

INDIGENOUS HEALTH LEARNING LODGE

McMASTER UNIVERSITY | FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Issue 3
May 2023



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Lori Davis Hill
Executive Director

**Shekoli • Sge:no • Shekon • Boozhoo
• Tansi • Greetings**

As the days begin to get longer and warmer, we acknowledge the Spring Equinox and the reminder of how we are connected to all of creation. We are each here to follow our dreams and carve our own path.

The past few months have been busy at the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge, as we have welcomed new team members with more to come in the new few weeks. We have been working on increasing our presence on social media, so be sure to follow us and share our posts.

We are most excited about the time we have spent meeting and connecting with Indigenous learners, along with faculty and staff within the Faculty of Health Sciences. We are working to make sure everyone knows IHLL as a safe place, a safe space with safe faces to support Indigenous learners, faculty and staff across the university.

My time as Acting Executive Director will draw to a close in June. It has been a year of learning for me and I want to send out my appreciation to everyone who has welcomed me and supported me over this past year. I am so grateful for this experience.

As you prepare for the end of term and for whatever is next on your journey, remember to give thanks to all of creation and remember that you are here to share your gifts.

Yaw^ko
LoriDH





**Dr. Bernice
Downey**
Associate Dean,
Indigenous Health

Indigenous bioethics: Creating a circle of knowing and appreciation

Boozhoo, She:kon, Greetings!

As the academic year 2022-23 draws to a close, there is a lot to reflect on from the Indigenous health science education perspective. It has been a very busy time in our Indigenous Health Learning Lodge; getting settled in our new space in the Michael DeGroot Centre for Learning, welcoming new staff and as always, advocating and supporting our Faculty of Health Sciences Indigenous Learners.

A most important topic of interest is that of bioethics. More specifically, Indigenous bioethics perspectives. This March, the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge Team (IHLL) collaborated with Dr. Lisa Schwartz, Professor, Health Research Methods, Evidence and Impact and co-hosted a Bioethics Roundtable to explore Indigenous considerations in bioethics for health systems, research and education. Bioethics as a field of study and practice involving academic scholarship that informs policy, guides health research and is applied to clinical settings. The overall aim is to support and guide those who work in healthcare to help ensure the best possible experience and outcomes for patients, research participants, communities, and the healthcare providers and researchers they interact with (Schwartz, 2023)

From an Indigenous perspective, the field of bioethics offers an opportunity to identify, affirm and highlight the inequities experienced by First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in health systems, research and education. Anti-Indigenous racism, systemic barriers and epistemic injustice are examples of important related issues to consider among others.

Invited participants included Indigenous clinical practitioners, Knowledge Helpers, faculty, bio ethicists, researchers and staff who engaged in this important dialogue over two days. The goal of these sessions was to provide an opportunity to discuss bioethics as it relates to Indigenous peoples and to consider strategies to address barriers and issues. The first session included a presentation with an overview of bioethics followed by group work that involved reviewing and discussing assigned case studies. The second session was held in a circle process with the intention of facilitating reflections from session one participants and identifying potential strategies.

The outcome was a very rich dialogue from both sessions. Participants expressed an appreciation and satisfaction with the circle process and for the ideas about how to address ethical issues experienced by Indigenous peoples. Themes from this discussion included the need for ongoing education, mandatory cultural safety training, anti-racism & anti-oppression approaches; making an ethical space for Indigenous ways of knowing and being and traditional healing; and structural factors that contribute to an 'unjust' institution.

The emerging literature on Indigenous perspectives and bioethics acknowledges that Indigenous languages do not include a translation for the terms 'ethics' or 'bioethics'. Rather, that there is a need to understand and respect diverse Indigenous values such as holism, pluralism, autonomy, community or family-based decision-making along with the maintenance of quality of life rather than the exclusive pursuit of a cure (Ellerby et.al,2000).

Participants in our circle process seemed to echo this perspective and also acknowledged the need to 'connect to our collective humanity' and to 'connect the heart to the head.' Further, that we need to be prepared for a generation of Indigenous children who are stronger spiritually and will have expectations of accommodation in their healthcare.

The field of bioethics can potentially create a doorway for Indigenous scholars, researchers and health practitioners to harmonize and integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into Western healthcare approaches. The sessions provided an opportunity to discuss and consider strategies to move this agenda forward in the Academy. A fuller report on these sessions and additional work by Indigenous scholars and researchers regarding bioethics is forthcoming soon.

All the best to our learners and faculty and I look forward to seeing new and returning faces in September!

