

# Good things come to those who WORK HARD

## Jamaine Fraser

NGĀTI RANGIWEWEHI

Kia ora. I am a Radiation Therapist (RT) at Waikato Hospital. I grew up in Owkata, Rotorua. I went to Rotorua Lakes High School. At school the sciences were not my strong point. It was not until later in life that I grasped scientific concepts. By this time, I had completed a Bachelor of Design: Industrial Design (BDES 1st Hon) at Massey University and a Masters of Design: Product Design (MDES) at Unitec.



### Career transition

I worked as an Industrial Designer designing simulation products for defence forces around the world. However, a lot of time was spent in front of a computer.

I was aware of radiation therapy as a career because my partner (now wife) studied radiation therapy. However, it was a forum I attended at Waikato University that was promoting the health industry as a career for Māori. There was a sense of urgency to increase the number of

Māori health professionals. It was at this point I thought I might give radiation therapy a go.

### Kia Ora Hauora

I was in my first year of radiation therapy study at Otago University and Kia Ora Hauora (KOH) organised a hui. At this time, I was not aware of KOH. I decided to attend the hui to learn more about them and discovered they promote health as a career option for Māori by running workshops across Aotearoa for Māori youth. I was lucky enough to gain employment with KOH travelling to many different secondary schools teaching health related topics to year 9 and 10 students. I really enjoyed this experience and getting involved within the community and I have kept in contact with KOH ever since.

### Prepping for interviews

I think the best advice I could offer when preparing for course related interviews (or any interviews for that matter) is to ensure your Cover Letter, C.V, answers to interview questions and referees all correspond all while addressing the specifications of the role (i.e radiation therapy student or a qualified professional). If all these facets do not resonate with one another it can be difficult for the interview panel to grasp the full story of you as

a radiation therapy student or in a professional setting, an employee.

In an interview, when answering questions, I use an acronym imparted to me by my mum.

**S** – what was the situation?

**T** – what was the task you had to do?

**A** – what was the action you took?

**R** – what was the result of your action?

**E** – was it the best decision to make? If not, why not? If so, would you do this again,

### Adapting to a new career pathway

My first year of radiotherapy study was all theory and the second and third years were theory and clinical. I did my clinical placements in Wellington and Auckland. The biggest learning curve for me was adapting to a different cohort of colleagues. My previous employment history was framed around the trades, fabrication work-shops and engineering, all male dominated. Radiation therapy is largely female dominated, so it is matter of me adapting to this new environment for me.

### Patient rapport

During my study, I also learnt different techniques to build patient rapport. This I believe is the most important aspect. Building a relationship with patients. Clinical skills are important, but personal interaction skills are equally so and at times, even more important.

### Future aspirations

Currently my wife and I are renovating our home and my previous experience within the trades and skills learnt in my previous study are very handy. Sometimes I dabble with the idea of going further and studying medicine, but for now, I want to focus on my career as a radiation therapist and keeping my wife happy.