

# SACRIFICE AND TENACITY PAYS OFF

## Camille Aroha Harris

BHSc, Midwifery

My grandparents adopted me when I was six weeks old and raised me in Mangere Bridge. We're from the Far North in Te Kao so I went back and forth up north all the time. When I was ten my grandfather died and my mum came back into my life. I was living in Christchurch and about fifteen years old when I first thought about becoming a midwife after going to a friend's sister's birth. Something in me liked the midwifery world but my careers adviser said I needed to live a little bit first, which was good advice, so I became a hairdresser.



### Revisiting the dream

When I finally decided to study midwifery at AUT, I had been out of school for twenty-three years and had run a hair salon business for eleven years.

It was tough at first and I think I underestimated the intensity of the degree. In my first year, I continued to work full time and didn't give my studies the proper time and effort needed. Because of that I failed a paper, so my pathway's been a year longer than it should be.

### Sacrifice and support

Running the hair salon provided a big part of our income but when I took up midwifery studies, my husband Rob had to become the main breadwinner and cook. If I was on call, my bigger kids helped to get my little one ready and get her to school. Everybody in my family has had to sacrifice in some way and we've certainly not had the frills anymore since doing this degree.

#### Scholarship

The Pu Ora Matatini Midwifery Scholarship, which is funded by the Tindall Foundation, helped take some of the financial pressure off my family. Because of their sacrifices, I wanted to make the most of the scholarship

to advance myself.

We need more Māori midwives but many Māori students don't go for scholarships or don't know how, and I wanted to show others the opportunities from engaging with the scholarship.

### Kia Ora Hauora

A couple of years ago I learned about Kia Ora Hauora through Ngā Maia, the Māori midwifery group. They were holding an annual general meeting and conference for Māori midwives at Tapu Te Ranga Marae in Wellington. Kia Ora Hauora funded a few of us students to go down, that was a big part of my involvement with them.

### Boosting Māori Midwife Numbers

I'm in my third year now and my plans have always been to work in South Auckland where the majority of Māori whānau are. More Māori women are seeking Māori midwives but are continuously being turned away because there aren't enough Māori midwives. We have that cultural understanding and we can connect. Building trust and relationships with Māori women and their whānau is a huge responsibility, but it can help you deliver good ante-natal care and hopefully better, healthier outcomes.

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