Luke Calver 0:15

Hello and welcome. This podcast has been brought to you from UHI and the Careers and Employability team. My name is Luke calver. And in this episode, we'll be focusing on the BA Child and Youth Studies degree showcasing one of the many career paths you could take once graduating. I'm joined by Dr. Me0-Li Roberts, programme leader for Child and Youth studies, as well as alum, Becky Poyner who will be talking about their career over to Mei-Li.

Mei-Li 0:38

Thank you, Luke. And welcome, Becky, and thanks for joining us today. I just wanted to start off just by asking, Could you just introduce yourself? And just let us know what you you graduated from the Child and Youth Studies degree?

Becky Poyner 0:51

Yeah, so um, my name is Rebecca Poyner. But I go by Becky. And I agree, graduated in 2019.

Mei-Li 0:58

That's Becky. So would you be able to just tell us a little bit about your career path and tell us a little bit about what you're doing currently your current role.

Becky Poyner 1:08

So over the last couple of years, since leaving the degree I have, in May, when I finished in May 2019, I went on and became self employed by July. And I worked alongside an organisation the money wellbeing hub, which is a social enterprise and the social movement. And I have continued to work with them since 2019, right up until current day. And then over the last six months, I have also been involved with an organisation called Revolution for good. And within that, within my role with muddy wellbeing hub, I facilitate and work alongside different organisations and Maori to provide wellbeing workshops with children, young people and families. And we have a wide range of things, we're currently at the moment we are have a massive, long term projects as basic high school, in the money area. And so coordinating that and supporting children and young people across localities and money. And then, in my role with revolution, for good, I am a part time progression coach. So I work again with children, young people to support them to create change in your life. And that might be one to one, at school or at home, whatever they want to support that or need that support. And we take them through the coaching process, which I've done that as part of my training, and support them to create what changes they want in their life.

Mei-Li 2:51

Thanks, Becky, it's really interesting to hear about your career so far, since you've left us, what would you say would be the kind of the main tasks, the main parts of your role that you find the most enjoyable, I would

Becky Poyner 3:03

say it's that support or empowerment aspect, being able to provide a safe space to enable the young people or the adults to grow really, and actually seeing that moment where something clicks, and they realise something or, and they might have been trying to create that change for months and months and months. And then one day, it just clicks. And yeah, and being able to work alongside the teams that I have, and just that support massive support, particularly at the beginning of 2020. And over the course of the pandemic. So it is it's that sense of support coming, the support I'm giving but also the roof support and receiving in that as well.

Mei-Li 3:48

Thanks so much, Becky. I was just wondering as well, would you be able to tell us a little bit about how you feel that your degree in Chinese studies has helped you both in your kind of career pathway, but also your current role,

Becky Poyner 4:02

I suppose the degree in itself, because there's such a wide range of modules within the degree as you've worked through, it enabled me to give me a variety of options to which career path I wanted to take. I went into the degree thinking I want to do primary education, and I left the degree thinking, I don't know what I want to do, but primary education is definitely not it. But that enabled me to have a background, I suppose in general knowledge around children, almost a theory to children and young people and, and enabled me to have a variety of knowledge in a variety of areas that I possibly wouldn't have thought about. So in terms of like, I did my literature review or my dissertation around different things. And but I had that third year to develop that and then learn the skills and then go on and do the dissertation in the fourth year. But I've also other things like childhood law and things like that, that actually, I wouldn't have necessarily taken on its own. But because there was a module within the degree, it gave me that overview that actually, that's all I needed at that point. And I suppose in some way, that's all I've needed. Now. It's just an overview of topics as enabled me to, to pick up on that as I go into different careers, and I develop my career path. And in terms of now it has, it's giving me that grounding of understanding of different areas. Although I don't work in an education role. I work with education. So I have the understanding of curriculum and just general child development that if a child's behaviour is appealing one way that actually, there's a lot more potentially behind that. And it just fascinates me, and I think, excellent analysis of different people. And because I am I'm working with human beings. And I suppose the degree has given me that foundation of theory, to enable me to then put those elements into practice in the work that I've done since graduating. Thanks,

Mei-Li 6:17

Vicki. It's really, it's really heartening to hear how much it's kind of giving you that that kind of foundation knowledge for your your current role that can leads quite nicely into my next question, which is about graduate attributes. So you'll remember we taught we had a bit of this, in the degree programme, as is those kinds of soft skills that you developed, which you kind of briefly mentioned already, but it's just wondering, in terms of graduate attributes, and all those kind of skills around communication, interpersonal skills, all that kind of thing? What would you say? Are the kind of create key graduate attributes that you learned and developed while you're at uhci? And how the skills helped you in the working world?

