

A home away from home

MHS alumna shares glimpse of newfound work, life in New Zealand

LAUREN COUGHLIN, Editor

Nina Green is 19 hours and 6,494 miles removed from her native Malibu, but she feels right at home.

A little more than three months ago, the 23-year-old MHS alumna moved to Auckland, New Zealand, taking a job with Storicom, a public relations and marketing firm. The *Surfside* recently caught up with Green via email about life in New Zealand.

In many ways, she said, New Zealand's culture is a whole lot like that of Southern California.

"Most people here are very laid back and friendly," she wrote. "Everyone walks around in shorts and flip flops like in Malibu. Kiwis and Southern Californians are very similar."

Green was initially introduced to the New Zealand lifestyle in her study abroad program through the University of San Diego. In the spring of 2016, she found herself studying at University of Otago, in New Zealand's South Island.

"I loved everything about the country and knew I needed to find a way to get back and live there on a more permanent basis or even just for a larger amount of time than four months," she shared.

Upon receipt of her bachelor's degree in communication studies in May 2017, she began to plot her course. But, she took a long, winding and wonderful road back.

WORDS OF WISDOM

Nina Green, a member of Malibu High's Class of 2013, shares advice from New Zealand

MSN: What would be your advice for any Malibu High School students or graduates who may be considering a big move like yours?

NG: I'd have to say if you're thinking of moving, absolutely do it! You don't have to go as far as New Zealand to make a big move. I think it's really important to experience living in a new city at least once because it gives you a new perspective.

I'd also say for those that want to travel, it's much easier than you think and amazing opportunities are everywhere if you look for them. For Americans specifically, there are so many opportunities teaching English, working in tourism, and taking advantage of our working holiday visa agreements with other countries. Also when you travel, you'll always meet other travelers or people who will do their best to help you out so I wouldn't be afraid to venture far from home.

"After I graduated from USD I went to Europe to travel while I figured out how to move outside the US more permanently," she said. "My main reason for going to Europe was a job offer I'd received to teach stand up paddleboarding and kayaking in the Dalmatia region of Croatia.

"After Croatia I traveled and/or worked for a few more months in places like Italy, Greece, Switzerland and Spain. Some of these travels I did with my international friends, some by myself, and some with my boyfriend who is from Switzerland."

Over the course of five months, Green's passport gained a good amount of ink as she passed through Sweden, Austria, Slovakia, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Switzerland, Spain and Greece.

In November, she found herself back in Malibu, and she began to save money for her next big move.

"After my boyfriend and I spent some time applying for visas and working with the system, they were approved by February and

were able to officially move to Auckland by March 1, 2018," she states.

At Storicom, Green has had the chance to refine her skills and love of storytelling, with a focus on local businesses.

"My main responsibilities as account executive include interviewing subjects for different stories, writing and editing press releases, phoning journalists to find outlets for publishing, coordinating orders and materials necessary for events, and writing blog posts," Green explains.

When she's not working, Green has largely spent the past three months out-

doors, taking in the natural beauty that surrounds her. With a love of hiking, camping and spending time out on the water, New Zealand has been a great fit for Green. And, though she was familiar with New Zealand, this time around she's on the North Island, which, at times, feels like an entirely different country from the South Island, she said.

But, there is this one thing that New Zealand is lacking.

"I really miss classic Southern California style burritos because it's hard to find good Mexican food here," Green shared.

Still, burritos aside, Green



Nina Green, a Malibu High School alumna, graduated from the University of San Diego in 2017 with a bachelor's degree in communication studies.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

looks forward to continuing to explore New Zealand and beyond in the years to come.

"At some point I know I'll come back to southern California to settle down to

some degree but for the next few years at least, I want to keep traveling and working while I grow and change my career in different ways," she said.



After college, Nina Green found herself plotting her way back to New Zealand, where she studied abroad in 2016. Here, her photo of Roy's Peak in New Zealand is shown.