

# BRIGHT SPARKS



FOCUS ON CURRENT GRANTEEES ON THEIR FULBRIGHT EXCHANGES / LEARNING FILMMAKING SKILLS /  
DEVELOPING INNER STRENGTH & ADAPTABILITY / A TEACHER WITH A PASSION FOR HELPING  
STRUGGLING LEARNERS SUCCEED / CONSIDERING STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS



**Penelope Borland**  
Executive Director

## From the Executive Director

In this issue, we focus on our current cohort of Fulbright New Zealand grantees. We bring you interviews with and comments from some of our outstanding people who are in the midst of their exchange right now.

In reading and reflecting on the experiences of our grantees here in this issue, I was struck by how transformative our awards are for people both professionally and personally. I also felt this recently when our 2016 American grantees spent a few days in our Wellington offices wrapping up their exchanges and sharing with us the journeys they had been on in New Zealand. Something our grantees have in common is that Fulbrighters extend themselves personally, academically and professionally. On their exchanges, they may find themselves out of their comfort zone, far from the familiarities of home and at times under academic pressure. Fulbrighters grow by learning to overcome these challenges, embrace different perspectives and build personal resilience. They make new friends, study hard, learn about the communities they find themselves in and share knowledge from home with those around them - ultimately gaining a new understanding of home and the world from the experience. Often, I'm told our alumni feel they have been changed positively by their time abroad.

I hope that you enjoy this issue of Bright Sparks. We welcome feedback.



**Dr Colin Kennedy**  
Director Programmes & Engagement  
colin@fulbright.org.nz



**Jazial Crossley**  
Communications Manager  
jazial@fulbright.org.nz



**Pip Climo**  
Programme Manager  
pip@fulbright.org.nz



**Magnolia Wilson**  
Programme Manager  
magnolia@fulbright.org.nz



**Julie Williams**  
Accountant  
julie@fulbright.org.nz



**Lyn Allday**  
Receptionist/Administrator  
lyn@fulbright.org.nz



**Kyla Orr**  
Alumni and Events Manager  
kyla@fulbright.org.nz

### WHERE TO FIND US

[www.fulbright.org.nz](http://www.fulbright.org.nz)

Level 8, 120 Featherston Street  
(entrance on Waring Taylor Street)  
PO Box 3465  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand



[twitter.com/fulbrightnz](https://twitter.com/fulbrightnz)

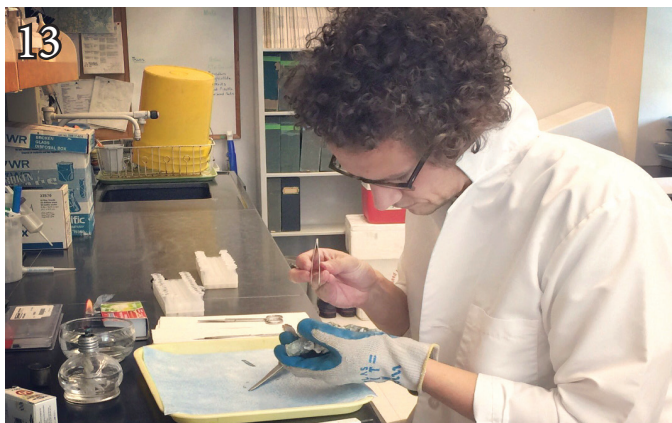


[facebook.com/fulbrightnz](https://facebook.com/fulbrightnz)



[instagram.com/fulbrightnewzealand](https://instagram.com/fulbrightnewzealand)





# Contents

- 03 News from current grantees and alumni
- 05 Learning filmmaking skills to document kaupapa Māori and the arts
- 07 Becoming a more nimble thinker, more critical reader & more knowledgeable writer
- 08 Developing inner strength and adaptability
- 09 Nanotechnology research, music festivals, embracing cold winters and exploring Chicago
- 11 A teacher with a passion for helping struggling learners succeed
- 12 Considering the strengths and weaknesses of healthcare systems
- 13 Gathering information on oyster parasites
- 15 Southern hospitality and top notch academics
- 16 Lindsey Pointer: “I have met incredible mentors”
- 17 Hooked on linguistics



