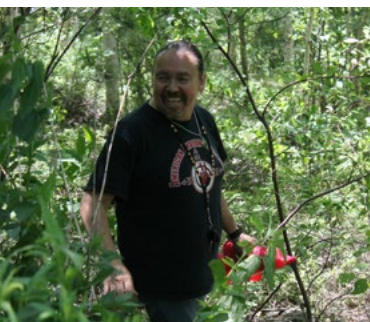




Indigenous Mentorship Network of Ontario

Year 1 Report

Summer 2017- Spring 2018



Land Acknowledgement

IMN-Ontario is housed at Western University and our network extends across the Province and beyond. We acknowledge the many territories and diverse Indigenous communities of our mentors, trainees and network participants across Ontario and Turtle Island (North America).

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing urban Indigenous population.

IMN-Ontario values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island.



Contents

Message from Dr. Chantelle Richmond, Nominated Principal Investigator.....	3
Introducing IMN-Ontario.....	4
Official Launch 2018.....	5
Webinar: Working in Relationship with Indigenous Communities.....	5
2018 Scholarships and Seed Grants.....	6
Undergraduate Workshop: Supporting Transitions.....	8
Inaugural Summer School at Laurentian University.....	9
Meet the IMN-Ontario Mentors.....	10

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funds 8 regionally based Indigenous Mentorship Network Programs in Canada:



Indigenous Mentorship Network of Ontario – Ontario

Based at Western University

Indigenous Mentorship Network of the Pacific North-West – British Columbia and the Yukon

Based at the University of Victoria

Alberta Indigenous Mentorship in Health Innovation (AIM-HI) – Alberta

Based at the University of Calgary

Saskatchewan Indigenous Mentorship Network Program – Saskatchewan

Based at University of Saskatchewan

Prairie Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Network (PIKE-Net) Mentorship Program – Manitoba

Based at University of Manitoba

Quebec Indigenous Mentorship Network Program – Quebec

Atlantic Indigenous Mentorship Network – Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick

Based at Dalhousie University and Memorial University

Ombaashi Network – National/international outreach and opportunities

Based at Thompson Rivers University



Message from Dr. Chantelle Richmond, Nominated Principal Investigator

“Our inaugural year was a profound success in bringing together our mentors, trainees and community partners to grow the next generation of Indigenous health scholars. This report is a celebration of that coming together, of the many people who make up our Network, and strengthening research relationships that value Indigenous knowledges and prioritize working directly with Indigenous communities

We are guided by three long-term goals. The first is to redress the structural inequalities experienced by Indigenous people in Ontario universities, seeing more Indigenous people in the university context at all levels, and primarily at the faculty level. The second goal is to increase the number of Indigenous people doing Indigenous health research, and our third goal is to support meaningful ways for Indigenous communities to participate and lead research on the issues that matter most to them.

This Network is about making deliberate spaces for Indigenous scholarship to be realized and to strengthen the relationships between Indigenous peoples, scholars, and our institutions. The way forward is for universities and funders to make their environments and programs more inclusive of Indigenous scholars, including their Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing research. And perhaps the most important part of our Network is that it has been built on a foundation of shared history, deep relational accountability, and a commitment to our families, communities, and the generations of Indigenous children yet to come.”

Read about IMN-Ontario’s backstory in Dr. Richmond’s 2018 article, **Try Bravery for a Change: Supporting Indigenous Health Training and Development in Canadian Universities**

IMN-Ontario Staff and Mentors

Our staff also includes Veronica Reitmeier, an undergraduate student who works part-time as the Network’s Research Assistant, Katie Big-Canoe, our full-time Program Coordinator who oversees Network activities, and Elana Nightingale, who helped us in our first year. We have also assembled a large group of dedicated Mentors from diverse areas of expertise. Spread across the province, Mentors support our network in different ways, sometimes working directly with students, or supporting network activities by offering webinars, hosting events, or reviewing applications. Meet our 2018 Mentors on page 10 of this report.



