, renovators moved in. Over the next three summers considerable refurbishment work will be undertaken at Cumberland. While the focus is on safety including installing sprinklers in the Castle Wing and enhanced fire safety, there will also be upgrades of all bathrooms, two new mini laundries, some new kitchenettes, and refreshing of bedrooms, to enable Cumberland to continue to be able to offer its unique experience to incoming residents for years to come.

Ryan Adamson Resident of the Year

Puna Hihi

This year's recipient of the Ryan Adamson Resident of the Year Award was Puna Hihi, who came to Cumberland from Gisborne Boys' High School with the assistance of a Māori Entrance Scholarship. Puna embodied the Cumberland spirit, as someone who was always friendly to residents and staff alike; showed genuine care and manaakitanga for other people and was known to everyone. An example of his mana within the College was him being chosen to lead the Karakia at Midwinter formal dinner, an honour usually given to staff. Puna participated in the full range of College activities and was a regular participant and supporter in intercollege sports events. He was a key member of our Māori and Pasifika performance group in the Intercollege Cultural Performance evening, and performed at our own Cumby's Got Talent evening. Outside of the College, Puna spent the year committed to his rugby, playing premier grade rugby and representing his club in the Dunedin Premier final, and he was one of two Cumberland residents selected for the Otago under 19 representative men's rugby team.





Hayward College | *Te Kāreti o Hayward* *Luke Lovegrove - Warden/Tautiaki*

In 2025, Hayward College saw a long serving Deputy return as the Tautiaki | College Warden. The appointment also brought a new staffing model where Hayward College and 192 College would be managed by one leadership team.

As always, the warm, open plan spaces leading on from Hayward's reception on the ground floor, helped residents to quickly relax and feel at home in their new home. However, it was the Kaiāwhina team of 2025 and their dedication to all aspects of their work which was instrumental in the smooth running of the College.

Their support rewarded our Taura with an exceptional first year experience both academically and socially. The residents of 2025 were an extremely respectful cohesive community. Their attention to study was notable and their capacity for a balanced social life was apparent but not unfettered. The community was led by an effective Student Committee who helped with the establishment of community guidelines and how best to approach college events so they would better meet resident expectations.



The College was lucky too, to have a superb Tautiaki Kaiāwhina | Assistant Warden with a great love for the outdoors allowing Hayward to offer our Taura an affordable Ski Trip. Participants were there to ski, get to know each other and enjoy the outdoors. It was a trip designed to have everyone pulling their weight – cooking, cleaning, carrying the heavy stuff so that on their return the experience was much more than just skiing but an experience where everyone could grow stronger within a community and know how to stand within it.

Community, Integrity and Manaakitanga were the guiding principles of 2025, and it is with pride that we remember 2025's marvellous cohort having seen it flourish as a result.

Hayward Prize Receptient

Josie Bamburgh

My time at Hayward College was formative for my entire experience at Otago University. From the first day, we were all welcomed and made to feel like we had a home there. I personally loved mealtimes. The sense of community - everyone going down to dinner, coordinating with friends to avoid the queue but also get the best portion, sitting for way longer than we needed to and having the most heated, jovial, and frankly insane conversations. My friends and I would then clamber back upstairs to the gaming room and watch Dr Who all together. Some would watch and study, knit, draw, or just watch with a hot chocolate. It was our little, ongoing tradition, and it was one of the things that really made me feel at home, especially during tough times. Those friends will be friends for life, and I only met them because of Hayward.

As Vice-President of Hayward, I was given a lot of responsibility and had input into how the college was run, and I organised a lot of the big events that we ran, such as the Hall only Parties (HOPs) and of course, the Ball! This event took a lot of organisation, particularly in it being a cooperative effort with 192, but the way both halls separately came to craft nights to make decorations and then came together as one to have a fantastic night was truly amazing. This night is one of the things I am most proud of about being the VP last year. The response from the Hayward192 community definitely made it worth it.

Working directly with Luke, the other Senior Staff, and Kaiāwhina was great. We could give resident feedback directly to the top of the College and work out any problems that arose. We also were able to influence how the college ran, e.g. we created the study zone rules around exam time. Because these were made by the residents, for the residents, we were able to make rules that people would actually respect, and that worked well for people to both study and enjoy the end of their semester.

We also got a lot of academic support, which as a HSFY student was amazing. Weekly tutorials were always great, but more-so the encouragement from the Kaiāwhina, the support from Senior Staff if things got difficult or needed fixing, and of course the camaraderie of the residents.

2025 was a difficult year personally for me, with many illnesses both mental and physical, and a very gruelling academic schedule. But somehow it was also one of the best years of my life. That was because of my whanau at Hayward. The love and support from my new friends, the wonderful Kaiāwhina, and the space itself made everything easier to get through, and having Hachi (Luke's dog) around for cuddles whenever I needed a furry friend certainly didn't hurt! I was sad to leave Hayward at the end of the year, it truly felt like home, but I know I will always be a Haywardian, and I fully intend to come back and rejoin the college as a Kaiāwhina when my studies allow.





Knox College | *Te Kāreti o Knox*

Caroline Hepburn-Doole - Head of College/Tautiaki

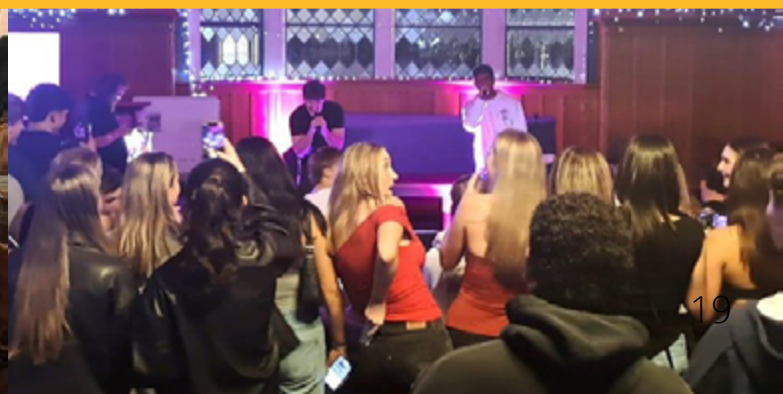
2025 started with a very busy Move-In Day and then straight into our Knox O'Week programme - lots of opportunities for new Knoxies to meet each other while settling into Knox and tertiary life! Our Kaiāwhina Whare and Student Leadership Teams did a fantastic job of providing a wide variety of events – BYC, quiz, 3 on 3 Bball, games nights, paint & sip, garden party, movie nights, crafting, DJ gig, toga feast, roman forum, collecting for the Heart Foundation, zine-making, open mic; and to round out the week... a massive Birthday Feast for the whole college ... piñata and all! Something for everyone, and a great way of settling some of those new-arrival nerves, and to help make our new Knoxies feel welcome.