**Janna van Hasselt** (right) from Christchurch used her 2012 Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Award to complete her Master of Fine Arts degree in Printmedia, specialising in lithography combined with ceramics and painting, at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois. She has recently completed her first public art project, Buzz Carpet at ReSTART, the Christchurch container mall. Buzz Carpet (left) is an interactive ground mural which truly engulfs



its site. A tension between the planar and dimensional spaces creates a skin with an ambiguous sense of figure and ground. The pattern is derived from the stitches in crochet and mimics the makeup of surrounding building sites that form its back-drop. Visitors can engage directly with the piece on many different levels and will be dazed by its intense colour buzz.

Janna says, "It's a huge carpet mural engulfing a lane. It was produced with SCAPE Public Art with some help from a Fulton Hogan road-marking team, although my husband and I painted the pattern ourselves."



The Chairman of the New Zealand Harkness Fellowships Trust Board Ross Tanner is pleased to announce the New Zealand Harkness Fellow for 2016 is **Peter Coleman** (left). Mr Coleman, of Wellington, is Strategic Adviser to the Chief of the New Zealand Defence Force.

For over sixty years, Harkness Fellowships (administered by Fulbright New Zealand) have enabled mid-career professionals who aspire to significant leadership roles

within New Zealand, particularly in but not limited to the public sector, to benefit from new ideas, practices and contacts in the United States. The Fellowships reinforce New Zealand-United States links by enabling aspiring leaders to benefit from a programme of personal study at a US research institution or other organisation.

Mr Coleman will use the Fellowship to travel to the United States in 2017 to learn from work undertaken within the U.S. military measuring and understanding the cultural traits of organisations. His project is entitled: 'Culture counts, so let's count culture: Considering quantitative tools for supporting culture-change in the public sector, with a specific focus on enhancing military integration'.

## In memoriam

We were saddened to hear of the recent passing of the following Fulbright New Zealand alumni.

**Lyle Fastier**, who had a 1949 Fulbright New Zealand Research Scholar Award to study microbiology at the University of California.

**Sue Bulmer**, who had a 1956 Fulbright US Graduate Award to New Zealand to study anthropology at The University of Auckland.

**Rod Bielecki**, who had a 1960 Fulbright New Zealand Scholar Award to study plant physiology at the University of California.



Fulbright alumna **Dr Edwina Pio** (right) has recently published 'Religious Diversity in New Zealand Workplaces', with the New Zealand Work Research Institute and AUT Group for Immigration & Inclusion Research.

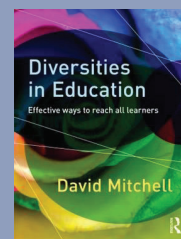
In the foreword to the publication, New Zealand Race Relations Commissioner Susan Devoy says, "Dr Pio understands the challenges and opportunities we face as one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world".

Religious Diversity in New Zealand Workplaces is available online at AUT University's website.



Fulbright New Zealand alumnus **Simon O'Neill** (left), the opera singer dubbed "THE Wagnerian tenor of his generation", received an honorary doctorate at Victoria University of Wellington's graduation ceremony in December.

He was granted a 1998 Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Award to study music at the Manhattan School of Music. Mr O'Neill is a principal artist with the Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. He is highly sought after across Europe and the United States, and has performed on some of the most distinguished stages, including Milan's Teatro alla Scala and at Bayreuth in Germany, and under many esteemed conductors. Mr O'Neill has received a number of accolades including being a grand finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in 2002, and New Zealand Arts Foundation Laureate in 2005.



Fulbright New Zealand alumnus **David Mitchell** has published a new book, *Diversities in Education*.

David received a 1981 Fulbright Scholar Award to research education at Princeton University. He is Adjunct Professor at the University of Canterbury.

