

# Keanu Piki

## 2019 • MAPST Master of Applied Statistics

Keanu tells the story of Māori through his work with statistics at Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development).



Keanu (Ngāti Maru, Te Atiawa, and Ngāti Maniapoto) always had an affinity for numbers and solving problems. Now he contributes to telling the stories of Māori through his work with statistics.

Relationships were core to Keanu’s experience at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. As a member of Ngāti Maru, Te Atiawa, and Ngāti Maniapoto, he has found his time at the University enabled him to connect with his people and support Māori students. Keanu became one of the Māori and Pasifika tutors for the Statistics in Practice course and a mentor for Āwhina . “The positive feedback I received from my students and the satisfaction I felt knowing that I helped them made me realize that I wanted to use my skills with numbers and statistics to support Māori aspirations,” says Keanu.

A few weeks before graduating Keanu was accepted into an Analyst Internship at Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development). This role enables Keanu to learn about the opportunities and challenges Māori face and how the machinery of government works to support Māori. Te Puni Kōkiri encourages Keanu to express his opinions and think outside of the box even in meetings and subjects that are new to him. “My work colleagues feel not only like work partners, but like whanau, they show support in all areas of my life.”

Entering the workforce allowed Keanu to blend his theoretical work from university with practical experience. He recommends current student start applying for internships and research programmes early to develop the skills to apply knowledge in a practical setting.

Before starting university, Keanu thought that lecturers would be intimidating and difficult to approach. However, the lecturers and tutors exceeded his expectations as they were always happy to help. His final piece of advice for prospective and existing students is to not be afraid to ask for help. “You would be surprised how many people do not ask for help and end up struggling to reach their goals, I was almost one of them,” he says.

Keanu is enjoying forging his career path following university. “The world is my oyster. I do not want to limit myself — I am always up for learning and developing new skills so who knows where I will be in the future”