





# Go Waitaha Canterbury Welcome

It was a gorgeous start to the year with GWC!

Beautiful sunshine, good company, an amazing race, and kai together to finish the day. This was Day 1 for some friendships that are still going strong! We kicked off the year with chill vibes and some fun.





## Bowling and Laser tag!

Well, this event was originally going to be surfing at Sumner Beach.

We had to cancel because of Cyclone Gabrielle that was tearing up the country at the time... so we do what we can! From a health and safety perspective, we made a quick pivot and did some bowling and laser tag instead. Waayyy more easy-going than surfing, but we had lots of good chats, and bit of silly fun! Definitely saw some people getting competitive...





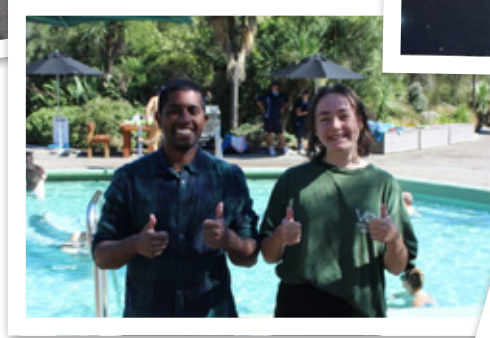


# Explore Ōtautahi Christchurch

For many in the cohort, this was their first time really getting to know Ōtautahi!

We were blessed to be guided by Joseph Hullen (Ngāi Tahu) who shared with us pūrākau (stories, legends) and gave us direction to help us find our bearings. Honestly this city is on the up and up and it's exciting to see the new stadium and public recreation centre taking shape! While we were in town, of course we had some Rollickin' Gelato, because it's an Ōtautahi CLASSIC. Rollickin' was born out of the rubble of the earthquakes and is still thriving to this day! We explored all over the city and ended our day in Hagley Park listening to some live music in the soft grass. It was a stunner of a day, and it needed to be after the weather cancelled our plans for surfing earlier in the week!





# Hanmer Springs Overnight Trip

This trip is iconic. From start to finish, the trip was packed with action. We gave back to the community through volunteer work across Hanmer, but we made sure get in a lot of fun! With a mixture of archery, tree-climbing, and a puzzle that had us running all over Hanmer Springs, there was never a dull moment. In the evening we had free-time to stargaze, play mafia, and enjoy everyone's company. The hot pools are always top notch, and we couldn't have asked for a better weekend to get off of campus.

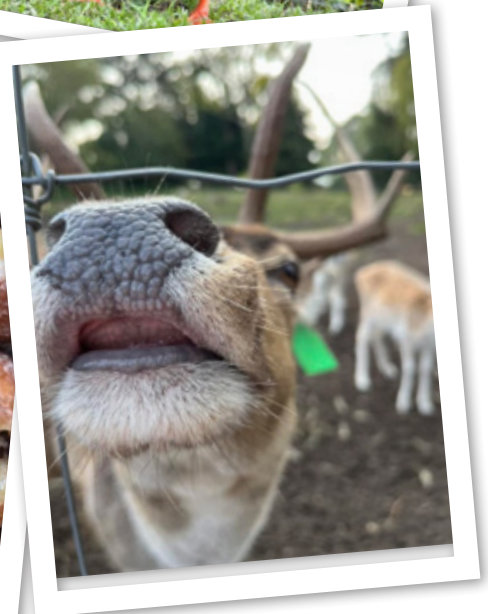




# Willowbank Reserve

Term 2 tends to bring on a lot of stress, and there is nothing like visiting some animals to put smiles on everyone's faces!

Furry creatures and top-quality donuts: what's not to love? Feeding the animals was very cute, and a great way to unwind during the Term 2 grind!





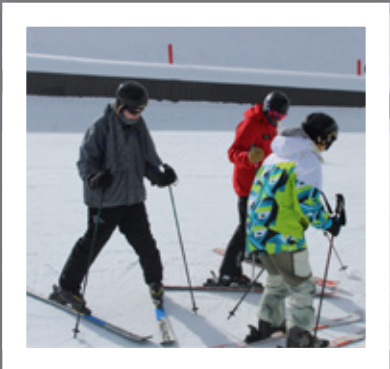
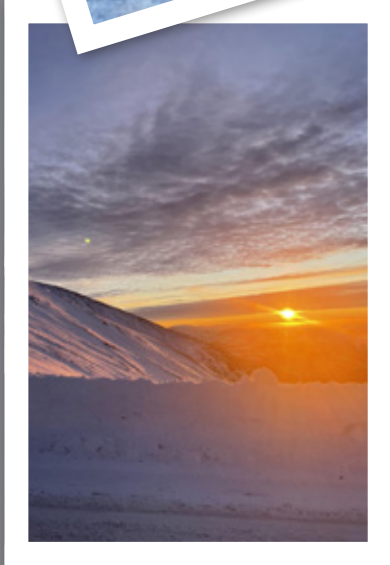
# Ice Skating

Surprisingly the most challenging event of the year, ice skating got everyone out of their comfort zones.

It was beautiful watching everyone going from holding onto the railing, so sailing around under the disco lights at the end. There was only love and support from everyone on this trip; I wish I could have bottled up that energy!







