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### **Unitec Alumni Connect**

Kia ora,

#### **Welcome to our 2020 Autumn Alumni Newsletter**

*Takitahi: He ngākau takitahi, e kore e nuku – Together we're stronger.*

In this issue we highlight the importance of working together, as well as supporting one another while we acknowledge the shared responsibility to remain compassionate in these uncertain times.

Firstly, we look to celebrate the achievements of our alumni, whose generosity of spirit allows us to share in their stories and celebrate them together in this issue.

We also take a look at the stories of alumni who are giving back to Unitec, and lighting the way as active contributors to a better Auckland.

There is information on our new programmes as well as our new staff, and an open invitation for you to let us know; how can we help you in your career journey in these uncertain times? What else can Unitec offer to ensure that you remain well equipped and change-ready?

Lastly, we wish to share with you an update on the changes that are happening in the ITP sector, as well as featuring industry partners who are working with Unitec to strengthen pathways to employment for our graduates.

Thank you for your hard work and resilience. We truly are stronger together, as we all work toward a shared vision of stronger communities and a better Auckland for all.

Ngā mihi  
The Alumni Connect Team

## **A message to Unitec Alumni Whānau from Merran Davis, Interim Chief Executive**



Celebrating our graduates' success is a key moment in our academic calendar, and it was a tough decision to have to postpone our Autumn Graduation this year. However, I'm sure you'll all agree it was a necessary decision in light of the COVID-19 situation, in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of you and your loved ones. We love sharing the celebration of your success with friends and whānau and look forward to being able to do this when the time is right.

We encourage you to stay connected with us through the [Unitec Alumni Connect LinkedIn](#) group. Here you'll find employment vacancies and items on what's happening in your industry, and we can continue to celebrate your successes and achievements through your shared posts. Keep a look out for our short courses and other programmes of study so you're continually responding to the skills and competencies in demand in the workforce.

Please look after yourselves and your whānau.

Ngā mihi

Merran Davis

## Your Success Stories



### Protecting people on the country's rail corridor

As National Protection Manager for KiwiRail, Ria Apiata runs the team responsible for access to New Zealand's rail corridor. She says Unitec's flexible, practical approach to learning helped set her on the path to success.

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### Mastering his craft

As a Content Producer for leading public relations agency PeadPR, Izak van der Merwe gets to bring his creativity and passion for photography to work everyday.

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### Balancing a degree with a family

When she made the decision to become an early-childhood teacher, Emily Crozier needed a degree that would fit around her young son- and Unitec offered just what she was looking for.

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### A company built with people

Conal Dempsey started Dempsey Wood with friend Tony back in 1993. Since then the business has continued to grow with a firm focus on its people, becoming a key player in Auckland civil infrastructure scene.

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### Architecture: from Fiji to New Zealand

When Shableet's older brother returned to Fiji from New Zealand in 2004 with an Interior Design degree from Unitec, he became inspired to further his own architectural qualifications at Unitec.

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### Ready to hit the ground running

Having completed the Master of Architecture (Professional) degree at Unitec in 2017, Peta Smith now works for architectural firm Brewer Davidson. She says the hands-on, practical learning she gained at Unitec really helped her hit the ground running.

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## Partnering with alumni in the industry



### Keeping their finger on the pulse

Kiwi land development and planning consultancy Cato Bolam says their partnership with Unitec enables them to 'keep their finger on the pulse' of current industry thinking.

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### A values-driven and community focused partnership

Pacific owned non-profit organisation The Fono provides accessible, affordable, quality health services to those who need it most. They say their partnership with Unitec is a win-win for both organisations.

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### Unitec rising stars at PHD Media

PHD Media has been a Unitec partner since 2018, and they have been very impressed with the capability and motivation of the Unitec graduates.

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## Celebrating alumni achievements



### For the love of whales

Bachelor of Applied Science graduate, Abigail Robinson, has continued her work studying whales since leaving Unitec. Abigail features in the short film "For the love of Whales"



### Beatrice Faumuina appointed to Sport NZ Board

Unitec grad Beatrice Faumuina ONZM OLY has been appointed to the board of Sport NZ for a term of three years. Her appointment, filling a vacant directorship,



### Prime Minister unveils striking digital artwork by Unitec grad Lisa Reihana

A large-scale digital work by renowned New Zealand artist Lisa Reihana is immersing viewers in a visual spectacle, telling the



as a member of the Whale Wise team.