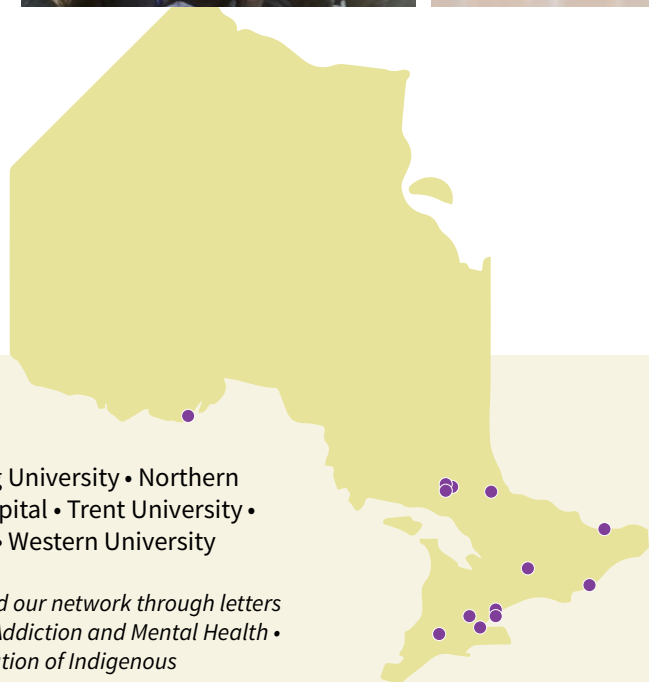
2017 Parliamentary Health Research Caucus on Indigenous Health Research in Canada

Along with Mentors from IMNPs across Canada, IMN-Ontario mentors Chantelle Richmond, Chelsea Gabel, Jennifer Walker, Janet Smylie, Dawn Martin Hill, Janet McElhaney, and Sheila Cote-Meek were invited to Parliament Hill to speak about their research with Parliamentarians. Learn more about **Indigenous Health Research in Canada**.

Introducing IMN-Ontario

The Indigenous Mentorship Network of Ontario (IMN-Ontario) provides First Nations, Inuit and Métis scholars and trainees with high quality mentorship, training, and opportunities to engage in Indigenous health and well-being research. We are funded as part of a five-year, Canada-wide Indigenous Mentorship Network Program through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)'s Institute of Indigenous Health Research.

IMN-Ontario is fundamentally rooted in the philosophy of 'community first', bringing together 100+ scholars, trainees and community partners of diverse skills, experiences and methodologies in Indigenous health research. We are an interdisciplinary collaboration supported by 13 partnering research institutions, including the leading Indigenous health scholars and research centres in Ontario. Our partnering institutions support the Network in different ways, including hosting scholarships at their universities, facilitating or hosting mentorship or learning opportunities, and helping to fund IMN-Ontario activities.



IMN-Ontario Partner Institutions

Health Sciences North Research Institute (Sudbury) • Lakehead University • Laurentian University • McMaster University • Nipissing University • Northern Ontario School of Medicine • Queen's University • St. Michael's Hospital • Trent University • University of Guelph • University of Ottawa • University of Toronto • Western University

Chi-miigwetch to our community & academic partners, who have supported our network through letters of support and/or celebrated our launch: Cancer Care Ontario • Centre for Addiction and Mental Health • Chiefs of Ontario • Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences • Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres • Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre

Mno Nimkodadding Geegi: Supporting and growing the next generation of Indigenous health scholars

IMN-Ontario's driving force is inspired by the Anishinaabe concept, Mno Nimkodadding Geegi ('we are all connected'), encompassing the inter-relationships among youth and elders, health and environment, cultural practices, institutional policies, and many more. We seek to create and sustain the very best training environments and mentorship opportunities for current and up and coming Indigenous scholars at the undergraduate, master's, doctoral and postdoctoral levels, with particular emphasis on community-based research.

We focus on four primary activity areas, holding Mno Nimkodadding Geegi and our community of students, scholars, and partners held at the centre of our work. Within these four areas, some of our offerings include:

- Quarterly webinars to share knowledge, advice, and best practices
- Annual scholarships and seed grants for Indigenous trainees
- Annual community-based summer school
- Engagement in local, national and international networks
- Research innovation and publishing opportunities
- Cultural, social and academic tools and resources





Official Launch Celebrates “Health Research by Indigenous People for Indigenous People”

We marked the official launch of IMN-Ontario on January 11, 2018 at Western University. Coming together with partners, students and community members, we emphasized the significance of Indigenous health training environments and programs that support research by Indigenous people for Indigenous people, and address the health and social issues that matter to Indigenous people.

“Despite an increase in research on Indigenous topics in Canada, inequities are growing and outcomes are not improving. The only way to change that is to work with communities, through diverse, interdisciplinary teams of trainees who know community landscapes intimately. For the first time, we are connecting the networks of the community with the networks of academia, and putting communities in the driver’s seat on health research that matters to them.” - Dr. Chantelle Richmond

Read more in [**Ontario hub for community-based Indigenous health training launched at Western University**](#), January 2018 by Media Relations, Western University.

