

### **Mearon O'Brien (2001 – 2005)**

I graduated from St James College in 2005. After graduating I travelled to South Africa for a month with the Christian Brothers as part of the South Africa/Australia Alive program, although I had been passionate about social justice and actively involved prior to this experience the people and programs that I came into contact with in South Africa really inspired me to work in an area where I could support people and work for change to some of the systems that allow injustice.

Initially after completing high school I enrolled in a Bachelor of Social Science at the University of Queensland. Whilst studying I also worked for a young worker's non-government organisation that promoted the rights and responsibilities of young workers (especially in the casual workforce) and encouraged young people to act for change. In 2007 I moved to Melbourne to work full time for this organisation and I worked closely with other NGO's and trade unions with campaigns around issues leading up to the 2007 Federal Election. In 2008 I moved back to Brisbane and commenced full time work for an NGO called the Foundation for Development Cooperation which is a Brisbane based not for profit development consultancy that specialises in microfinance in developing countries. I returned to university in 2009 and am currently completing a Bachelor of Health Science Majoring Nutrition at QUT. I have worked for the past two years with leading Brisbane based mining and engineering recruitment company SmartWorker and since 2008 as a casual Membership Organiser for the Independent Education Union - Queensland and NT branch.

I plan to sit the GAMSAT entrance exam for Medicine next year and complete a post graduate medicine degree after I finish my undergrad next year. My goal is to become a gynaecologist and work with women in areas where there is a lack of access to health care and to be involved in the area of sexual health and health education.

Since finishing school I have travelled to South Africa, South East Asia and Europe and I been heavily involved with a range of organisations and campaigns in a voluntary capacity. Currently, I am on the Brisbane Subcommittee of Young UN Women Australia.