With O'Week behind us, Knoxies quickly shifted gears and moved their focus to the business of academics. We saw an increase in the uptake of tutorials and supervisions, and as always it was great to see our study and library spaces being well used throughout each semester. However, the start of classes didn't mean that our activities calendar slowed down; regular activities included crafting, painting, cookie/cupcake-making and decorating, movies and sports nights. And our weekly speaker series drew from a wide range of

topics such as 'Artificial intelligence and law', 'NZ colonial history', and 'Advocacy and political processes at local through to national level'.

Community Dinners continue to be a great way for our Knox community to all come together over kai; with themes that included Matariki, Street Food, Americano, Te Wiki o te Reo Māori and Knoxmas. Of particular note was our Founders' Feast as it was very special to be able to hold this on our actual opening date, albeit 116 years later! The Feast had a massive turn out, and it was great to see the 'Bringing-In Ceremony' scatter Knoxies into the night to leave a memory in our grounds, which was followed by a special Chapel Reflection to learn more about our history and ever evolving modern traditions.



Our Te Wiki o te Reo Māori week was another highlight; not only providing lots of opportunities to give Te Reo a go, but also to experience our Food Services Team going above and beyond – Parāoa Parai for the whole college, Rēwena trials to get the bread just right; and an ‘all welcome’ Kaimoana Maruāpō and Boil Up!



Volunteering hit the ground running (literally for some) with Relay for Life as our first big focus. Lots of fun was had at this event - laps of the clocktower, small-hour chats and snacks - and all while raising funds for the Cancer Society, who we then went on to support in another practical way - a working bee for their office grounds; it was great to see Knoxies giving of their time to help!

Working closely with a local foodbank was a Knoxmas bonus, where not only did Knoxies cook meals for donation from scratch, but they also coordinated a special delivery of Christmas fare ‘food rescue’ after our Knoxmas Feast.



Our Sustainability group had a project-based focus for 2025, with our two raised garden beds planted out and providing leafy greens and herbs to our Food Services Team. A special trip to the Waitati Estuary boardwalk, followed by a café and nursery visit, showcased how easy it is to get to get back into nature, whether it's 5 or 15 minutes from college. Dunedin's winter weather allowed for the painting of a mural showcasing our local wildlife and flora and displaying some serious Knox artistic talent.

Sports and Arts opportunities were spread across the Nevill Cup for arts, and the Cameron Shield for sports. Keeping us humble, it was again a very close competition against Selwyn College. However, we didn't manage to bring the Shield and Cup home (we drew the Cup!) which will give us some serious incentive to get them back in 2026. Karaoke drew big crowds, with a number of talented residents taking the stage, and our College Band ‘The Out House’ provided plenty of entertainment. A good reminder of the unexpected but fortuitous connections that can be made during college-life.

Other highlights of our year included our annual Larnach Castle Winter Ball – Knoxies dressed up for a unique experience with a DJ until late, in New Zealand's only official castle! Temper that with an Easter-egg hunt, Quiz Nights, Academic Reception and our own ANZAC Chapel Reflection (as well as other special Chapel opportunities) ...some more glimpses into the diverse types of fun we've had during the year.

2025 was Knox College's inaugural year of an Artist in Residence, Ruby Burke. As Artist in Residence, Ruby engaged Knoxies in her creative process, sharing her passion and skills in photography and painting, and inviting feedback and discussion. Her tenure included completing a body of work 'exploring the unique atmosphere of Dunedin and highlighting the quiet beauty often overlooked' and culminated in a solo exhibition; the opening of which was attended by the public as well as Knoxies.

As the academic year drew to an end and exams approached, our Annual Dinner and Welfare Day - candy floss, popcorn, cupcake decorating, face-painting and balloonology (think dogs, crowns, flowers, swords) - provided our final chances to come together as a whole community; to reflect on our success and challenges, and to acknowledge

the memories and connections that have been nurtured over the course of the year. Of note, Ruby Saunders and Priya Wilson were co-jointly awarded the KCSC Cup for being 'the student(s) who, by their example of kindness, cheerfulness, courage and loyalty to ideals, most worthily upholds the spirit of Knox College'. A great end to the year, recognising each Knoxies contribution to the Knox community, no matter how great or small, and celebrating what a vibrant place this is to live and develop connection with others



From our 1909 foundations: Gratia et Veritas; Grace and Truth

Grace: a gift given freely because of love and compassion for the recipient. Kindness, mercy, compassion. Truth: an accurate perception of reality. Honesty, integrity, faithfulness.

And gifted to us late in 2020, the College's whakataukī is 'Ko te toa i a tini, i a mano o te takata'. This translates to 'it is the bravery of a multitude, of thousands of people'.

This Ngāi Tahu whakataukī (attributed to Tū Whakauika and Te Oreorehua) refers to the strength of collectivity and testifies to the vibrancy of the living tradition which Knox represents, stretching back over 110 years, but also reaching into the future as each cohort of students contributes to the Knox story and legacy.

Caroline Hepburn-Doole

Tautiaki Te Kāreti o Knox - Head of Knox College



Salmond College | Te Kāreti o Salmond

Nick Bates - Head of College

The sense of community built at Salmond in 2025 was felt in a tangible way in the singing of Salmond Anthem 'Scarfie Roads' at the Farewell Dinner in October. There was joy in the room as the community reflected together for the final time what it meant to live together for the year, celebrating the ups and downs, and embracing the fun times. The 'Mond buzzed for the big finale.

Music is an appropriate place to start when reflecting on 2025, as the musicians amongst us have contributed so much to the positive vibe of the college this year. Deputy Head Rachael Carson said it well when she presented the Narayanan Trophy for Contribution to Music at the Farewell Dinner. Rachael noted that music often has an immediate improvement to mood and that regularly listening to music can help us remain much happier in all kinds of situations. From cellist Jiya Sidhu to duos Aaniya Jithu/ Liesha Chawla and Bella Logan/Izzy Edmond, we have been regularly entertained. Furthermore, the establishment of a College Band 'The Mondkeys' early in the year meant College events were accompanied by a series of skilful renditions of popular rock songs. The Band's performance at September's Battle of the Bands at U-Bar was epic, with the judges crowning Prarb, Seth, Marwin and Rafael overall winners following their performance of songs from The Eagles, Green Day and Black Sabbath, and concluding with an outstanding version of Lynyrd Skynyrd's Free Bird. They proved the formula: cracking music = a recipe for top college vibes.



Once again, the community spirit was felt through the high levels of participation in the Intercollege Sports, Games and Cultural events. Overall, 3rd in Games, 5th in Sport and 6th in Cultural was good result. Standout performances were 'Poet Laureate' Jula-May Taylor's win in the Poetry section of the Arts and Literature competition with her offering entitled Nostalgia. James Catto was a star winning the men's singles Table Tennis, and he ran a great leg to take Salmond to third place in the off-water dash among his other sporting feats. The team highlights of the year included the women's football team which took out the tournament played in September, with a comeback 2-1 win in the final, and the pairs win in the Pool Tournament, when Lindsay Gozal and Kaiyo Henrichs beat allcomers.