Fulbright New Zealand alumnus **Roberto Rabel** (right) has been granted Emeritus Professor status at Victoria University of Wellington, following retirement from his management role as Pro Vice-Chancellor (International Engagement). He has also been appointed a Professorial Fellow in Victoria's Centre for Strategic Studies.

He was awarded a New Zealand Graduate Student scholarship in 1978 to complete his PhD in History at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. He has a BA (Hons) in History and International Politics from Victoria University of Wellington. Professor Rabel is Vice President of the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs.



# Learning filmmaking skills to document kaupapa Māori and the arts

*Ana Montgomery-Neutze (Muaūpoko/Ngāi Tara, Ngāti Pāriri hapū) from Kāpiti is using her Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Award to complete a Masters in Social Documentary Film at The School of Visual Arts in New York. Ana graduated with a Bachelor of Design (Hons) from Massey University in 2004, a Postgraduate Diploma in Secondary Education from Victoria University of Wellington in 2006, and a Diploma in Digital Film from the Southern Institute of Technology in 2015.*

The purpose of me coming to the United States is to complete my Masters in Social Documentary Film. My ultimate goal is to become a New Zealand-based documentary filmmaker specialising in kaupapa Māori and the arts.

I arrived in New York about four weeks before school started and I am glad that I did, because it took me some time to get things in order. The first six weeks were challenging. From apartment searching during the heatwave to setting up a bank account - nothing was easy. After six weeks though, I found myself in a wonderful apartment with five lovely roommates from all over the world, and I now feel very much at home in this amazing city.

Two weeks after my arrival in the US, I was fortunate to attend a Fulbright Gateway orientation in Miami. This was an incredible experience, the highlight of which was meeting and spending time with people from over 40 countries during the three days. I formed friendships during that week that I know will continue for years to come.



Ana (front row, fourth from left) with her classmates

experience so far, with the greatest challenge being the sheer volume of work required. In saying this, it is a challenge that I am thoroughly enjoying. It is wonderful to be doing something every day that I love, with people who are as passionate about it as I am. Our classes are engaging, our professors are filmmakers at the top of their game and are wonderful teachers to boot, and our class is small (only 17 in total, 16 of whom are women), so we have already formed close bonds with one another.

Most of us are international students, which means that we bring different perspectives to the work we do, and constantly challenge each other to think in different ways which is important given the industry



“

It is wonderful to be doing something every day that I love, with people who are as passionate about it as I am

”

we intend to work in. A typical week has us in class from Monday through Thursday until 9pm, and then shooting, editing and completing assignments from Friday through Sunday.

This semester I have had little time to do terribly much outside of schoolwork, but I have hosted three visiting Fulbrighters in my home, trained to become a ‘Global Guide’, participated in a fundraiser for New York children’s hospitals, and attended Indigenous People’s Day on Randall’s Island. I was also lucky to receive tickets to an off-Broadway show and a classical musical concert courtesy of One To World, who are another fantastic resource for Fulbright students here in the US.

In addition to meeting a whole lot of amazing new people, and having an opportunity to do what I love every day, some of the highlights of my time in the US so far have to be: working with our incredible professors; having an opportunity to hear from and speak to inspirational people and attending world-renowned film festival ‘Doc NYC’.

I am grateful that I am here, and for what I have been able to achieve so far, and I am incredibly excited about what is yet to come.



# Becoming a more nimble thinker, more critical reader & more knowledgeable writer

*Jeremy Olds from Auckland is using his 2016 Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Award to complete a Master of Arts in Journalism specialising in arts and culture at Columbia University in New York. Jeremy graduated with a BCS (Hons) from AUT University in 2012.*

Was there ever a more important time in history to consider the role of the journalist? After the events of late 2016 in the United States, some hard questions were being asked in the classrooms at Columbia Journalism School. Brain teasers like: Can a fractured news environment be mended? Can our work still make a difference? Does the truth even matter?

