



## **Mitch Zandstra – Alumni**

### **Graduated with a Bachelor of Physical Education in May 2015**

**1. Why did you choose your degree programme, and what made you enrol at the University of Otago?**

I first visited Dunedin, when my sister was down there studying. The student vibe and environment automatically had me hooked so the next step was to find a degree suitable for me. Because of my love and passion for sport, it was a no brainer to do a Bachelor of Physical Education.

**2. What did you enjoy most about your academic journey at the University of Otago?**

For me, it was the wide range of papers I took. The Physical Education degree offers a holistic approach to learning. I did dance and gymnastics for a year, medical papers, went on camps and much more. Also the support from the Pacific Islands Centre helped me achieve my academic goals.

**3. During your study what were the key relationships that mattered most? What were the key sources of support you encountered?**

The relationships I had with my friends were the most important. University is not easy and you go through some highs and lows during your time. However, having good friends who are always there for you, makes for a better experience. Also having professional relationships with your lecturers is important because they are just as interested in your learning as you are. The Pacific Island Centre also provided a lot of support with tutorials and food.

**4. What are you doing post-graduation?**

After my undergraduate degree, I went to the University of Waikato (closer to home) to complete a one year postgraduate diploma in teaching. I am currently a teacher at my old school, Tauranga Boys College.

**5. What was it like living and studying in Dunedin at the University of Otago?**

Dunedin was an awesome experience for me during the 4 years I was down there. The friendships I made, teams I was in and the people I met created some of the best memories of my life to date. Apart from the weather, I believe it is the best place to study. An environment where 20,000 students are in one area, in which you never find yourself with nothing to do.

**6. What do you remember about your graduation day?**

Awesome day, started off with taking photos at all my old flats and hall. Then had a great breakfast and ceremony with the Pacific students, whilst being supported by family and friends. From there my class of 2010 met up and walked down town for the parade. A very enjoyable experience.

**7. What advice would you give to new students?**

Embrace your time down there and get amongst all the events. Some friends you make will be life long friends.

**Pacific Development**

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