Salmond Residential Leaders/
Kaiāwhina Team with their
bosses

But it wasn't all about winning. The Salmond performance at the Cultural Performance evening, combining Waiata and Bollywood dance was outstanding. At events like this participation rather than competition is highlighted and performances from all colleges were celebrated in the spirit of whanaungatanga. There were creditable performances in the Debating competition, puzzle mania, chess tournament, the Art competition and teams were entered for every sport offered. The Intercollege Competition is a valuable means of developing a sense of college pride, and the opportunity for companionship was once again enjoyed by large numbers of 'Mond residents.

Feedback from taurira indicated a high level of satisfaction in 2025. Despite several residents facing significant mental health issues, the feedback regarding the support offered for their wellbeing and welfare was nothing short of outstanding. Residents were highly satisfied and rated Salmond's sense of community spirit highly, and the overall college experience as outstanding. The food service team again excelled and fulfilled the wide variety of dietary needs. The development of the food service in recent years has been exceptional and Salmond's food service is now rated among the top few colleges at Otago.

The annual College Ball was held at Errick's for the first time, and the venue was perfect for the event. The dance floor rocked all night. The traditional Salmond Bubbly Brunch followed on Sunday morning, with residents turning out in their gear from the night before.



Salmond College 2025



President Ally Wotherspoon setting up
for a Salmond event



Glow Worm trip



Emmalise, Elise, Poppy and Sam
become elves for mid-winter Christmas



ICC Awards Dinner



Salmond performance at ICC Cultra
Performance evening

Resident Spotlight

Meg Regnault

2025 Salmond College Resident of the Year, winner of the Bursar's Cup. Meg Regnault's involvement in the life of the college in 2025 cannot be underestimated. The impact she made at Salmond and beyond was emphasised at the Intercollege Awards Dinner when Meg was one of three residents from all colleges to be awarded a special trophy for contribution to the ICC. Meg's enthusiasm was boundless, her availability to volunteer consistent and her respect for others genuine.

Meg writes:

There is not one specific thing that I can say I've enjoyed this year at Salmond because I can't choose. I have genuinely loved every day at the 'Mond, from the people to the food - it's the most incredible place. The environment and the community that has been created is so invaluable, and maybe it just happened to be a special cohort, but I am forever grateful for it.

This year my plan was to study Occupational Therapy, however after applying super late in 2024 I missed out on a spot. Combatting this rather big issue in my intended career plans, I started a BA majoring in Education with a minor in Physical Activity and Health - still with the intention to study OT 2026. This 'fill in' year allowed me to put 100% into things that were not considered study! Every weekend you could catch me playing various sports through the ICC competition to other events such as Big Sing, the Cultural performance or Relay for Life. I joined the university hockey club, as well as a few run clubs, including Salmond's very own girls run club. I was also able to give back to the community through volunteering with Red Frogs and The Valley Project.

The main thing I think I take away from this year is the importance of the journey and making the most of every situation. It is super easy to get caught up in life, but allowing time to just appreciate where you are and the people around you is positive in so many ways.

(Meg fails to mention that she passed all her papers with flying colours despite everything she got herself involved in, due to her disciplined study alongside her extra-curricular pursuits. She has left a legacy at Salmond, and is a part of the wider community that continues to flourish from year to year.)

Ko te toa i a tini i a mano o te takata

It is the bravery of a multitude, of thousands of people





Selwyn College | *Te Maru Pūmanawa* *Sagato (Ziggy) Lesa - Warden/Tautiaki*

It's been a great year for Selwyn College. Our annual sporting and cultural traditional exchanges with Knox College and College House continue to be popular events within our community. Witnessing our communities enjoying the events and establishing new friendship relationships have added more meaning to our exchanges. The relationship between our colleges continues to flourish and has become highly valued. We look forward to adding and making improvements in our exchanges in the future.

The special Character of the College in relation to its three cultural streams of Tikanga Māori, Tikanga Pacific and Tikanga Pākehā has been well reflected in the introduction of additional small leadership scholarships to encourage students within their heritage into student leadership roles. All three of these scholarships were allocated in 2025. These leaders provided great opportunities for the college community to gather together and build connections, learn about and experience other cultures, and get involved in supporting the wider Dunedin community.



Student President Reflection

Ronan Brier

There are so many words to say about so many things that've happened during this fantastic year. It's been an absolute privilege to serve and represent you all, and I am more than grateful for the opportunity it has given me to get to know as many of you as I can.

Before coming down here, I had very high hopes for my time in Selwyn. Many of my Granddad's lifelong friends were people he met in his hall. And it fills me with great joy to look across the room and think I'm the same. It fills me with great joy to think that you all can look around and think the same. It has been a year to remember for us in Selwyn, thank you all for being such

a fantastic group. We are surrounded by an incredibly compassionate and intelligent group of people here at Selwyn, and we have forged precious memories that will last a lifetime.

To our subbies, Ella, Tyra, Thimeth, Tai, Milla, Jamie and Sam. You guys are an approachable and friendly group. Your ability to juggle your studies as well as your roles here at Selwyn is very impressive. We have been so lucky to have you guys around this year. I'm sure you're all well and truly sick of unlocking our rooms or dealing to various alcohol-induced noise complaints. You are great friends of all your residents, and they appreciate you to pieces.

To Ziggy, Brad and Karun and Kate, you have effectively created an environment here at Selwyn that makes the place feel like home. Your efforts to get to personally know your residents is something that makes this place so special. You are supportive, rational and have a genuine interest and care for your residents. I feel very privileged to have worked alongside you guys this year. Thank you to all staff for everything you've done to make this year as special as it's been.

As we put this year in Selwyn behind us and look towards the future, whatever that looks like, I hope we can carry the proud sense of Selwyn spirit with us and wish the absolute best to everyone for the rest of our time in Selwyn.

Cheers Ronan Brier Selwyn College Student President 2025.





St Margaret's College | Te Kāreti o Makere Tapu *Elizabeth Koni - Head of College*

2025 was another amazing year at St Margaret's College, and it is a pleasure to reflect on the many moments that shaped it and to acknowledge those who made it so memorable. Our theme for 2025, 'You be you', encouraged each of our Members to embrace their individuality – whether that was culture, personality, values, talents, or quirks. In a world that can often pressure young people to blend in, this theme offered a powerful invitation to stand out. The response from our community was inspiring. The diversity of our Members has been one of our greatest strengths, and the spirit of inclusivity and acceptance could be felt in every part of College life. From the chaotic joy of sock tag and the hilarious intensity of the speed-eating competition to the determination of our intercollege teams, these events brought connection, pride, and joy to our community. Our formal dinners added moments of elegance and reflection, celebrating



the mana and warmth that make St Margaret's so special. The standout event of the year was possibly the Cultural Performance Evening, where Members showcased their talents and identities with pride. Watching these performances was a powerful reminder of the richness of culture, creativity, and authenticity within our College.