The discussions have been nuanced, emotional, searching. It has made me realise I am here at a time

of historic significance, and with that comes opportunities for learning that can never be replicated.

I am fast approaching the half-way point of my masters study, but already I sense a shift in my journalistic practice. Studying under some of the world's most prominent reporters has made me a more nimble thinker, a more critical reader, a more knowledgeable writer. Being in New York enhances everything I learn in the classroom. One Tuesday morning in class, we analysed Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel Maus. Less than a month later, I was face-to-face with Spiegelman, who was speaking at a book store near my apartment.

The experience has its challenges. The academic discourse is passionate and unforgiving of trepidation. The workload is staggering. My walls are papered with To Do lists and deadline reminders. My desk is more books than wood. But the pressure is like a strong coffee: It is heart-racing, energising fuel, helping me function in a way I previously could not.

That said, I could really use a good coffee. The stuff here is garbage water.



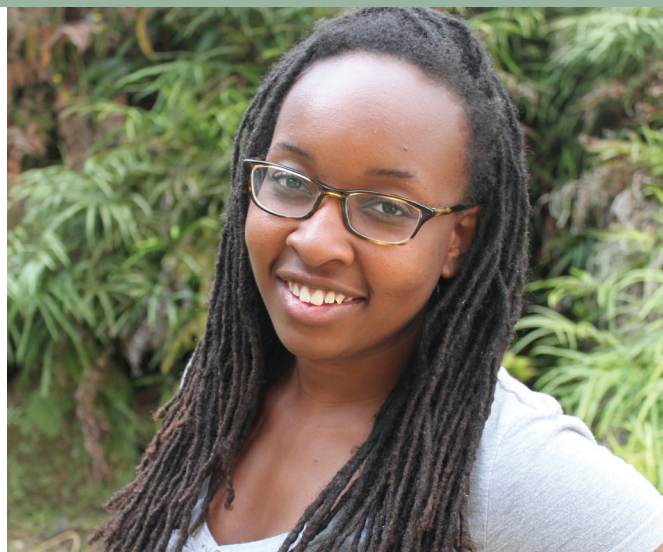


# Developing inner strength and adaptability

*Kandyce Anderson from Indianapolis, Indiana used her 2016 Fulbright US Graduate Award to complete a Post-Graduate Diploma in Global Education, focusing on theoretical underpinnings of kaupapa Māori theory at the University of Waikato. Kandyce graduated with a BA from DePauw University in 2015.*

There are no words to describe how this exchange in Hamilton, New Zealand has transformed my life. Since arriving in January, I have been doing independent cultural research through a Post-Graduate Diploma of Education. My life consisted of wrapping my head around educational theory, philosophy, and literature during the week - completing essays, literature reviews, and reflections. Then on the weekends, realising that I needed to get out, I went on day hikes and trips.

The biggest challenge, I believe, was the independence and discipline needed to go to my office every day and set plans for myself. My work was equally reflective as it was theoretical and most of what I produced could not have been directed by my supervisors. That being said, I enjoyed the opportunity to explore my own interests in a way I would have never been able to without Fulbright. Personally, my ability to adapt to unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable situations has immensely increased. I learned how to depend on my own inner strength and confidence to motivate me and my work. The close connections I've made thus far supported and carried me through my time here. My friends are from all over: Tonga, New Zealand,



India, and Nigeria. I recommend to anyone who does this exchange that they do not devalue the friends and mentors you find on this journey.

Because of my work studying indigenous rights and history, I have found a new understanding of cultural difference and respect towards others. I plan to advocate for the political equality of all people of colour in the United States. I will take my passion to encourage the embracing of cultural difference towards the platform of Doctoral Studies in Multicultural Education.