# Mt Hutt

Another GWC CLASSIC. It's always a great time going out to the mountain for the first time.

We are so spoiled in Waitaha because the scenes are epic. The mountains are spectacular and the views will take your breath away. The ski and snowboard instructors are top notch as always, and make the day accessible and fun for everyone, no matter if it was your first or 100th time on the slopes. We look forward to going back in 2024!





# The Ball

It's always a good time at the Akiaki Ākonga Student Experience Ball!

The fun thing about this ball is that it brings together all the programmes: He Tētēkura, UniLife, UC Mentoring, and of course GWC!



# Waka Ama

An unforgettable experience with Te Waka Pounamu Outrigger Club.

They welcomed us into their space, shared their knowledge, and taught about working together as one: mahi tahi! It's amazing what we can do when we are unified. We were grateful to learn more about the moana and whenua of the region – it's a privilege to be in Ōtautahi! Ngā mihi TWP!







# GWC Farewell

**And as quickly as it  
started, the year ended!**

Honestly the farewell is my favourite event of the year because everyone is there to eat and chill. We were graced with THE BEST WEATHER and were able to enjoy the spring sunshine out on C-Block Lawn. Bacon Bros' are always coming in hot and they definitely delivered again this year for this event! Those chips with those secret spices – whew! I tried asking for the recipe, but they wouldn't share! And it wouldn't be a GWC end of the year celebration without Rollickin' Gelato, so of course they came to the party too. Great flavours every single time. And the best part was we got to share it all with GWC and the staff who supported us along the way. Wholesome end to the 2023 year!



# Volunteering

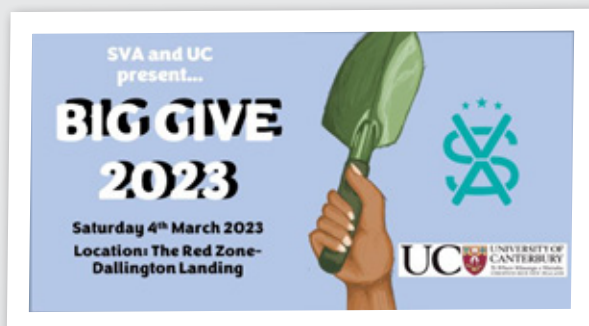
Halswell Quarry tree planting



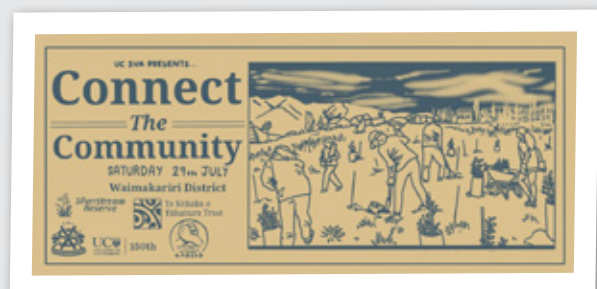
Volunteering with SPCA



BIG Give with SVA



Connect the Community  
Volunteering Event with SVA





# Workshops

## Identity Workshop

Taking the time to figure out who we are and who we want to be now that we are away from home.

## Wellbeing Workshop

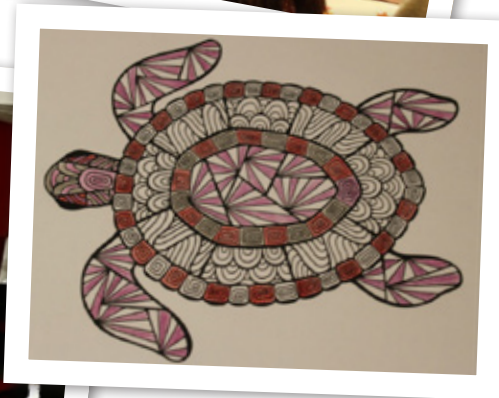
Taking a breather to learn how to look after ourselves when times are stressful!

## Keeping Safe Workshop

If we are going to have fun, we are going to make sure it's safe!

## Yoga and 2nd Year Prep Workshop

Getting ready for what is on the horizon!





# Message from the Coordinator

## Kia ora koutou GWC!

We made it! We had such fun going off on adventures, trying new things, and generally having a cracker of a time. I loved seeing the connections being made across the year and seeing everyone grow. Massive mihi to the Kaitaki Ākonga | Student Leaders who made it all happen. Their support for each other and the cohort, as well as their full dedication to the mahi made this year epic. I couldn't have done it without you all! My wish for everyone on GWC is that we take to heart the things that we learned over 2023. I hope that we all embrace the times where we struggled or failed and take precious learnings from those moments. It's those things that will carry us furthest towards our goals in life. Remember the laughs and the good times as well because that's what makes all the hard stuff worth it! Congrats on making through year one of uni – I hope everyone enjoys the journeys that they are on, no matter where it takes you!

Noho ora mai rā,  
**Emily Stankaitis**

*Left to right: Nathan Houkamau,  
Dillan Thiagarajah, Sukhleen Kaur,  
Lydia Ainsworth, Ollie Freeman,  
Marianne Reynecke, Lucas Redding,  
Bri Law, Ella Amos, Emma Rose,  
Emily Stankaitis*

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