A defining feature of the year was the strength and energy our Members brought to the intercollege competitions. 2025 was a historic year for St Margaret's as we finished on the podium in all three categories—sport, cultural, and games – for the first time in our history. This awesome achievement not only reflected the dedication and talent of our Members but also challenged outdated assumptions about who we are as a College. Far from being “all HSFY's who lock in” our Members showed the campus what we already knew: St Margaret's is home to athletes, creatives, strategists, performers, and community-minded leaders who show up with heart!



Our strong affiliation with the University continued to enrich the experience of our residents. Being part of this wider Collegiate community is one of Otago's greatest strengths: a vast network of individuals working together to support, challenge, and inspire young people as they navigate their first year of university life. The collaborative spirit across the Colleges – through intercollege competitions, shared initiatives, and collective wellbeing efforts – created a sense of belonging that extended far beyond individual walls. St Margaret's was proud to contribute to and benefit from this community that is so uniquely Otago: connected, vibrant, supportive, and deeply invested in the success of its students.

The final word deservedly goes to our 2025 cohort. They showed up academically, socially, culturally, in sport and service, and most importantly, supported one another along the way. They embraced the opportunities of College life with pride and passion. Their willingness to contribute, participate, and proudly be themselves turned St Margaret's from a place to stay into a true home. It was a privilege to walk alongside them in 2025, and we are excited to see the extraordinary paths they will take beyond our College walls.



Resident Profile

Lucy Chen

Having moved from Auckland to Dunedin, I still remember how daunting it felt walking into St Margaret's College for the first time. I didn't know a single person and the idea of starting fresh in a completely new city and environment was terrifying. However, within days, that fear disappeared and was replaced by a sense of comfort, community and sense of belonging that St Marg's gave me. After two years here, I can confidently say that St Marg's has been so much more than just accommodation. It's my home away from home. What makes this place so special isn't just the beautiful architecture, the cute pets or the top-notch facilities (though the yummy buffet dinners and our beloved soft-serve machine certainly don't hurt). It's the people. The kindness, openness and willingness of everyone (the members, staff, College Leaders) to connect with one another created an environment where I always felt supported. It gave me a sense of comfort knowing that I was not alone, building my confidence and allowing me to thrive.



One of the things I love most about St Marg's is how easy it was to make friends. Conversations happened everywhere in the College. Whether it was over meals or toast time, in the hallways, at the pool table or during one of the many activities the Student Exec organised – there were always so many opportunities to connect with the other members. We had Mystery Bus Trips, an ice-skating trip, beach trip, inter-floor competitions, Mid-Winter Christmas, movie nights, etc. You name it, there was always something happening that pushed me out of my comfort zone in the best ways possible!

Beyond the adventures, it was the everyday life at St Marg's that shaped me the most. The open-door support from staff, the constant support and encouragement from friends to step up and seize every opportunity, the monthly formal dinners where we all dressed up, the shared study sessions, the late-night horror movie marathons on the projector in the common room, the late-night walks, the sweet treats from Rob Roy's and, above all, the comfort of knowing I was surrounded by people who genuinely wanted the best for me, both academically and personally.

St Marg's didn't just provide me with accommodation – it gave me a community, a support system, useful life skills and beautiful memories that I will carry with me forever. It helped me grow into the best version of myself, pushed me to try things I never imagined myself doing and create lifelong friendships. Looking back, choosing St Marg's was one of the best decisions I've ever made. No matter where I go from here, this place and the people in it will always feel like home.



Studholme College | Te Kāreti o Studholme

Liza Bergantino Mitu - Warden/Tautiaki

2025 has been quite the year for Studholme College, and let's just say we've certainly set the bar high—like, Waka Ama champs-high! For two consecutive years, our waka ama team has dominated the competition, celebrating glistening victories on the water that made our rivals ponder if they should quit while they're ahead. And speaking of dominating, our off-road triathlon champs also strutted their stuff, showing off incredible speed and endurance while basking in the glory of their hard-earned gold!



In addition to our athletic prowess, we took home the coveted traditional challenge trophy after some fierce tug-of-war action with our friends from Arana College. Let's just say they didn't see it coming when our team pulled together with all the might (and laughter) we could muster! Moreover,

this year marks our sixth consecutive win in the ICC Sports Competition—yes, that's right, we've got more bling than a treasure chest! And to add a cherry on top, we claimed victory in the games competition for the first time. The spirited camaraderie, playful banter, and a whole lot of fun made it a truly unforgettable year for all involved.

It wasn't all about the competition, though—this year was rife with social and cultural activities that made it extra special! Our debating team loved to flex their brains. We set the record for the longest Scrabble word. Who knew we had future wordsmiths in our midst? With our beautiful wellbeing labradors, Louie and Bear, spreading joy through cuddles and walks, our community couldn't be happier. Our Mid-Winter Xmas Party, complete with Secret Santa shenanigans, and a formal dinner with prizegiving capped off the year perfectly. Cheers to Studholme College for another year of remarkable achievements, laughter and unforgettable memories!

Liza Bergantino Mitu
Studholme Warden



For many of us, Studholme College became more than just a place to stay during our time at the University of Otago in 2026. It truly became a place to call home. From the moment we arrived in move-in weekend, we were welcomed into a community that valued connection, inclusion, and shared experiences, shaping memories that will stay with us long after we leave. It goes without saying, defining aspects of life at Studholme was our strong presence in the Intercollege competitions, we annihilated 'all' in our way! Throughout the year, students came together to represent the college with pride, determination, and unmatched team spirit. Our success across sport, taking out the competition for the 6th consecutive year and games for the first time ever, reflected not only individual talent but also the encouragement and camaraderie that pushed everyone to perform at their best. Winning was celebrated, but the friendships built along the way mattered even more.



Social life at Studholme was just as memorable as our sporting success. The Studholme Masquerade-themed Ball stood out as a highlight of the year, transforming the college into a night of elegance, mystery, and celebration. Students embraced the theme with creatively made colourful masks, creating an unforgettable evening filled with laughter, and shared moments that brought the entire college together.



The retro party added a completely different energy, with throwback outfits, classic tunes, and a lively atmosphere. Equally iconic was the back-to-school party where uniforms, nostalgia, and humour combined to kick off the year with fun and inclusivity. These events helped break down social barriers, allowing students to connect beyond the University lecture theatre.

No reflection on Studholme 2026 would be complete without acknowledging one of its most iconic residents, Studholme resident of the year: The man. The myth. The legend. Bobby from Floor 3. Born and raised in the small town of Te Awamutu, Bob grew to become the legend we all know today. Whether it was dominating in the Intercollege Competition world or schooling his mates at training, Bob was simply unchallenged in all he did.

Like all legends, Bob required a place to rest—and Studholme proudly played host. The college provided food, shelter, and countless memories he couldn't have made anywhere else. From having a gangsta neighbour named Ada, to moments where he could freely blast his music and let the entire floor bask in his greatness, Bob made the most of his time here. Surrounded by mates, he even managed to form what felt like his own rugby club, leaving a legacy that will be talked about well beyond 2026.

