

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES GRADUATE

ELIZABETH SCROOPE

CURRENT ROLE: CASE MANAGER, CARRIE'S PLACE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES INC. MAITLAND

PAST ROLE: INTAKE CASE MANAGER, CARRIE'S PLACE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICES INC. MAITLAND

DEGREE: BACHELOR OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

When it comes to advocating for the disadvantage Elizabeth does not shy away from tough conversations. She is passionate about creating change for those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE GRADUATING?



Image: Elizabeth at graduation, 2018.

When Elizabeth first started her degree, her focus was on policy and procedure. She entered the degree expecting that she would end up working in policy reform within state or federal government. However since she undertook her work placement with [Carrie's Place](#), her career has been redirected and she now works in the grass roots, helping individuals and families facing challenging circumstances.



Elizabeth currently works as a Case Manager at Carrie's Place in Maitland. Carrie's Place supports people experiencing domestic violence and homelessness. As a Case Manager, Elizabeth's role is to provide one-on-one support to individuals and families with the aim of alleviating homelessness. Elizabeth's role requires her to understand and approach not just the issue of homelessness but also mental health, drug and alcohol dependence, domestic violence, child protection, cultural competency and disability. Elizabeth is responsible not only for advocating for her clients, but she is also there to support the real estate agents and other stakeholders if any issues arise.

Elizabeth knew her passion was supporting disadvantaged communities. Carrie's Place aligned with Elizabeth's interests and she contacted them about completing her placement with them for the [Work Integrated Learning in Development Studies and Human Geography](#) course. Elizabeth's role at the time was based around the [16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence](#). During this time Carrie's Place raised awareness around domestic violence through a coffee cup campaign. Elizabeth was responsible for designing the cup and contacting cafes to use those cups in their facilities to raise awareness. The campaign was incredibly successful, and since it first began it has now transitioned from using disposable to keep cups.



Image: Representing Carrie's Place at ToranaFest in Maitland 2017.

Carrie's Place were impressed with Elizabeth's energy, and they offered her casual work shortly after finishing her placement. She has worked with Carrie's Place ever since. She finds work is incredibly rewarding. Clients that come to Carrie's Place for assistance bring their own strengths and capabilities although they often don't recognise this. Elizabeth is able to highlight strengths those to clients and help them realise they are more capable than they knew and they are entitled to a better life.



Image: Carrie's Place participating in the [Hunter Homeless Connect Day](#) 2019. This is an annual inclusive event that provides free services including haircuts, medical assistance, legal advice, bedding and much more.

HOW RELEVANT HAS YOUR DEGREE BEEN SINCE YOU GRADUATED?

Elizabeth completed the *Cultures and Citizenship* major and has a keen interest and compassion for indigenous Australians. Elizabeth has worked with Indigenous families in her role, and the knowledge gained from her Aboriginal Studies courses provides important context when helping Indigenous families. Being aware of the inequality, discrimination and prejudice faced by Indigenous people in Australia allows Elizabeth to approach such cases with a level of compassion and support that enables her to create a strong relationships with Indigenous clients.

Elizabeth made the most of her time at UoN. She [volunteered her time](#) with UON Amnesty International, volunteered to teach English at the Language Centre, she was a student representative on the Student Services and Amenities Fee Committee and she also volunteered during Orientation Week. These volunteering experiences were a highlight for Elizabeth.

“I put myself into every situation that I could.”

Development Studies is such a broad degree that volunteering your time is a great way to help you figure out your interests. The [Careers and Employment Expos](#) are another great opportunity to speak with organisations and find out what they do. Volunteering allows you to put yourself out there, show your personality and what you have to offer. For Elizabeth, completing her placement at Carrie's Place was an amazing opportunity, and one that eventually lead to a job that she really enjoys.

“Networking and talking to people are so important.”

ADVICE: UTILISE STUDENT SUPPORT AND ATTEND EVENTS

Elizabeth strongly encourages students to utilise the Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) and the Peer Writing Mentors. These are [supports](#) provided by students for students. PASS gives you the opportunity to study and ask questions to students who have completed and achieved high marks in specific courses. There are relevant worksheets provided and at the end you are also given practise exams to help you.

The Peer Writing Mentors will read your written assignments and offer feedback around grammar, spelling and the general flow of your assignment. Elizabeth found these support services incredibly valuable during her undergraduate.

If you want to learn more about organisations and clubs, approach them and ask questions. This is how Elizabeth widened her networks and knowledge base during her undergraduate degree and she strongly encourages students to do the same.

“Go to University events, talk to different people and make different friends.”

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Elizabeth is currently enrolled in a [Master in Social Work](#) with the Charles Sturt University. At the moment Elizabeth is focused on her work with Carrie's Place, however she does see herself in the future exploring roles within the areas of child protection and mental health. Elizabeth is incredibly passionate and empathetic towards disadvantaged people and her goal is to continue improving situations for those people.

To find out more about Elizabeth, and our other Development Studies graduates please visit;
uonblogs.newcastle.edu.au/ges/graduate-profiles/
facebook.com/DevelopmentStudiesatUON/

For more information about the [Bachelor of Development Studies](#) you can contact:

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