

TK's postgrad story: realising his dream of being a doctor

Dr T'kido Titasey has had his heart fixed on being a doctor since he was a young boy.

It often felt like an impossible dream to him, but clock the "Dr" in his name today—his passion and perseverance have clearly paid off.

TK recently graduated with a Doctor of Medicine from the UQ Medical School. His journey wasn't the smoothest ride, but he wouldn't change a thing. Now he's excited to return home to practise as a full-time doctor.

What inspired TK to study medicine?

TK was born in the rural Queensland town of Atherton and then raised on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait. He remembers feeling drawn towards medicine (and generally helping people) from a young age.

"Growing up in the Torres Strait, I was exposed to many health inequalities, and I naturally gravitated towards wanting to help people in our community," he says.

"I also come from a really nurturing family who go above and beyond to look after our people.

"I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for them, and I feel obligated to give back."

TK's path to the Doctor of Medicine

After high school, TK immediately enrolled to study medicine at university. But the transition from school to uni can be challenging, and he discovered he wasn't quite prepared for it... yet.

"I originally started studying medicine at James Cook University (JCU), but I was young and immature and still needed to find my way," says TK.

"I was obsessed with becoming a doctor but didn't have any idea on the work that was required to succeed.

"I wasn't overly successful in progressing through the degree, so I dropped out and took a few years off, travelling and working in hospitality."

This time away from study gave TK valuable life experience, but he never lost sight of his desire to work in the healthcare field. His dedication led him back to JCU, this time to study a Bachelor of Nursing Science.

"It took me some time to find my feet, but I grew to absolutely love it."

After graduating as a fully qualified nurse, TK began working in interventional cardiology, cardiothoracic surgery and emergency nursing. But while his mind was focused on the job, his heart was still pulling him towards further study in medicine.

"I was working at Townsville Community Hospital where a lot of Indigenous people had cardiovascular issues, and I really wanted to understand why the number of Indigenous patients was so disproportionate to those who were non-Indigenous," he says.

"This was when I realised that I was ready to take the next step and try to pursue my career in medicine again."

Thriving in UQ's Doctor of Medicine program

TK found returning to uni as a mature-age student difficult at first, but the medicine program's combination of theoretical and practical components empowered him to succeed.

"UQ provided me with so many tools to get me through my time at university," he says.



Watch TK's journey from UQ student to doctor

TK is a proud Naghir man who has blood ties to the Kulkagal and Maluligal Nations of the Torres Strait. He is a graduate of the Doctor of Medicine.

"I've had some amazing mentors along the way, too."

In particular, TK discovered just how much of a positive impact one key supporter can have during an academic journey.

"I was very lucky to have a mentor in Honorary Associate Professor Linda Selvey, who supported me through understanding the ins and outs of research," says TK.

"She also played an integral role in assisting me with the decision making through medicine."

Linda taught TK during his first year of medicine, but it wasn't until a little later that she was motivated to become his mentor.

"TK was a keynote speaker at the student NAIDOC ball, where he discussed the challenges he faced during his time at university, and his determination to give medicine a second go really inspired me," says Linda.

"I got in touch with him after that and offered to be his mentor. Occasionally I would give advice, but mainly it was about me listening to him as he worked out his career path."

Naturally, she's proud of everything he's now achieved.

"Students like TK give me hope for the future of medicine, because he is incredibly capable and incredibly passionate, and those are the sorts of people you trust when you are in need of medical care," says Linda.

During his studies, TK completed a placement back home on Thursday

Island, which became the most rewarding part of his degree.

"It was amazing to be back on Country, reconnecting with my family members," he says.

"My last block of placement was spent in the Thursday Island Hospital, which was a great place to get exposure as a medicine student.

"Anything and everything could walk through the doors of emergency, from bacterial infections, to traumas, to paediatrics—it really tested my knowledge and consolidated a lot of the theoretical skills I had developed over the past four years."

What's next for TK?

Now that he's graduated, TK hopes to return to the Torres Strait as a full-time doctor, giving back to the community that raised him and encouraging the next generation.

"As a doctor, you're in a place of privilege and power and you can make a fair bit of change," he says.

"So, why not come back and inspire other Torres Strait Islanders to pursue their dreams?"

And when asked about what he might say if he could talk to his younger self today, TK's answer is... nothing. Because he wouldn't change a thing.

"All those ups and downs are kind of pivotal to where I am today," he says.

"I needed to figure it all out myself to find the balance. If I had to do it all again, I'd do it exactly the same."

Pursue your pathway to medicine

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander admission pathways to medicine at UQ.

Whether you've already studied a bachelor's degree and are seeking graduate entry into the Doctor of Medicine (MD), or you're new to university and applying for provisional entry, we can help you realise your dreams of being a doctor.

Our admission pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can help give you the boost you need to get into medicine at UQ. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander provisional entry applicants may also receive automatic adjustments to their ATAR or selection rank when they apply through QTAC.

If you are ready to create change in your community by pursuing a career in medicine, apply to UQ.

Application key dates to commence study in 2026

MD graduate entry:

1 August 2025
applications close

MD provisional entry:

30 September 2025
applications close



"During high school, I thought I was going to be a lawyer, which is why I never did the pre-med path... having the support within the [ATIS] Unit and being able to connect closely with a group of students that are also going through at the same time has made the transition really nice. It was talking with people, seeing that there are opportunities available, and that there was a pathway."

Brittany Ruska
Quandamooka woman and UQ Doctor of Medicine student



Find out more