The outdoor areas of Studholme were central to daily life and memory-making. Countless afternoons were spent on the basketball courts, where casual games quickly became competitive showdowns. Volleyball competitions brought students together across floors and backgrounds, reinforcing the inclusive and energetic atmosphere that defined the college. Inside, the pool table became an iconic social hub. It was where students gathered to unwind, connect, and share stories, and a sense of belonging that made Studholme feel alive at all hours.

In 2026, Studholme College was far more than accommodation. It was a community shaped by shared success, unforgettable characters, and moments that defined our university experience. For all of us—and for legends like Bob—Studholme will always be remembered as home.

- Josiah Lenati & Louis Robinson





Growing up in Canada with an Otago alumnus for a father, I was raised on stories about his university days—especially his first year. He spoke of Dunedin so fondly, and as I reached my late teens, I decided I wanted to see what Otago had in store for me, too.

Little did I know that hearing the stories about it would never come close to experiencing it. My year at Studholme College was nothing short of incredible. Coming to a new city, in a new country, knowing not a single person was daunting—but the warmth of Studholme made it feel like home almost immediately.

The first week, as every student will tell you, is chaotic, exciting, and overwhelming. Between learning (and relearning) new names, faces, and streets, we were all thrown together as strangers. But the events, activities, and orientation traditions pushed us past that awkward stage faster than we realized. By the end of the week, we weren't strangers anymore—we were part of something bigger.

One of the standout memories was the Intercollege Sports Day. Walking down our entire hall, all dressed in matching colors, cheering and laughing together—it was so cool to so quickly be a part of the community. The joy of competing and cheering for each other during tug-of-war, and (of course) celebrating when we beat Arana—it made us one of the smallest halls, but we felt like the biggest. For at least a week afterward, we continued those chants on our way to town. It was a miracle none of us got egged.

What makes Otago special, I think, is that the colleges aren't just places to sleep and eat—they're communities. Back in Canada, residence halls are just accommodation. At Otago, they're families. They're where memories are made, and such strong friendships are forged through the crazy changes that happen in the first year.

What I loved most about Studholme was how involved and caring the staff were. They went above and beyond to make our year amazing—organizing themed parties like Retro Night and Back to School, supporting our student DJs and bands, and helping us explore Dunedin by taking us places like the ice skating rink. Their kindness made such a difference. I'll never forget preparing for my final exams and finding that the kaiawhina had made us all little gift baskets—it meant the world to us, knowing someone was looking out for us and understood the struggle. Another highlight for me was the Intercollege Cultural Performances in Semester One. Seeing so many cultures celebrated through music, dance, and storytelling was eye-opening and beautiful. The energy in the room was unforgettable.

Studholme's magic comes from its community. Being one of the smaller colleges made it feel like a family—you'd always see familiar faces at breakfast, and our own hall events were some of the best nights of the year. When everything else around me felt unfamiliar, Studholme became my anchor.

It's hard to put into words how much this place has meant to me. The memories, the friendships, and the feeling of belonging—these are things I'll carry long after leaving. Studholme was so much more than where I lived—it's where I grew and where I truly found a home away from home.

- Isabella Hoy





Te Whare Whakamaru o Te Rangihīroa

Kara Whaley - Warden/Tautiaki

Our second year of operation allowed us to hit our stride in different spaces. After an active first year, Te Whare Whakamaru began to relax into the role of guardian of 450 tauira. The warm buzz of occupation was noted by many, and no one could deny the ‘feeling’ they experienced after entering the whare; the manaaki (care) and aroha (love) is tangible.



We saw growth in some competitive areas, but more importantly, we can see promise. Ka mua, ka muri (walking backwards into the future), we are constantly reflecting on what has been to ensure that we are improving what can be for our future tauira. These are the reflections of our peer nominated tauira recipients of the Te Rangihīroa Award, recognised for their significant impact on the college community.

As we moved through the year, we celebrated many victories, and we came together to support each other through our struggles. Our ‘vibe’ began to emerge, and it was one of manaaki and aroha. This became evident at our students elected members of Te Whare Whakamaru based on the characteristics of Te Rangihīroa - manawa roa | resilience, manawatina | resoluteness, manawa nui | ambition and courage, and manawa toka | strength and determination. Tapas Kant, Hannah Jansen, Daniel Hiroti and Vita Vailala were nominated by their peers for their significant impact on the community of Te Whare Whakamaru. This is what they had to say of their first year.



Sine Toa

Te Whare Whakamaru o Te Rangihīroa was the true epitome of my home away from home. Not only the building itself, but the people within. I am so blessed and grateful for my friends who felt like family, our kaiāwhina who felt like older siblings, and how accepted my Samoan culture was. I also can't forget the best roommates on the best floor, Te Papa Tuatoru!

From late-night talks in Puanga Kai Rau to the endless pool matches with music blasting in Mahi Tamariki. From helping each other with studies in Te Titōhea to then taking ‘study breaks’ that would last over an hour. The aroha and mana I felt during my first year of university have truly uplifted and challenged me into striving to become the absolute best version of myself. I know for certain this experience would not have been the same if it weren't for the best college out there, Te Whare Whakamaru o Te Rangihīroa and the amazing people within. Fa'afetai tele lava. Thank you.



Tapas Kant

The end of 2025 yields mixed emotions. One hand passes excitement for the future – flitting with the mates I've made both this year and last; continuing the degree I've spent years dreaming about; and adventuring through the journey we call life. The other hand carries more confusing thoughts – the loss of the haven that is Te Rangihīroa College. A place far more than a building. More than a hall of residence. More than an organisation of people. These descriptions forget the essence of connection – not only to the people, but to the structure, the schedule, the space itself. Each element of Te Rangihīroa College is truly special. Its past holds an enormous history, and its future has an unimaginable amount left to collect. I'm humbled and grateful to have existed within this brief cross section of Te Rangihīroa College's timeline. Grateful for each nut and bolt; for each meal; for each washer and dryer. For each pool ball sunk; for each football goal scored; for each volleyball spike missed. For each smile created; for each conflict resolved; for each moment shared. Whakawhanaungatanga is a two-way street. To give as much as I could to Te Rangihīroa College, and to receive as much as I did, the relationship I have built with this college is a remarkable taonga I will hold close to my chest forever. To Te Whare Whakamaru o Te Rangihīroa – and to everyone and everything within – thank you. I am, truly, eternally grateful.



Katrina Nelisi



The privilege of being the first residents of Te Whare Whakamaru o Te Rangihīroa only sinks in once you reflect and appreciate the opportunities it presented. I can't imagine a first year without Te Rangihīroa. Academically, I received every helping hand I could need. And beyond, I learned a lot about people's culture and values – both my own and of those around me.