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moves the board from gender parity to a 5-4 majority of female directors

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traditional Māori story of the origins of the world.

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## Alumni giving back



### Tash at the Unitec ISACA Student Group

Former ISACA Student Group president and now Unitec alumnus, Tash Bettridge, surprised new members when she showed up as a guest speaker at its introductory session. Tash has always been an advocate of 'giving back' to Unitec. While studying, she was awarded the Google Women Techmakers Award and got accepted as an IT intern at Google. She recently joined Vodafone as a graduate Cybersecurity Analyst.

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### Yaser Shakib Career Workshop Speaker

Yaser has always been an active 'give back' advocate. He makes sure to share his talents as Engineering social media moderator, speaker in career workshops and writing thought leadership blogs. He was recently a speaker at Unitec's Graduate to Career Workshop.

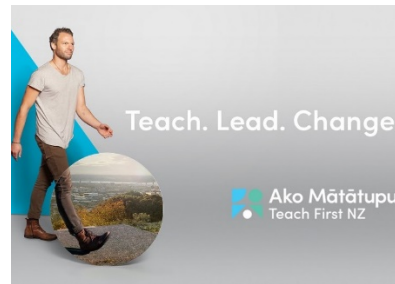
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### Hanelle Harris at the Unitec Aronui Focus 2020

Unitec Grad and successful Writer/Director/Producer/Actor, Hanelle Harris, returned to Unitec to be part of the panel for the Unitec staff gathering- 2020 'Aronui Focus'. Hanelle drew on her own experiences to share wise insights on ways in which Unitec can continue to create an inclusive and uplifting learning environment for all students.

## Events for you



### Connect Events 2020

The Connect Events are disciplined-based networking events where we invite businesses to meet Unitec talent. This year two more schools are in the mix. So if your organisation wants to access Unitec talent or if you would like to shift careers and find new employment opportunities, then please come along.

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### Teach First NZ Info Session

Here's an opportunity for our Unitec alumni who are looking at changing careers or finding a new vocation in the field of teaching. If you want to grow as a teacher and a leader who can make a difference, come to the information session to know more.

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## So, what's happening across Unitec



### Unitec now a subsidiary of NZIST

First of April marked a significant milestone as the official start date of the new national institute for vocational education and training – with the working name of New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST).

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### Waitakere Strategy

Led by Te Noho Kotahitanga, Unitec has put together a document that reflects its commitment for a collaborative partnership for wider community opportunities in West Auckland, in response to skills demand in the West to support regional business growth.

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### Unitec Engineering Alumni Event

On Friday 6 March 2020, the Unitec Engineering Alumni event was held. It saw a gathering of alumni, industry partners and staff in the civil and electrical engineering space.

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## Sharpen your skills



### Cybersecurity responding to a very real need

Are you thinking of upskilling yourself in the cybersecurity area or changing careers? This NZ first pre-degree programme at Unitec might interest you.

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### NCC Education announces progression route agreement with Unitec

NCC students who have successfully completed L4 & L5 Diploma in Computing will now have guaranteed entry onto the third year of the Bachelor of Computing Systems at Unitec.

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### New appointments at Unitec's Performing and Screen Arts

Unitec's School of Creative industries has announced a range of new appointments in its Performing and Screen Arts (PASA) department. Such wealth of experience and skills coming into the School of Creative Industries signals the excellent practical arts education on offer at Unitec.

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## We're here to help you achieve your professional goals

No matter where you are in the world or what your circumstances are, Unitec is your whānau and community to which you can turn for support especially amidst these difficult times.

Reach out to our [Career Centre](#) for guidance and speak to one of our Career Centre experts.

You can enrol in a free career workshop, get access to a range of resources and advice that can help you plan your career, write a CV and cover letter, and prepare for a successful interview.

For a range of opportunities to upskill yourself or staff in your organisation, visit our [professional development page](#).

## Stay involved, stay connected

As a graduate, you're an important part of our Unitec whānau.

Find ways to [partner with us](#) and [be involved](#).

Be informed on the [innovative research](#) being done across Unitec.

To make sure we're still keeping in touch, it's a good idea to [update your contact details](#) whenever there's a change.

To see what other Unitec graduates and staff are up to and grow your professional network, be part of the conversation by connecting to our [LinkedIn Unitec Alumni Group](#).



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