

Jaden Dzubieli says giving back to the community adds another dimension to work.

[Jaden attended the 2017 Indigenous Australian Engineering School in Perth hosted by Curtin University on behalf of Engineering Aid Australia. This article appeared in National Indigenous Times on 22 May 2019.]

Nineteen year old Jaden Dzubieli credits his early career success to his late nan.

“She always wanted my brother and I to go to a prestigious school ... In year seven, I got the ‘Go Forward’ scholarship into Guildford Grammar School.”

Four years later, the Perth-based student encountered engineering and infrastructure company Aurecon, through a state-wide bridge building competition the company had funded. Jaden entered in a team of three and was placed second in the state.

Then, a week before starting year 12, Jaden took part in the **Indigenous Australian Engineering Summer School** Camp hosted by Curtin University, where he again encountered Aurecon (one of the sponsors of the event).

Initially interested in mechanical engineering, Jaden got chatting with an Aurecon staff member. This led to work experience, then to positions with the company as an undergraduate mechanical engineer and now a programmer.

As part of his work, he also has the opportunity to foster Indigenous engagement.

“I’ve always had a voice with Aurecon—they are culturally sensitive. Within the company I’ve been doing a lot with the Reconciliation Action Plan. We are trying to get Indigenous artists to come in and create paintings, do tours, and become more involved.”

“Culture plays a big part in my life ... I’m giving other Indigenous Australians the chance to see that this [kind of] career is possible—whether in engineering, science, or maths. The opportunities I’ve been given have been amazing. I want more people to experience that.”

“I feel it is healing, in a sense. It gives me peace of mind knowing I’m doing something for the better. There is one aspect of going to work and

coming home knowing that you did your job. But giving back to community adds another dimension ...”

Jaden doesn't just give back in the workplace, he was also an active year 7 mentor with MADALAH Limited. MADALAH is a not-for-profit organisation based in WA that offers secondary, transition and tertiary scholarships to First Nations students from remote and rural communities.

His relationship with MADALAH began in year eight, when his mother pushed him to apply for a scholarship. He won—and later on in life, seized the chance to give back to the organisation that supported him.

“I received the email to volunteer with MADALAH and I got a spot. It's something that I definitely wanted to do; it just felt right. I think volunteering work and getting engaged with the Indigenous community is one of the best things I've ever done.”

Later this year, Jaden will also be a mentor at an **Indigenous Australian Engineering Summer School** Camp.

With hard work and passion, Jaden has created an incredibly successful career so far, and wants students like him to push to achieve their goals.

“I think the common understanding is that you have to go to university, or there's only one way. That's a lie, there are multiple ways to go.”

“The common thought is that you have to get an ATAR over eighty to get into engineering. But there are other courses you can do to side step into it. There are always multiple routes to get where you want to be.”

He has advice to other Indigenous students at the start of their careers.

“Don't be so hard on yourself, and don't stress out.”

“Take every opportunity – you don't know your capabilities until you actually test them.”

By Rachael Knowles

