



Tālofa lava, o lo'u igoa o Mūāgututi'a Jessee Tanu Fia'Ali'i. O lo'u tama o Iosua Fia'Ali'i, o lo'u tinā o Savalina Wong Chiu Fia'Ali'i. E omai o'u mātua i nu'u o Fogāsavaii ma Āfega i Sāmoa i sisifo.

Kia Ora, my name is Jessee Fia'Ali'i and I am a gay cis-male and a New Zealand-born Sāmoan. I grew up in South Auckland where I currently still reside with my family. I work in mental health at Counties Manukau Health. I absolutely love the challenge and sense of contribution that comes with helping people through difficulty whilst inpatient and then helping them to live a meaningful life despite the presence of chronic pain.

I'm still trying to figure out how to be an adult with 'hobbies' but am enjoying exploring (easy) walking tracks across Auckland. I also love spicy food and need to start carrying around baby tobasco sauce bottles.

What made you want to join the RY board?

Growing up, I struggled to find a way to comfortably act as an advocate for my Pasifika LGBTQI+ community. Part of this was due to not knowing what skills I could use to be able to help out in the community effectively. The opportunity to join the RY board last year was very timely as I had just completed my studies and training and felt that I could dedicate more time and energy into other aspects of my life and identity. I have always maintained that RY represented an organisation that was already doing work for the betterment of my community. It had an established presence in the community and I wanted to contribute to that. Although short, I have appreciated my time serving on the board. I have learnt a lot and have hopefully contributed to amplifying the voices of our Pasifika rainbow youth. I would like to continue this in the coming year before I am aged out.

RainbowYOUTH is on a journey to proactively and respectfully uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi. How would you contribute to this journey?

I am proud to have been part of the recent discussions of ways in which Rainbow Youth as an organisation acts to honor its responsibilities to Te Tiriti in its constitution and operations. In other domains of my life I have found that aims to incorporate Te Tiriti can often be stifled by a lack of diversity and representation of members of communities that are disadvantaged upon multiple levels due to the intersectionality of their identities. When policies, practices and protocols are developed without these voices they tend not to work as intended and may even perpetuate the discrimination faced by these communities. If RY is to advance in this aspect of the organisation, appropriate space and time needs to be allocated for these voices (not necessarily mine but voices nonetheless).

I believe that I can continue to contribute in the RY journey by providing one of these voices that will seek to create safer spaces for our Pāsifika and Māori Rainbow Youth.

What particular skills do you think you have that would make you suitable for the RY board?

I am a keen listener and have found this useful when meeting new people with experiences and opinions which may differ from my own. I feel that I have been able to exercise this whilst on the board and in other areas of my life and has helped me to respond with empathy. This is particularly useful in situations of high emotional tension.

Being part of the Pasifika community I acknowledge that whilst I can't speak to all in my community, I can provide insight into particular issues that will impact Pasifika peoples and advise on ways to circumvent this. Being involved in Pasifika health research and clinical practice, I believe that I may be able to extend my experience and learning from these environments into RY.