Finally, the greatest part this year was the people; he tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata. To connect with my peers was, to me, to live the lives of my peers. To learn from their wisdom. To celebrate their success. To console their grief. Each interaction was infinitely memorable and meaningful. It's an understatement to say these people have changed me; really, they have made me the person I am today. This growth is much to the credit of my college, my home: Te Rangihīroa.

Thank you for the amazing year. I am eternally grateful.



University College - Te Kāreti o Te Whare Wānaka

Pauline Donovan - Warden/Tautiaki

2025 was an outstanding year at University College. We welcomed Josiah Lesa as our new Tautiaki Kaiāwhina and had an incredibly memorable year that included highlights like the UniCol Ball, the cultural performance in collaboration with Hayward College, and a huge amount of giving back to our Dunedin community.

UniCol is proud of the diverse composition of its residents. It is a place where everyone can find their people. Our cohort hails from all over the country, representing 170 high schools, studying a variety of majors from sciences, health science, law, commerce, arts, humanities, surveying and education. UniCol continues to embrace traditional collegiate structures with live-in management supported by a large and diverse team of Kaiāwhina.

The College's Orientation Program was a huge hit this year, with a full suite of activities organized by the college and augmented by the OUSA's offering. We started the year off right with a mihi whakatau in the dining room and a great group picture with all 465 residents. O-week was full of highlights and our amazing Kaiāwhina team put on a plethora of well attended activities including: Paint & Sips, Black Light Party, Quizzes, Trips to the Glow Worms, and speed meet and greets. Kaiāwhinas continued to be an essential part of the fabric of the UniCol community. The team shared their lives and experiences with the new students. Their role in supporting the first year students cannot be overstated.

University College had an absolute blast at the 2025 Intercollege Competition! From podium finishes to unforgettable moments, it was a season to remember. A huge shoutout to Naaz Hassan and Sam Pan for taking out first place in mixed badminton doubles, an incredible achievement for UniCol!

While we didn't take home every trophy across sports, cultural events, and group activities, we showed up, gave it our all, and did it in style. One of the standout moments this year was collaborating with Hayward and 192 Castle College to bring University College back into the cultural performance space for the first time in years, paving the way for an even stronger 2026 cohort.

After such an enjoyable 2025 ICC program, we're already looking ahead. Bring on 2026, we're coming back for those trophies!



Collegians of the Year:

Danielle Hemi & Waika Cassidy

For 2025, two residents exemplified what it meant to be part of University College. Danielle and Waika proudly embodied the values of what it means to be a student and a resident at University College. These values of community, kindness, and friendship were demonstrated by Danielle and Waika. They put themselves out of their comfort zone and tried new things and encouraged fellow residents to do the same, mirroring the college motto of “Ut Magis Aptil Reddamur”, “ which translates to “That we may be made more fit”.

Danielle and Waika represented the college at multiple activities and events throughout the year, spanning from sports, games, and cultural events. These representatives of the College did so with immense pride and respect, helping residents and staff as issues arose and participating in events, even if they were unsure of what to do; they both gave it their all.



These events included waking up early for training and competing in the Waka Arma competition, participating in the touch rugby festival, helping with the cultural performance night, and playing weekly Basketball. They were also involved in the Big Sing, Netball, and the Amazing Race, just to name a few. They were frequently seen around the college helping and talking to senior staff and the Kaiawhina, catching up with mates and were always down for a chat or a laugh.

From the start of the year to the end, Danielle and Waika embraced the college, got stuck in, and were made more fit, embodying what it meant to be a University College resident. A massive thank you and congratulations to these two for the past year, and all the best to them for the future.



University Flats

Ngā Whare Rīti o te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo *Sean McCallaghan - Warden/Tautiaki*

In terms of staffing, we welcomed Dr Sean McCallaghan in as our Tautiaki/Warden in January to take up the mantle of leading our diverse community. Sean was an excellent addition to the whānau, providing amazing leadership and leading UniFlats from strength to strength, allowing us to serve our community with a student-centric approach. Sean has since accepted the role of Tautiaki Matua / Senior Warden and will be taking up this role in January 2026. We've also seen the appointment of two new Tautiaki Piki/Deputy Wardens-Kirsten Humphreys who has been stepped up from being a Tautiaki Kaiāwhina/Assistant Warden. Kirsten has been largely in charge of our events portfolio but will now be able to improve it even further with her new position! We also welcome from the division Stewart Noguier- Blue, who has served as Tautiaki Piki of Hayward/192 for the majority of the year. Stewart brings fresh eyes and nearly 10 years of experience to the whānau!



This year was filled with stand-out moments from our visits to Puketeraki Marae and Huriawa Pā where our taura had the opportunity to learn more about te ao Māori and our mana whenua - Kai Tahu, through to our FOFOA taura taking to the stage at the Intercollege Competition Cultural Performance Evening! We also had much smaller events with dessert nights every Thursday bringing out the community and the Gazebo Lunches being a highlight of everyone's week! These events and the many more that happened wouldn't have been possible without the commitment of our taura and kaimahi who helped bring them to life!

To sign off the year, we are grateful for everyone who chose to be a part of our community and participate in a unique part of what Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka has to offer. From our amazing kainoho / residents, without whom we wouldn't be here, to our kaimahi in the accommodation HUB that work behind the scenes to make sure that every goes smoothly, kā mihi! Thank you all for your mahi and making 2025 a year of growth and development for University Flats. This is also a reminder of our whakatauki that has been with us since the beginning - Te WhareMaha, Kaika Tahī / Many houses, one home. A home for all of us; residents, staff, the wider University. While we navigate Aotearoa New Zealand and share in a journey that grows more intricate with every student and narrative that gets added to our cultural identity, we do so together under the safety of our shared journey.



Student Profile

Amelia O'Connell

Being a Uniflats resident in 2025 was a great experience. As a New Zealand student living in a community of mainly international students I have made new friends for life, built lasting memories and can't wait to do it all again!

I got to meet people from all over the world and learn about different cultures and perspectives without even leaving Dunedin. Sharing our backyard with international students gave me a new appreciation for New Zealand's outdoors and how lucky we are to live somewhere like this.

Uniflats ran numerous events throughout the year that made it feel more like a community than just somewhere I lived. There were quiz nights, UniFlats only parties, weekly swimming trips, and lots and lots of free food!

UniFlats made it easy to meet other residents, and the layout of flats meant you quickly went from having one new friend to knowing everyone in the surrounding flats. The staff were approachable and it felt like they were there to support us with anything from a blown light bulb to trouble with study.

Looking back on the year, I feel very grateful to have been part of such a cool community and have had so many amazing experiences!