# Nanotechnology research, music festivals, cold winters and exploring Chicago

*David Collinson from Auckland is using his 2015 Fulbright Science and Innovation Graduate Award to complete a PhD in Mechanical Engineering specialising in nanomechanics and nanomaterials at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. David graduated with a BE (Hons) from the University of Canterbury in 2014.*

My research focuses on the fundamental understanding of how materials behave when nanometre-sized (1 billionth of a meter!) particles are added. Nanoparticles can greatly improve the strength of some materials and give them various special properties. To understand how this works we can examine the materials at tiny length scales using specialised equipment to see the nanoparticles and how they interact with the surrounding material. By understanding this interaction, we can make significant progress in creating the next generation of materials.

My inspiration for studying nanotechnology came during my final year of undergrad at the University of Canterbury. The final year projects that we do was an insight into research, and during the project I realised how much I enjoyed the process of discovery and learning something new. It's exciting to think that you are doing work that have never been done before. Particularly, I am inspired by how scientists and engineers can create and make discoveries in the foreign, unseen of nanotechnology.

history in this field. The location of Northwestern really appealed to me. It's situated in a town called Evanston just outside of Chicago so I was looking forward to being able to experience the American college town while having a metropolis next door to explore.

I hadn't been to Illinois before going on my Fulbright exchange, and my first impression was that it is flat,



Above: David and new friends at a music festival in Chicago



very flat. But beyond that, I have found people in the Midwest to be warm and welcoming so Evanston has been a very enjoyable place to spend my first year in the USA. Chicago has also been amazing to explore and its size is so far beyond any city in New Zealand.

As my postgraduate study continues, I take less and less coursework and focus more on research. I have found that research requires a different mindset to coursework so I have had to make some adjustments. Your due dates and goals generally are stretched out compared to classes but you have to work just as hard to meet them which takes a lot of self-motivation.

I have really enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate and work with a diverse range of people at Northwestern. For my research I work closely not just with people from my own group, but also students who specialise in robotics research and other areas of materials science.

I love having Chicago right on my doorstep to explore during my downtime. It's very easy to get into Chicago and explore the diverse range of food and cultures. Chicago seems endless to me and there is always more to do.

My biggest learning curve was learning to deal with the winters here. Winter in Chicago starts in November and it generally doesn't get warm until April/May. Temperatures can get as low as -15C and struggle to get above 0C for several months! The buildings here are constructed with this in mind, but being outside in -15C with wind chill on top of that



is certainly an experience.

I think the most defining experience of American life I had was the Thanksgiving dinner I had with an American family local to Chicago. The Fulbright Association in Chicago has set up a program for families to volunteer to host a Fulbright exchange student. The family I went to had a lot of extended family at their place as well and put on a veritable feast with three turkeys, stuffing, biscuits, cranberry sauce, and various salads among other things. To complete the cultural exchange, I made a Pavlova to bring along for dessert. Afterwards everyone sat down to watch an American football match (Green Bay Packers vs Chicago Bears). They were very warm and welcoming.

I think international education is important because we are able to expose ourselves to a broader range of views and opinions from people with diverse backgrounds that we would never otherwise get to meet.

# A teacher with a passion for helping struggling learners succeed

*Sarah Kennedy from Nelson is using her 2016 Fulbright New Zealand Distinguished Award in Teaching to research the transition from school for students with high learning needs and which aspects of leadership around this process produce the most effective outcomes. Sarah is Head of the Special Education Department at Waimea College.*

I became a teacher 30 years ago because I had so enjoyed being a Camp America horse riding instructor in my gap year in Vermont. I went on to specialise as a Special Education teacher when I realised I had a passion for finding ways to help struggling learners succeed. At Waimea College Special Education Department in Nelson, I enjoy working alongside 40 outstanding students and their families as part of a dynamic, committed teaching team. No two days are the same!

It has been great to have the luxury of time to study and think on my exchange. I am enjoying the friendships within the cohort of 21 fellow Fulbright teachers from nine other countries – Palestine, Israel, Singapore, Finland, Taiwan, Indian, Morocco, Mexico and Botswana.