Becky Poyner 6:56

Yeah, I definitely remember the question at the bottom of the submission sheet, every time we submitted something, what key attributes are connected to the subject. And I suppose they're the degree itself, taking away the modules and things like that. The Bacchus degree is an online degree. And in a lot of ways, if yours and don't get me wrong, there's support there. There's some fantastic support there from tutors and staff. And depending on what college you're coming from, to study, the degree that will vary. But actually, the discipline that you need to complete an online degree. And I laugh with the number of times I've said that actually, the four years I did on mine, prepared me for two years of pandemic working at home, because it's that discipline, and it's keeping your focus, but also being adaptable and flexible. To the fact that things don't always work, particularly living in a rural area working on mine, if you don't have internet, you have to tap to, I suppose that flexibility in that discipline, to find motivation, even if it's not there, and actually doing stuff, because you have to, even if you don't feel like it. And again, that communication, of taking that encouragement that you have to reach out if you need support, because there's not necessarily someone there to notice that. So I suppose that confidence in communication, and that has continued to develop as I've moved forward into career. That sense of motivation and communication, and I suppose, taking pride in the work that I do, because at the end of the day, it is the work that I'm doing, I'm doing that work, and I've got myself through that degree, like I say, not without support when I've needed it, but actually, it's given me a sense of confidence, in that I'm able to achieve things, even if it's really, really difficult. And I suppose it's not until now that I'm reflecting back on my time at the gym, doing the degree that I can really, really see where those attributes have come out. And and yeah, definitely looking back that are that is there's so many there. I suppose the ones that are definitely standing out is that discipline and that inner confidence to be able to achieve what seems really, really difficult. Definitely third year was hands down for me the most hardest year that jump between the reading lists were definitely a big, big change. But again, it's putting in place those organisation skills and just continuing to work at it and getting there and achieving that and nobody can take that away from me.

Mei-Li 9:55

Absolutely. Becky, you should be proud of everything you've used. He for sure. You again, you kind of touched on some of some of the kind of key aspects, you know around motivation and discipline. And you know, that kind of confidence you've gained from being able to complete, particularly being able to do it all online, obviously, with support, but also, you know, having that self discipline to, you know, get online and study and so on. So if you're going to give some advice to our current students, and based on your experience, what would that be?

Becky Poyner 10:27

I suppose there's two sides of that is, don't be afraid to ask for help. Because actually, there will be more people struggle, or potentially more people finding the same question difficult. Or there'll be other people who might be able to understand the question you're finding difficult, but they might struggle with a question that you have found really easy. So there are people out there, and particularly on online, it can be quite difficult to feel like there are other people out there, but push past that discomfort of thinking, Oh, my goodness, I'm going to be the only one who doesn't know this. Because trust me, there are far more people in that degree who don't know the answer to that as soon as you meet just one other person. And you think not on my own, but also take pride in how far you've come. If that's just first semester, first year, or whether your second semester of third year. It is a high degree partly because it is 100% online. So every time you pass a module, every time you submit an essay, you're one step closer to finishing that degree. So take pride in doing that, regardless of what the result is, because I am, I was not a high flyer academically in terms of my results, bypass my degree. So yeah, I suppose it as for support, don't be scared to ask for support, but actually take pride in what you've achieved, regardless of how far that journey is.

Mei-Li 11:53

That's wonderful, Becky, and I think, you know, you're saying about not necessarily being a high flyer, but look at all you've achieved with a degree and in your career now. And you know, how much you've you've gained. So like you said, at the kind of little steps are so important for getting that kind of big journey picture as well, wherever your TV should be proud of it. Yeah. And just to say, thanks so much for taking the time to come speak to us. It's great to see you again, as well.

Becky Poyner 12:20

I know it's fantastic. It's been great to share that knowledge

Mei-Li 12:24

that I think that's the end of all my questions just now. Unless Is there anything else that you wanted to share with us or any other comment just about your career or the the degree itself or kind of linking between the two, I just

Becky Poyner 12:38

thought is it's the degree while it was really challenging at times has provided me with such a fantastic opportunity. So for anybody who's nervous about it, because it's online, I think it's about giving it go. Because actually, like I like I say I was an academically I'm not necessarily high fly. But there's so many different forms of intelligence. And that theory that the degree gave me, enabled me to then go forward and actually excel in what complemented my other volunteering and other experiences elsewhere, to be in a role to be in two roles, actually, that I absolutely love. And I'm thriving in.

Mei-Li 13:21

Perfect. Thank you so much.

Luke Calver 13:22

Thank you very much, Becky. That was really interesting podcast, a really interesting career path as well, one that we've not heard yet. So it's really interesting to see how you got there and how the degree has helped you and your advice was really good as well. Thank you as well, mainly for hosting the podcast. We hope this podcast has helped show you a potential career path from the child new studies degree. If you do have any questions about the degree do contact uhci. If your current students have questions about a career path, please do contact the careers team and we can help you out with that. Thank you very much for listening and thank you again Becky, for participating in this podcast.