



From shame to pride



My name's Thomas Squire and I'm a proud Wiradjuri man.

Growing up I always knew I was Aboriginal, but I wasn't really connected to community. It wasn't something I was able to embrace or learn about.

I remember feeling ashamed of being Aboriginal because of the way people spoke about our culture and how it was taught at primary school – that the British arrived and 'advanced' Aboriginals.

It was only later through Indigenous-led support programs, pathways and events that I was able to embrace and learn more about my culture in a non-condescending way. We are the oldest continuous culture in the world and that is something I'm incredibly proud of.

One of the most eye-opening moments was a three-day Leadership Development Institute (LDI) conference for alumni, community partners, interns and advisors run by CareerTrackers. It's a program that links Indigenous university students with employers. I don't think I'd been to an event

with that many other Aboriginal people before. Seeing so many people in a room talking about culture and celebrating made me feel so proud.

Flexible pathways

My path to UTS wasn't a straightforward one.

I was failing most of my classes at Wollongong Uni and had several issues including sleep apnoea and chronic foot pain.

After taking a break from my studies, I looked into the possibility of transferring to UTS, which I'd heard good things about and knew it was easier to get to via public transport.

I was lucky enough to be able to join UTS College with the help of the Jumbunna pathways program, then go straight into the second year of my Bachelor of Business majoring in finance.

Before going to UTS College, I was used to being spoon-fed information, but my critical thinking wasn't there. I wrote in tangents about whatever I thought was important until someone from the college sat me down and showed me how to write to the marking

criteria. My marks are up now and I wouldn't change it for the world.

But it was eye-opening at the time, because no one had taught me that before. For anyone who's struggling with marks, don't worry about imposter syndrome because we're all learning, and at the end of the day it's more your character and dedication that's going to get you through uni.

If you're lucky enough to get the opportunities, especially the ones you get through Jumbunna, take them with two hands and run with them!

A passion for finance

I've always been interested in how money is created and moves across the world, which is one of the reasons I chose finance as a career. It's a broad industry that's adaptable to your needs, where you can change multiple times across your career to adapt to your circumstances.

I was able to land an internship with financial credit rating organisation Moody's thanks to the partnership they have with Career Trackers.

Working in the finance industry



Thomas Squire, proud Wiradjuri man.

“They've committed to having Indigenous interns for the next 10 years”

with Moody's I've gained much more confidence within myself. The experience has helped me to see the practical side of what I'm taught throughout my degree.

The major thing for me is

the opportunity to work with people from a diverse range of backgrounds. It's amazing to learn about other people's cultures, and share mine with other people.





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