A highlight about this exchange so far was a magnificent weekend trip to Chicago with my Fulbright group. I am focussing on Transition Education for students accessing Special Education support – how teaching self determination skills will improve long term, quality of life outcomes.



It has been a challenge to adapt to living on my own. I'm missing my family and friends and trying hard to apply critical thinking to the multitude of readings from my two post graduate University courses in Comparative Education and Evidence Based Practice in Special Education. Both have challenged my brain from different angles!



# Considering the strengths and weaknesses of healthcare systems

*Mataroria Lyndon (Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Whatua) from Whangarei is using his 2016 Fulbright Science and Innovation Graduate Award to complete a Master of Public Health in Health Policy and Management at Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts. Mataroria graduated with a MBCbB from The University of Auckland in 2011.*

I came to the US to learn about a healthcare system that is completely different to the one in New Zealand. I am learning about how the system is shaped by its history, how major legislations such as the Affordable Care Act were implemented, and how I can bring some of these ideas back home to improve healthcare access and address chronic diseases. Since coming to the US, I've had the opportunity to explore research about ethnic disparities in health in the US, while reflecting on our policies and actions needed to close the gaps for Māori. During my time here, I've also learnt how to craft policy recommendations about challenging issues in healthcare such as physician assisted dying, managing Zika virus outbreaks, increasing immunisation coverage, and reining in the high cost of prescription drugs, among other things!

My Fulbright has offered me a rare chance to understand and reflect on a health system that is foreign to my own. It is these experiences that are shaping my thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of the NZ health system. I hope to one day take a lead role and be an advocate for improving health care in my own country.



Since commencing my Fulbright exchange, I've had many other Māori students contacting me to express their interest in studying in the US, and the steps needed to apply. It was after I met other Fulbrighters (Catherine Yang, Kiri Toki, and Kingi Snelgar) and heard their journeys, that I was inspired and felt it possible to apply.

I hope I can be that same person for many more Māori, that they feel it is possible - to pave the way for future Fulbrighters.





# Gathering information on oyster parasites

*Henry Lane from Auckland will use his 2016 Fulbright Science and Innovation Graduate Award to research the phylogeography of the oyster parasite Bonamia at the College of William and Mary, Virginia, towards his PhD in Zoology from the University of Otago. Henry graduated with a BSc in 2011 and an MSc (First Class Hons) in 2013 from Victoria University of Wellington.*

As a visiting student researcher I've been working at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), College of William and Mary, within Prof. Ryan Carnegie's Shellfish Pathology Research group.

Academically, I have been immersed equally in enhancing my own PhD thesis through newly acquired skills and information gathered, as well as new projects that centre on elucidating the evolutionary relationship between the valuable Chesapeake Bay oyster fishery and parasitic disease.

The memorable times on the road for fieldwork along Virginia's Eastern Shore, surf trips further abroad, and visiting my Fulbright buddy – Dr. Dominique Didier – in Pennsylvania, have been balanced with equally memorable times at home in Gloucester Point. There, amongst other things, I have gone fishing, played in the inaugural staff-student softball game, experienced a proper American Halloween complete with pumpkin carving, enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast (including a homemade Kiwi pavlova!), and trawled through the plethora of local Virginian breweries with accompanying local seafood.

All of these experiences have not only enriched my knowledge of the USA – whether it be culturally,

biogeographically, or politically – but it has provided a new perspective on how I look at New Zealand which has enabled me to have a far greater understanding of my own country.

As I approach the halfway point of my exchange I look back at the personal and academic relationships I have forged and I look forward to the new relationships that await from upcoming events in the New Year. If the second half of my exchange is as enlightening as the first then I will indeed return to New Zealand more enriched than I originally could have hoped for. For now, however, it's time to get into the festive cheer with my VIMS peers and hope for a white Christmas.



