

FOCUS ON EDUCATION 2018

Your guide to what's happening in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

Study leads to OS travel

UNIVERSITY of Canberra student Milarli Taylor is proof you can take a University of Canberra degree almost anywhere.

The Yamatji man is in his second year of a Bachelor of Arts and is adding as many opportunities to study overseas as part of his degree as he can.

The 20-year-old always had a keen interest in studying overseas, and after completing his schooling at Hedland Senior High School in Western Australia, took a six-month break to work and save enough money to travel to Europe.

"I loved it, and I knew I wanted to study overseas if the opportunity arose," Mr Taylor said.

Mr Taylor is majoring in games design, management and heritage studies. Travel is a passion he has been able to realise twice since studying at the University of Canberra.

"Even though the closest university to my home town is in Perth, I chose to study at the University of Canberra because it had the courses I wanted and because of the study abroad options, which are a real perk of studying at UC," he said.

Last July, he embarked on a faculty-led program to Fiji where he spent ten days exploring traditional institutions and sites, meeting villagers, and learning about Indigenous Fijian culture.

The University of Canberra-led program is open to second and third year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the University, with Mr Taylor awarded a prestigious Australian Government New Colombo Plan Mobility Grant to help fund his participation in the program.

A few months later, he was off

again – this time to Finland on a year-long exchange program.

He is currently studying animation and game design, cultural history and arctic art and design at the University of Lapland in Finland, where he is experiencing the coldest weather of his life at minus 23 degrees.

"The snow is so thick they have to clear the roads and footpaths every day, so people can drive. There are huge piles of snow all around the city waiting to melt," he said.

"You will never regret the decision to study overseas as part of your degree. You get so much life experience, see so many new things and meet so many new people."

Despite the subzero conditions, Mr Taylor is enjoying the opportunity to meet new people and experience different cultures.

"Finland is so different to Australia, it's impossible not to experience something you've never seen before. I've also enjoyed meeting people from all over the world who are also taking part in exchange programs," he said.

Mr Taylor has also taken the opportunity to travel to other countries, including Norway and Latvia, and plans to travel to the UK in the near future.

He would recommend studying abroad to other students as a valuable experience.

"You will never regret the decision to study overseas as part of your degree. You get so much life experience, see so many new things and meet so many new people. I've found that a lot of people don't want to study abroad or even travel outside of Australia. Especially when I talk to other

mobs there's always something holding them back, but there is so much support out there to help you; you only have to look to find it," he said.

Mr Taylor's support network includes the University's Ngunnawal Centre, which provides a range of academic programs and pastoral support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying at the University of Canberra.

The Ngunnawal Centre works closely with the Study Abroad Office to provide access and funding support to students wishing to include overseas study into their degree.

"The Ngunnawal Centre has helped me immensely.

"I've spent countless hours at the centre either studying or completing assignments using the computers and printers. They also have a kitchen there, which is a huge plus," Mr Taylor said.

Mr Taylor also credits the help of the Ngunnawal Centre tutors, who are available for free to help across all areas of study.

"The support was great for my first semester. Everything was different and new and having that support gave me a huge advantage.

"I would recommend studying at the university and taking advantage of the support provided by the Ngunnawal Centre. They're amazing, always happy to help with anything you need and will always make you feel welcome."

For more information on the Ngunnawal Centre visit www.canberra.edu.au/ngunnawal

If you are a UC student or you want to find out more about UC's study abroad programs visit www.canberra.edu.au/current-students/study-abroad



Milarli Taylor travelled from sunny Fiji to snowy Finland as part of his degree at University of Canberra.



Milarli Taylor tries ice fishing in Finland while on exchange with the University of Canberra.