Name: Alice Fraser
Degree: Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery
Year of degree: 3rd (2013)
Campus: Campbelltown
High School: MLC School Burwood
Completed Year 12 in: 2010
Scholarships held: Academic Excellence Scholarship, John Flynn Scholarship, General Practice Students Network (GPSN) First Wave Scholarship

Is the degree or course structure what you expected?
I knew the course was structured with 2 years on campus and the next 3 years clinically based. I was surprised at how much free time we had for independent study and other activities. We’re now submerged in the clinical environment which will increase exponentially until we graduate.

How is university different from school?
There is more flexibility and greater learning opportunities at uni. The Medicine degree is similar to school in that you spend a lot of time with the same 120 people during the first two years but this is lost when clinical duties begin, which can be quite isolating. It’s important not to lose old friends.

How did high school help you in preparing for university?
My school had excellent careers counsellors who helped with the application process and personality tests. MLC taught me to be involved in extra-curricular activities which is often where the most fun and interesting learning can be found. This definitely applies at uni.

What is the most interesting thing you’ve done at university so far?
Working with professionals on the wards is very exciting – I’ve seen a caesarian section, knee replacement, I’ve given needles and talked to professors about patients’ conditions. I’ve also really enjoyed living out of home and learning to manage my own life.

What are some of your achievements since you started university?
I am proud just to have passed first and second year and although my test grades are never the greatest I was very happy to get a good mark in my practical exam. I have been involved in the rural health club (sitting on the executive committee and helping to run events) and really enjoyed the practical experience I gained from the John Flynn and GPSN scholarships.

Have your career aspirations changed since you began studying?
I am more aware of the many different medical career paths you can take and I am less worried about choosing a specialty straight away. I am more content to gain experience in different areas and hospitals before specialising in one area.

What advice would you give to students at your high school about pursuing university study?
University is one path you can take after high school but it’s not for everyone. Learn different things aside from those linked to your chosen career. At uni every skill set and experience can be useful, so taking time out to pursue something else before studying is not a waste of time.

Why did you choose to study at UWS?
I had lived and studied in closer to the CBD all my life and was hesitant about leaving the culture and vibrant people. However, UWS had what I wanted out of a medical degree and I was drawn to the prospect of doing and going somewhere different to what was expected of me.

Any other comments or observations about university study?
In high school there was a lot of jumping through hoops to meet marking criteria and get good grades, but in uni what you are learning is, more often than not, very relevant to your future career.

More School Graduate Stories can be seen at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community/for_schools/school_graduate_stories
Course Information

Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery

Where is it held (campus)? Campbelltown

How long is it? 5 years full time

Career opportunities: Medical practice (either general or specialised), medical administration and medical research. The MBBS program is fully accredited by the Australian Medical Council. Graduates will be eligible for registration as a medical practitioner by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

Subjects include: As a first and second year student, you'll be set a problem each week, and the lectures, resources, clinical practice and research for that week will focus on the learning that this problem creates or poses. From third to fifth year, you'll rotate through clinical placements across the whole of Greater Western Sydney and rural NSW, ensuring the utmost competence and confidence in your future career.

Selection Criteria: As well as submitting a UAC application, applicants must satisfy other selection criteria. Visit the School of Medicine website at www.uws.edu.au/medicine for more details.

Additional information: You could be studying at one of Australia’s newest medical research and education facilities. You will be stimulated, challenged and inspired, and have access to the most modern classroom and laboratory facilities, simulated learning spaces, problem-based learning rooms, anatomy laboratories and computer labs, as well as a three-floor specialist building dedicated to basic and applied medical research.

For more information: Visit the UWS website course information at http://future.uws.edu.au/