# Southern hospitality and top notch academics

*Clara Pau (Samoan, Pākehā) from Alexandra will use her Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Award to complete a PhD in Political Development, specialising in community development and policy in the Pacific at Tulane University, New Orleans. Clara graduated with a BA (Hons) in 2012, BSc in 2013 and an MA in 2014 from the University of Otago.*

Pursuing my PhD has always been something I've wanted to do – and being able to carry it out in the US, let alone New Orleans, with some top notch academics has so far been a grand adventure.

New Orleans is an amazingly diverse city, full of culture, and still very much recovering from Hurricane Katrina. It has been incredible to hear stories and see the effects first hand of the flood. Southern hospitality is real down here, which has been so amazing. After four days at my Gateway Orientation in Miami, I was so lucky to be hosted when I arrived by the parents of a US Fulbrighter to NZ, both who embody Southern hospitality and helped me get on my feet.

My biggest challenge so far has been the shock hitting the ground and suddenly realising I was actually in the US after such a long time talking about it. Combined with being in a new environment with only strangers, then having to concentrate on school work, made for some tough times.

My highlight so far has to be the music and food. As a burgeoning trumpet player, this city has been incredible for music. I try and go to a show every fortnight and there is no shortage of good shows.



I'm currently in now, there is a significant amount of reading and a relatively small amount of contact time (six hours a week). So a lot of my time is spent reading, wandering through the neighbourhoods of New Orleans, listening to music and trying different food with my classmates.

New Orleans has some of the best food in the world, and the Cajun cuisine is definitely my favourite so far. Luckily I have a couple more years to try it all!



# “I have met incredible mentors”

*Lindsey Pointer from Fort Collins, Colorado used her 2016 Fulbright US Graduate Award to complete a Master of Arts degree in Public Policy, specialising in the role of rituals in restorative justice, at Victoria University of Wellington. Lindsey graduated with a BA from Colorado College in 2013.*

Flying into Wellington for the first time, I remember looking down at the green hills dotted with houses, the rocky coastline, and the unbelievably blue water and thinking it looked like Neverland. There have been days in the winter months when Wellington didn't look quite so shiny, but it has still always felt like Neverland to me!

The opportunities that have opened up for me since arriving here have been beyond my wildest hopes. I have had the chance to take a deep dive into researching restorative justice while also having the opportunity to facilitate cases and provide training at the University. Each week, my desire for a balance between academic inquiry and practical application has been met beautifully. I have met incredible mentors who have provided guidance for both my studies and my personal life. On the weekends and during breaks, we have had the chance to explore New Zealand and appreciate the unmatched natural beauty of this place. We bought a minivan and named it “Leeward” after picking up some new vocabulary in Windy Wellington. With Leeward, we have been able to explore freely and have been on some of the most breathtaking hikes of my life.

After a year of learning and exploring, I have decided to expand my studies here to a PhD in Wellington. I am so grateful to continue the adventure.





## Hooked on linguistics

*Simon Todd (Ngāi Tahu) from Christchurch is using his 2013 Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Award to complete his PhD in Linguistics, specialising in the intersection between language variation and change, and computational methods and models, at Stanford University in California. Simon graduated with a BA (Hons) from the University of Canterbury in 2012.*

### **What are you specialising in for your PhD?**

I am in my 4th year of study towards a PhD in Linguistics. My dissertation research concerns the connection between asymmetries in spoken word perception and asymmetries in rates of sound change in words of different frequencies. I am combining computational modeling, psycholinguistic experimentation, and large-scale statistical analyses of the development of the New Zealand accent to show that common words are more easily understood than uncommon words when pronounced in an unusual manner, and that this can cause common words to

exhibit changes in accent faster or slower than uncommon words (depending on the circumstances).

### **How did you come interested in linguistics?**

I decided to try Linguistics in undergrad because I was interested in language, and I soon became hooked! I was also studying Applied Mathematics at the time, and a Research Assistantship at the New Zealand Institute of Language, Brain and Behaviour (NZILBB) made me realise that I could combine the two, using computational and statistical modeling alongside experiments to study language change and



evolution. I find this really exciting because we have no way of looking into the distant past or into people's minds to directly examine how language works and changes, but triangulating with these different methods lets us nevertheless shed light on such mysteries.

