

2026
Donor Impact Report



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

**TE HERENGA WAKA—
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
OF WELLINGTON**

ALUMNI APPEAL SCHOLARSHIPS



THE STORY OF YOUR IMPACT BEGINS HERE

\$75,577

RAISED FROM THE 2025 ALUMNI APPEAL CAMPAIGN

280

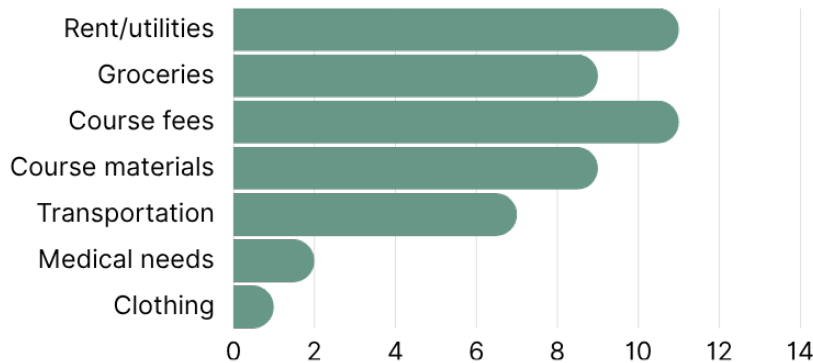
GENEROUS DONORS WHO MADE A GIFT

15

ALUMNI APPEAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED IN 2026

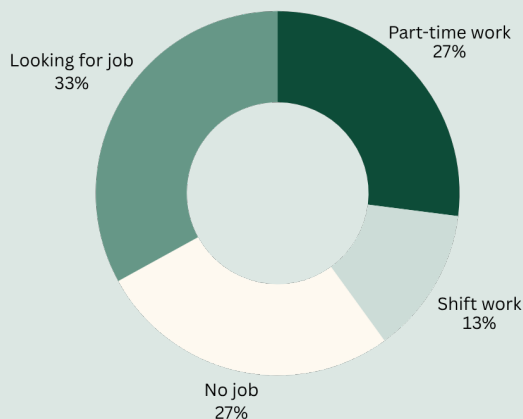
Thanks to the incredible generosity of alumni like you, the Alumni Appeal Scholarships programme was able to support a new cohort of second-year students as they pursue their academic dreams.

The second year of university can be extra challenging for students—many of whom are flattening for the first time and managing new expenses. As the cost of groceries, fuel, and rent continue to rise, students with limited incomes and a full course load are struggling to make ends meet. Your kindness ensures that hardworking students get a fair shot at higher education and can make their whānau proud. **Thank you for your gift!**

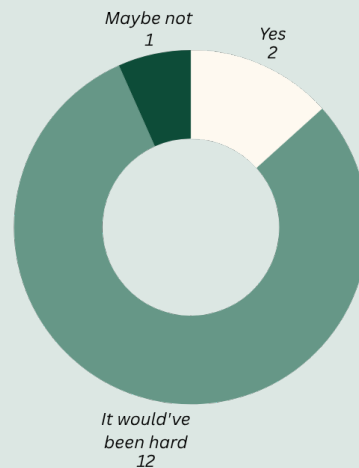


Recipients reported using the scholarship money for a variety of expenses related to student life.

The challenging job market has impacted students' ability to find work that fits within their course schedules. Still, nearly half of the recipients engage in shift work while another third are actively looking for a job.



Recipients were asked whether they could have continued their studies without the scholarship's support. The vast majority said it would have been very difficult to do so.



HEAR FROM SOME OF THE STUDENTS YOU'VE HELPED



“This scholarship allows me to fully focus on my studies and motivates me to strive for excellence. Without this support, I’d have to take out a student loan and find a job to fund my tuition fees—the former would be a financial burden for me in the future, and the latter would make it difficult to balance all my assignments. Additionally, I’m supported by a single mum who has made some sacrifices of her own to support my studies, so this takes the burden off her as well. Your support allows me to pursue my second year of university with an easier state of mind.”

Tristan, *Bachelor of Engineering in Software Engineering*



“This scholarship has changed my life. It’s lifted the weight off my shoulders because I know that I’m able to pay rent, keep the lights on, and get to university without emptying my bank account. I have peace of mind and I’m able to focus on studying so much more because of it. Your support reminds me that there are still people who believe in the potential of students like me. I come from a small rural town in the South Waikato, and kids like me hardly ever receive these types of opportunities. This scholarship has motivated me to work harder and hopefully one day be able to give back in the same way. Thank you sincerely for investing not just in my education, but in my future.”

Michelle, *Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting and Taxation*



“I don’t want to be in debt after I graduate due to extensive loans, so this scholarship has taken away the fear of putting myself in a difficult situation. It also gives me more time to work on my assignments and dedicate my evenings to studying since I don’t have to get a job until the holiday breaks. I have siblings who are attending uni at the same time as me, which means the expenses for my family are very high right now. This scholarship has taken the pressure off both myself and my parents—thank you!”

Lola, *Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology and Educational Psychology*



“The scholarship has given me the freedom to live in a hall of residence without having to worry about the accommodation cost. It also means I have more time to focus on my studies instead of searching for a job, and since I’m studying full-time, it’s critical to stay focused on my degree. Additionally, the scholarship has given me the freedom to enjoy the social aspect of student life and train for dragon boating competitions, which bring me a lot of joy. Thank you very much for your generosity.”

David, *Bachelor of Engineering in Cyber Security Engineering*

Creating intercultural community on campus

Isabella is an expert at balancing two cultures, languages, and identities at once. Originally from Argentina, her family emigrated to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2014 in search of better job prospects. After spending half her life in Wellington, she now comfortably oscillates between the Latin traditions of her native country and the Kiwi customs of her adopted homeland. But Isabella's knack for bridging cultural gaps doesn't just serve her personally—she uses it in the classroom and across campus to build community.

"I'm studying International Relations and Cultural Anthropology," she says. "I'm constantly thinking about the relationship between Argentina and New Zealand, so I really like looking at intercultural dynamics on a global level. Originally, I thought about getting into diplomacy, but I'm not sure that's where I can make the greatest impact. I think working for an NGO advocating for the rights of ethnic communities would be really interesting."

Isabella works as a waitress and serves coffee at her mum's Argentinian cafe in Lower Hutt to put herself through university. Money has always been tight, but things got particularly bad last year as rent costs in Wellington continued to climb. Isabella was able to move back home to the Hutt for her second year of uni, but the hour-long commute to campus drained her bank account and prevented her from participating in important extracurricular opportunities. That's when an Alumni Appeal Scholarship changed everything.

"This scholarship has such a huge domino effect on my life," says Isabella. "I'm now able to move back into town to be closer to campus and my work, which means I can easily pick up extra shifts or attend academic seminars I would've missed out on by living so far away. It gives me the freedom to balance all the things I value most."

Apart from financial stability, the Alumni Appeal Scholarship has given Isabella precious time to put her skills for cultural exchange into action. Earlier this year she was elected president of the Latin American and Spanish club on campus after reviving



its involvement on campus.

"When I saw the club in my first year, it had almost zero members and was run by someone without any cultural connection to Latin America," says Isabella. "I saw this as an opportunity to create a space for the other Latin students on campus to feel seen and heard. I got elected to the club's executive board, and now we have a thriving little community."

The club hosts regular events, such as Spanish-language potlucks and educational talks from representatives of the United Nations Association of New Zealand, with the goal of connecting Latin and Kiwi students through cultural exchange. In addition to running the club, Isabella finds time to intern at the Mexican Embassy where she drafts bilingual notices on New Zealand politics that are sent back to Mexico. At every possible turn, Isabella builds bridges that unite the two halves of her identity and enliven intercultural understanding. None of which, she says, would be possible without the scholarship.

"Thank you so much for investing in my future," Isabella says. "It's made a huge impact on my wellbeing and given me validation that I'm on the right path. Without it, I'd have to work so much more and wouldn't have time for all the community-building activities I love. Your generosity has made an immense impact not only on me and my family, but all the other students I connect with through the club."



THANK YOU

YOUR SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES

TE KURA TANGATA—DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE



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