Webinar: Working in Relationship with Indigenous Communities

IMN-Ontario released our first webinar, [**Working in Relationship with Indigenous Communities**](#), in Spring 2018. In a discussion format, a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous allied scholars, mentored graduate students, Elder-in-Residence, and community partners met in circle at Nipissing University to share knowledge, advice and best practices for what it means to work with Indigenous communities in a good way. They shared that research with Indigenous communities is fundamentally based in relationships, as well as the challenges that can arise when these relationships are situated within the broader context of academia.



2018 Scholarships and Seed Grants

Total funds awarded Year 1: \$182,898

IMN-Ontario awarded nine scholarships and two seed grants in our inaugural year.

[Read more about each of our 2018 Awardees on our website.](#)

Scholarship Awardees

In April 2018, we awarded the first IMN-Ontario Scholarships to nine Indigenous graduate students, each registered at Ontario institutions and undertaking applied community-based health research.

Chi-miigwetch to our Year 1 Award Adjudicators:

Dr. Cindy Peltier, Nipissing
Dr. Sonia Wesche, Ottawa
Dr. Hannah Neufeld, Guelph
Dr. Michelle Firestone, St. Michael's
Nadia Green, CAMH
Dr. Vicky Smye, Western
Dr. Chelsea Gabel, McMaster
Dr. Bernice Downey, McMaster
Dr. Chris Furgal, Trent



Lindsay Croxall

PhD student,
Aging and Health,
Queen's University



Brittany McBeath

Masters student, School
of Kinesiology and Health
Studies, Queen's University



Andrea Ianni

Masters student,
Health Promotion,
Queen's University



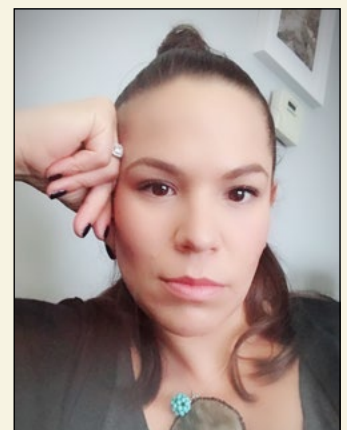
Megan Paulin

Masters student,
Environmental Studies,
Nipissing University



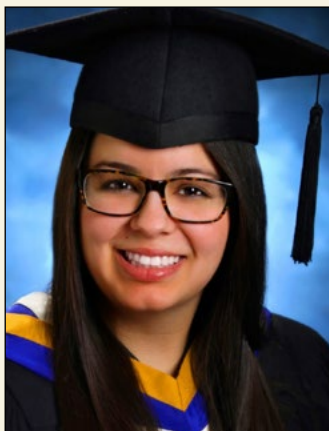
Randi Ray

PhD student, Sustainable
Leadership Development,
Nipissing University



Vanessa Ambtman-Smith

Masters student, Geography,
Western University



Robyn Rowe

PhD student, School of
Rural and Northern Health,
Laurentian University



Justice Seidel

Masters student,
Indigenous Relations,
Laurentian University



Staci Person

Doctoral student,
Clinical Psychology,
Lakehead University

Seed Grant Awardees

Indigenous post-doctoral fellows and new investigators undertaking applied community-based health research can apply for IMN-Ontario Seed Grants up to \$5,000 per year. In our first year, we were thrilled to award Seed Grants to two researchers working in Atikameksheng Anishnabek territory, Sudbury, Ontario.



Dr. Laura Hall

Laurentian University

Research areas: gendered impacts of colonialism, culture based sustainability initiatives, and addressing community needs through cultural resurgence



Dr. Joey-Lynn Wabie

Laurentian University

Research areas: traditional Indigenous women's health, grassroots community organizing, and youth engagement



Undergraduate Workshop: Supporting Transitions to Health Research and Professions

In February, IMN-Ontario hosted the Indigenous undergraduate workshop, Supporting Transitions to Health Research and Professions at Western University. This three-day workshop aimed to provide Indigenous undergraduate students with skills and mentorship to support successful transitions into graduate school and Indigenous health training. Facilitated by a panel of Indigenous health scholars and professionals, topics included:

- Pathways to Indigenous health careers
- How to apply to grad school
- Lessons from current graduate students
- Applied research in the Indigenous health context

“The workshop had a huge impact on my confidence to pursue Indigenous health research. I also feel that I have a network to fall back on for advice and guidance in my future goals, which makes me feel a lot more prepared and confident in myself to be a leader.” – Workshop Participant

Undergraduate Gathering: Supporting Transitions Video

Following the workshop, ten students representing nine universities shared how the experiences and connections they made provided them with direction, inspiration, and a sense of belonging. Participants emphasized the importance of belonging and connection to cultural identity within post-secondary institutions, as well as their motivations to continue into Graduate studies. Thank you, participants, for sharing!