College Catering

It was another very busy and rewarding year for College Catering. Across our 10 university colleges, a team of around 300 staff including 50 qualified chefs and 200 student team members worked together to produce almost 2.2 million meals. That's a huge effort, and one we're incredibly proud of. We are very lucky to have so many passionate and dedicated food service professionals delivering great food and service every day across the colleges. A major highlight this year was achieving the Food Made Good Standard from the Sustainable Restaurant Association. Food Made Good is an internationally recognised sustainability rating system often described as the Michelin Guide for sustainability. Around 45 universities worldwide are part of the scheme, and we are proud to be the first in Australasia to take part. On our first-ever assessment, we achieved an outstanding 2 Star rating out of a possible 3 stars for the period 2025–2027, coming very close to the top rating. This result reflects the strong work already underway across our colleges in areas such as sourcing, waste reduction, staff wellbeing, and environmental responsibility, and provides a solid foundation as we continue to improve.



I would also like to acknowledge our talented and passionate leadership team.

2025 Food Service Heads

Aquinas College – Sarah Mason
Arana College – Brian Galvin
192 Castle College – Rodney Young
Carrington College – Jodie Spedding
Caroline Freeman College – Brent Cowie

Cumberland College – Rodney Young
Hayward College – Jason Harding
Studholme College – Grant Hutton
Te Rangihiroa College – Dylan Henry
University College – Ben Henry

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the Divisional Office, College Wardens, and their staff for all the support we received throughout 2025.

Stephen Baughan
General Manager, University Union



Homestay

Homestay in 2025 was buoyant. Homestay has a constant turnover of students; some are short term stays and some are long term stays and some stay for years! Recently the Homestay office said goodbye to a long-term student who had made her homestay her home for six whole years – we were very sad to say goodbye to her. This student started at Pathways level and stayed in her homestay for her whole degree period. The Homestay office is only closed for two weeks of the year – every year.



Thai Teachers on their Otago placement

The 2025 year was again particularly busy with overseas students arriving to study in this beautiful part of the world. English Language Centre had more long-term students in 2025 and Pathway had a large increase in student numbers, in particular the Pathway students from Kuwait and Oman scholarship students.

Our ELC teaching staff travel to Thailand where they teach Thai teachers English, then later in the year, the Thai teachers finish their studies at Otago and stay in homestays.



Students have been on trips organised by ELC staff to Tekapo and Queenstown this year. Students from Japan tend to love the serenity and atmosphere with no light pollution at Tekapo. Many students have travelled all around New Zealand with their friends, hosts or just by themselves.

Moana (host) and Mansour (student from France) at the All-Blacks vs France rugby game



Takato at Steampunk



Nothing is unusual in the Homestay office! Over the years, we've heard just about everything and have collected many remarkable stories—some unusual, others more familiar.

Story #1

The oldest student we have ever placed into homestay was 83 years of age, from Japan. He was a part of a group of 10 who called themselves the “well aged” group who came to the English Language Centre for a period of four weeks to brush up on their English (never too old). They were all over 70 years old and real hard cases! As a part of their New Zealand experience, they wanted to stay in a homestay to live with the locals. Our immediate reaction was - Oh my gosh, how will we find places for them at that age? But our amazing hosts never fail to disappoint us and put their hands up for the task. They ended up absolutely loving them and not wanting them to go home!

During their stay in homestay, they approached us (this was mid-winter) as they wanted to experience a traditional New Zealand Christmas lunch. The Homestay staff organised this between a couple of host families where the group paid a fee for purchasing all the goodies, and the hams, lambs, minted peas and buttered carrots, and all the traditional frills were put together on a weekend day. The wine flowed, pavlova and cream, berries and trifle were the group favourite and as the wine continued to flow, the songs came out.

One of the group participants found the piano (unbeknown to us he could play) and started banging out a few tunes. The others sang along (all in Japanese) but with rosy cheeks and moistened vocal cords, the party ended up being just magical! Definitely a fond memory of Dunedin homestays to take home with them.

Story #2

Occasionally we have the weirdest things happen with our very new students.

A memory that continues to give us giggles, is of a Japanese student who was 20 on her second day in Dunedin. She got on her bus after a long day at ELC but got on the Intercity bus instead of her suburban bus. Short story is that the student was a little timid to ask the bus driver to stop but when she got onto the motorway, she knew she was on the wrong bus but stayed quiet. She ended up in Invercargill! She stayed at the police station overnight and returned to Dunedin the following day on the morning Intercity. It was lovely to see NZ Police step in to support her as needed. Communication between the Police, the host, Homestay office and the Support staff rendered so much disbelief and thankfulness that it all ended the way it did. I guess that was a good way for the student to see New Zealand on a budget!

We wish all our gorgeous international and domestic students well in their future endeavours as they embark on their university lives – we just know that your time at University of Otago Pathway and English Language Centre and University studies will be a time you will always remember. Homestay relationships are also a big part of those memories – good luck!

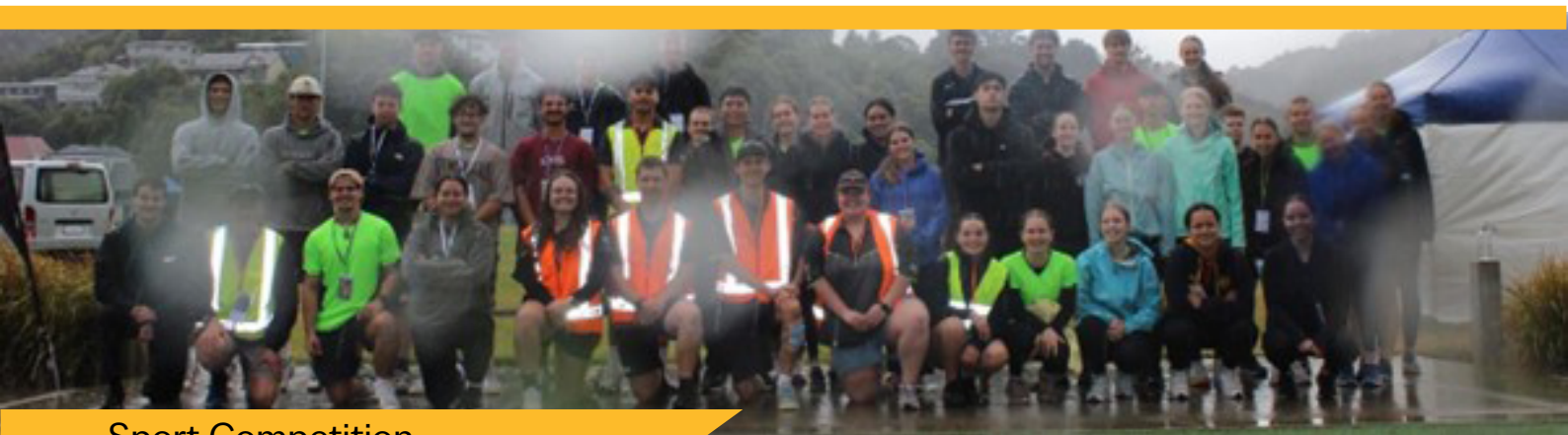
Mary Powell
Homestay Manager
Campus & Collegiate Life Services

Inter College Competition

This was the 10th year of the Inter-College Competition in its current format. The largest event on the Inter-College calendar, with the largest amount of logistics. This is a rewarding one to deliver to students because you can see, firsthand, the fun and the relationships being built. College Sports Day was held on the 18th of February at Logan Park. We estimated that around 3000 students attended this event. We had a group of 38 student referees working on the day as well as four student sport assistants. This made up an epic team whose spirits were not dampened by the rain during set up!