**You are back home in New Zealand for a few months in 2016 at the University of Canterbury. Tell us about what you're working on.**

I'm here working on my dissertation for three months. Because it involves a case study in New Zealand English, I have been lucky enough to get my undergrad advisor at the University of Canterbury on my dissertation committee, so I'm here under her supervision. We're working together to complete the computational modelling component of the dissertation, which emerged from my work at NZILBB several years ago. I'll also be collecting data from historical recordings of New Zealanders born between 1850 and the 1990s — the entire history of New Zealand English — which will feed into my dissertation as well.

**Had you been to California before going on your Fulbright?**

No — in fact, I had never been further than Australia! I was warned a lot about culture shock, but life in California is actually very similar to life in New Zealand; the cultural attitudes, climate, and landscape were all familiar, even if everything was on a much larger scale. On my first weekend there, I went on a bus tour to Muir Woods on the north side of San Francisco, and it felt just like I was in the hills around Canterbury.

**What is the most challenging thing about your studies in the US?**

To date, the most challenging thing has been keeping up with constant deadlines and course requirements. For a PhD in Linguistics at Stanford, the first 3 years are spent taking classes while completing two Qualifying Papers (mini-theses), a reading exam in a second language, and a research paper investigating a third language. This contrasts sharply with the 3-year research-only PhD in NZ! On top of that, Stanford is on the quarter system; there are three quarters, each lasting 10 weeks with no break, plus an 8-week research session over summer — quite a bit more intense than the semester model of four 6-week terms that I was used to! In the first year, I was required to take 3-4 classes per quarter, each of which had an original research project due at the end of the quarter, on top of which I was working on my first Qualifying Paper — it was only thanks to my experience with the hectic Honours schedule and research life at NZILBB that I was able to keep up with this.

**What is the most enjoyable thing about your studies in the US?**

The flipside of the hectic schedule is that I have had the opportunity to learn much more than would have been possible anywhere else, and to apply that knowledge in new and interesting ways. This chance to branch out and set a broad foundation has been really valuable. I've thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn from, and work with, so many talented professors and fellow students on diverse topics with wonderful support and resources.

# About Fulbright New Zealand awards

Fulbright New Zealand offers a range of exchange awards for New Zealand and United States citizens wanting to study, research, teach or present their work in each other's country.

## AWARD TYPE

Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Awards  
Fulbright Science & Innovation Graduate Awards  
Fulbright-EQC Graduate Award in Natural Disaster Research  
Fulbright-Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga Graduate Award  
Fulbright Specialist Awards  
Fulbright US Scholar Awards  
Fulbright New Zealand Scholar Awards  
Fulbright-Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga Scholar Award  
Fulbright US Graduate Awards  
New Zealand Harkness Fellowships  
Fulbright-Scholar in Residence Program  
Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Programme for NZ Teachers  
Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Programme for US Teachers  
Fulbright-Creative New Zealand Pacific Writers' Residency  
Ian Axford (New Zealand) Fellowships in Public Policy  
Fulbright-Wallace Arts Trust Award  
John F. Kennedy Memorial Fellowship

## APPLICATION DEADLINE

1 August annually  
1 August annually  
1 August annually  
1 August annually  
1 August annually  
1 August annually  
1 October annually  
1 October annually  
11 October annually  
14 October annually  
14 October annually  
1 November annually  
1 December annually  
1 March annually  
1 April annually  
26 July annually  
By appointment only

.....

**Fulbright New Zealand is jointly funded by the governments of New Zealand and the United States of America.** We gratefully acknowledge additional sponsorship and donations from generous supporters including organisations, philanthropists and individuals. To make a donation, please visit [www.fulbright.org.nz/donate](http://www.fulbright.org.nz/donate)



**Ministry of Business,  
Innovation & Employment**