[Watch the Undergraduate Gathering: Supporting Transitions Video on YouTube](#)

2018 Summer Institute at Laurentian University

Mentorship, sharing, networking and team-building

IMN-Ontario held our first Summer Institute at Laurentian University in June 2018. The four-day event hosted over 20 graduate students working in the field of Indigenous health research. Throughout the week, students gathered in Laurentian University's Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre's Round Room, and out on the Land, to share their experiences and learn about a variety of topics related to Indigenous health and community-based research including: the challenges and opportunities experienced by Indigenous Peoples in academia, how to work collaboratively with communities, and how to find supportive mentors to help foster students' research journeys.

"It is so valuable to gather in person, connect and share. It is such a good foundation for staying in touch and more collaborative projects."
-Summer School Participant

Read more about the 2018 Summer Institute in the [IMN-Ontario Summer School Report](#), including speakers, topics, itinerary and student reflections on lessons and learning.

IMN-Ontario in Maclean's Magazine!

Summer school students, including two 2018 Scholarship awardees, share about their experience and their community-based research in an article published by Maclean's in November, 2018. Read the article, [A new network aims to connect and support Indigenous scholars](#) to hear from them and learn more about how IMN-Ontario provides a foundation for Indigenous health research and training.

"The wisdom in striving to build an environment that fosters a sense of belonging in everyone has had a profound impact on me." -Summer School Participant



Chi-Miigwetch - Thank you to traditional knowledge keepers Perry and Darren for leading us in Ceremony and teachings, and to Laurentian University and the organizing team for hosting.



2018 IMN-Ontario Mentors



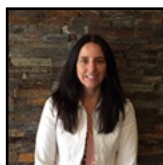
Dr. Amanda Sheppard
Cancer Care Ontario



Dr. Anita Benoit
Toronto



Dr. Bernice Downey
McMaster



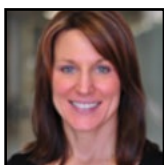
Dr. Beverley Shea
Ottawa



Dr. Bonnie Freeman
McMaster



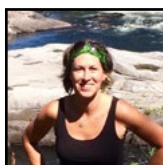
Dr. Braden Te Hiwi
Lakehead



Dr. Brenda Bruner
Nipissing



Dr. Brian Branfireun
Western



Dr. Carly Dokis
Nipissing



Dr. Chantelle Richmond
Western



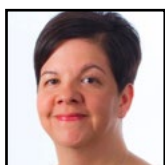
Dr. Chelsea Gabel
McMaster



Dr. Chris Furgal
Trent



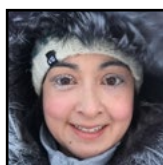
Dr. Chris Mushquash
Lakehead



Dr. Cindy Peltier
Nipissing



Dr. Dawn Martin Hill
McMaster



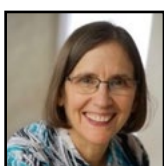
Dr. Gwen Healey
NOSM



Dr. Hannah Tait Neufeld
Guelph



Dr. Heather Castleden
Queen's



Dr. Janet McElhaney
HSNRI



Dr. Janet Smylie
St. Michael's Hospital



Dr. Jeffrey Denis
McMaster



Dr. Jennifer Walker
Laurentian



Dr. Jerry White
Western



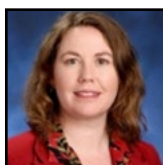
Dr. Katrina Srigley
Nipissing



Dr. Kim Anderson
Guelph



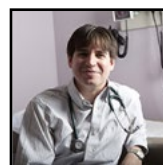
Dr. Laurie Chan
Ottawa



Dr. Lloy Wylie
Western



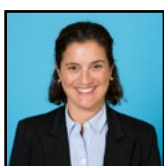
Dr. Lucie Lévesque
Queen's



Dr. Michael Green
Queen's



Dr. Michael Robidoux
Ottawa



Dr. Michelle Firestone
St. Michael's Hospital



Dr. Randy Jackson
McMaster



Dr. Robert Hegele
Western



Dr. Sheila Cote-Meek
Laurentian



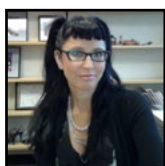
Dr. Sherrilee Harper
Guelph



Dr. Sonia Wesche
Ottawa



Dr. Stewart Harris
Western



Dr. Suzanne Stewart
Toronto



Dr. Taima Moeke-Pickering
Laurentian