Colleges arrived at 12:30pm and teams of eight participated in both a relay and tug of war, while being cheered on enthusiastically by their peers. At 1:30pm our team of referees blew the whistle for the first games to commence. Football, touch rugby, netball, and volleyball games all ran simultaneously throughout the afternoon. We had 216 teams entered across all sports – with the most in any one sport being netball with 62 entries. At approximately 3:30pm the thunder and lightning rolled in to the tune of ACDC (courtesy of ICC Assistant Beno Shaw). This was the call for most people to begin packing up and heading back to their colleges for dinner.



Sport Competition

There were five Sport Festivals and five Ongoing Sports featured in the competition this year in addition to College Sports Day, these sports were played across 26 separate divisions. We also ran a friendly 7-side football league in semester one on Monday nights. The sports events offered in 2025 were:

- Kī o Rahi
- Touch Rugby
- Waka Ama
- Badminton
- Netball
- Futsal
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Football
- Wild Card (T-Ball, Korfball, Spikeball, Dodgeball, Turbo Touch, and Handball)



Sport Competition Changes

The biggest change to the sport competition this year was to bring ongoing futsal back, after a one-year hiatus. This was run alongside netball on Sundays in semester one. We also trialled some new sports at Wild Card including T-Ball and Turbo Touch. We made some minor changes to the point structure of competitive divisions to offer more points to those who finish outside of the top four. Touch Festival and Football Festival also swapped semesters which touch being in semester 1 and football being in semester two in 2025. The reason for this was mainly to try and get some good weather for touch and as touch is a more 'friendly' sport to play it is a good opportunity for the students to get to know each other in the first semester. Football was also run as a 7-side competition this year, which was received well, and we will keep it as such going forward. The reason for this was to make it easier for smaller colleges to field a team – especially women's teams who often struggle for numbers.

Cultural Competition

There were five cultural events this year, two of which were non-competitive. This is less than we would like and makes the 'competition' aspect of cultural events feel like a foregone conclusion after the first event. Cultural Performance Evening has remained the event with the largest attendance, although it has increased significantly since being hosted at the Regent Theatre in 2024, which has a much higher capacity.

The cultural events this year were:

- Cultural Performance Evening (participation only)
- Arts Competition
- 48 Hour Film Festival
- Debating
- Big Sing (participation only)



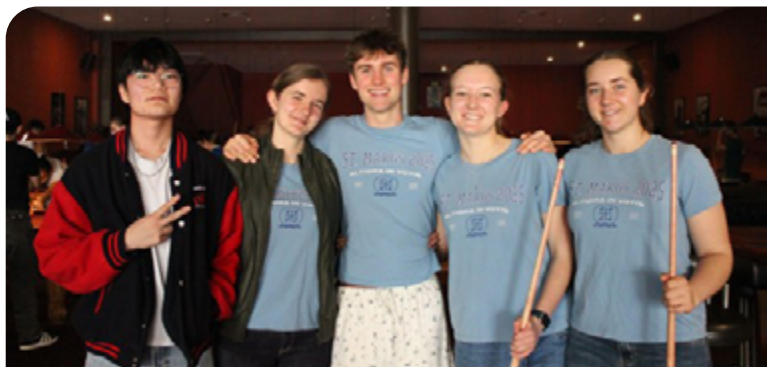
Gaming Competition

We have also been running a drop-in play event on Friday evenings for the trading card game 'Magic: The Gathering'. This has been held at Locals HQ and has been growing in popularity over the last half of Sem 2, with almost 20 regular members.

Quiz night is the most attended games event. However, the purpose of the Games Competition is to provide an alternative activity for those who may not be into more traditional sporting or cultural pursuits; and therefore, will by nature have lower numbers.

There were six Games events this year, all being one-day events:

- Quiz Night
- Table Tennis
- Chess
- Board Games Evening
- Amazing Race
- Pool



Overall Standings

Sport Competition

1st Studholme
2nd Te Rangihīroa
3rd St Margaret's



Games Competition

1st Studholme
2nd St Margaret's
3rd Salmond

Cultural Competition

1st Carrington
2nd St Margaret's
3rd Te Rangihīroa



Sustainability

Otago's dedication to food sustainability has been recognised with a prestigious, global certification – the first University outside of the United Kingdom and the first hospitality business in Aotearoa to do so.

The University has achieved a two-star rating, out of a possible three, in the Sustainable Restaurant Association's Food Made Good Standard – a global accreditation and rating system that helps food service providers operate more sustainably.

The University scored 69 per cent – one per cent off a three-star rating.

This achievement isn't the result of one initiative or one department – it's the outcome of genuine collaboration across our food services, sustainability team, suppliers and wider University community including the Food Science and Human Nutrition Departments.

University College's Food Service Manager, Dylan Henry, says thinking and working more sustainably is one of the priorities in all of Otago's kitchens such as the offering of plant-based meals served in colleges.

Teamwork ... With the University's new Food Made Good certification are from left, Bachelor of Science taura Ella Court, Otago's Head of Sustainability Dr Ray O'Brien and Food Service Manager Dylan Henry. The trio all played a part in the process of applying for the certification.



UniPrint has had a challenging year in 2025. We saw significant change following the retirement of Ian Hobson the long-standing general manager of UniPrint in May.

UniPrint highlights of the year will include the safe and secure production and delivery of exams totalling over 49000 individual exam papers for the second semester exams alone. In the second semester we marked over 17000 multi choice exams during the exam period in a very short time frame to ensure they were returned to receptive university departments. We also print all the individual degree certificates (about 6000) that our graduates will receive over the year, and we will have printed the graduation booklets and tickets that all students, parents and whanau receive when attending the graduation ceremonies in the town hall. In 2025 this will number over 4000 Booklets and tickets.

It has been a busy year producing ID cards for students and staff. This year we have produced nearly 13000 cards. This is nearly 10,000 cards less than last year, as this year we have introduced the three-year ID card meaning a significant drop in the number of cards produced – offering significant savings in costs and time for the university.

UniPrint plays a major role in the coordination of the UniFlow System. This includes the overarching control and operation of over 600 printers around the campus's and throughout New Zealand that the university has in use. UniFlow is a complex technical system we coordinate between ourselves, I.T.S and with our contracted supplier – Canon.

We end 2025 with major changes to implement going into 2026. The world of printing is changing and there are challenges ahead. However, the team here have been diligent, professional and have worked well together with ongoing respect and integrity. It has been a privilege to lead them and work alongside them in the latter half of 2025.

Martin Jones
Acting General Manager
UniPrint





Ōtākou
Whakaihu Waka

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO