

Thomas Watene

Class of 2018 - Head Boy
Masters student,
University of Otago



Thomas' Story

Thomas is currently studying towards his Master of Politics at Otago University, and it sounds like he is juggling a heavy workload. But he's exactly where he wants to be - he's found his spot in life.

Note to younger self: "Trust your gut, follow your instincts. Do what YOU want to do, not what everyone else tells you to do. And if not everything goes to plan, it's not the end of the world."

The road leading to his Masters study hasn't been a straightforward one. After leaving high school, Thomas started to study law. But two and a half years into his degree, he realised law just wasn't his calling, switched over and successfully completed a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics.

Asked about his time at St John's College, he shares quite the eclectic mix of memories. Coming to the College from St Joseph's in Morrinsville he remembers losing his jacket on his very first day - and Matua Jacob finding it for him. He also recalls the Y9 whanau camp that got robbed, doing kapa haka in year 10 and going to the US with the St John's basketball team. He's still playing basketball now and has remained close to his St John's friends. He was in the whanau ope class - the form class for Maori students - from 2014 to 2018 and was elected Head Boy in his final year.

At the time of writing this story, Thomas is halfway through his Masters study. His chosen pathway will open his career options up wide. There is potential for consultancy or policy analysis. He definitely doesn't want to be a politician. So where to next?

We've left some space here to continue his story and wish him all the best!

"I was quite a shy kid, and the Head Boy role felt at times like being thrown in the deep end - especially when representing the school and speaking in public. However, it has really helped me to become a more confident person and oral presenter."