Medical School Entrance Interview Workshop

On February 25-26th, the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge held our annual Medical School Entrance Interview (MSEI) Workshop for Indigenous students applying to the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine. This workshop aims to create a safe space for Indigenous students while providing them the opportunity to prepare for the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) section of their application. Over the weekend, applicants learned about the Undergraduate Medical Education program at McMaster along with all the supports available to them as Indigenous students. Applicants were excited to learn about what McMaster and our mentors were just as enthusiastic to share their experiences with them and why they should choose McMaster. The Indigenous Health Learning Lodge is proud to offer this workshop as it's an excellent way to build relationships with our incoming medical students and we look forward to welcoming our Indigenous students to the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine!

COMING SOON:

Indigenous Nurse's Day

On May 9th, the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge in collaboration with Six Nations Polytechnic will be hosting an Indigenous Nurse's Day Event! This event will be held at Six Nations Polytechnic in Ohsweken and will be open to Indigenous Nurses, Nurses who support Indigenous communities and Indigenous Nursing Students. As frontline advocates for Indigenous patients and the bridge between traditional healing practices and western medicine, we want to celebrate and recognize their contributions to the Nursing practice. Stay tuned for more details!

National Indigenous People's Day

National Indigenous People's Day takes place on the summer solstice, June 21. It's a special occasion to learn more about the rich and diverse cultures, voices, experiences and histories of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. McMaster prioritizes and encourages people to learn more about Indigenous Peoples, places, and experiences. This is a valuable step forward each person can take on the path to reconciliation. Please follow the Learning Lodge's website to receive information on events at McMaster and around the region that will be taking place for this momentous day.

Nagishkodaadiwag (They Meet Each Other While Going Somewhere) Indigenous Learner Gathering

This Fall, we will be inviting Indigenous learners from the Faculty of Health Sciences to join us for a retreat at Chiefswood Park on September 8-10, 2023. This gathering will provide learners a safe space to connect with other Indigenous learners, staff and faculty while engaging in cultural workshops and land-based activities. Limited spots are available. For more information, please contact VP IHs, Kelsey Allen at kelsey.allen@medportal.ca.

Indigenous Culture of Safety Sessions

The Learning Lodge had hosted an Indigenous Health Culture of safety program this semester. The program consists of 5 sessions that focus on colonization, Indigenous ways of knowing and reconciliation. Each session provides participants with a circle sharing structure that offers a unique experience that focuses on the embodiment of Indigenous knowledge. The program has been well received thus far and will be more widely available to students, staff, and faculty as we develop more capacity to run sessions for participants.

The Indigenous Health Learning Lodge is in the process of developing Indigenous Culture of Safety online Modules. This unique module program will be available to all students, faculty and staff that are interested in participating in this exciting learning opportunity. A unique feature of the modules is that they will showcase regional Indigenous Peoples' socio - cultural perspectives and worldview.

The Culture of Safety modules will bridge the knowledge gap and serve as a resource for self-education, anti-Indigenous racism training and curriculum enhancement thus, addressing existing systemic barriers for all learners, educating non-

Indigenous faculty, raising awareness and harmonizing Indigenous cultural knowledge into educational and research programs. The models will complement an experiential component that will be available for those who wish to participate in a facilitated circle learning process that focuses on the embodiment of Indigenous Knowledge, values and teachings through experiential learning. This aspect of the program is in a pilot phase at this time.

In the meantime, we recommend that individuals take advantage of existing digital and print resources to aid in learning more about the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples. For example, you can enroll in the San'yas Anti-Racism Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program (Core Health). Many learners and faculty have already taken the training here in the Faculty. The Indigenous Health Learning Lodge has pre-paid spots available to interested students, faculty, and staff.

For more information about this opportunity and the San'yas program, please visit their website: sanyas.ca. If you are interested in enrolling in the program, please contact lhll@mcmaster.ca to reserve your spots as they are limited.

Indigenous Health Resource

The Indigenous Health Learning Lodge is gaining significant momentum in the creation of an Indigenous Health Resource. The Indigenous Core Review group is regularly meeting to ensure that the content of the resource consisting of three main concepts of colonization, Indigenous ways of knowing and reconciliation are being developed properly. This project is being led by our curriculum developer Sam Yousefifard.

The purpose of this resource is to provide a document for the Faculty of Health Sciences that can be used across all programs to ensure consistency in curriculum content for learners. There will be more information for programs in the coming months on the status of the resource and when it can be available for use for learners to access.



STUDENT SECTION ▶

Congratulations to our 2023 Graduating Students!

Aanii, Shé:kon, Boozhoo, Sge:no, Taanishi

We wish all Indigenous graduates of the Faculty of Health Sciences Class of 2023 a big congratulations! We are very happy and honoured to share in your excitement of a well-earned success. We wish you all the best of luck as you carry on in your careers and future endeavors and we look forward to seeing your continued growth in the future. We wish you all the best as you carry on in your careers and the next step in your journey in life. All our students will be missed and if you ever need support, please reach out to the Learning Lodge, we would always love to hear from you!



Karennaonwe Dr. Karen Hill

Faculty Advisor

She:kon from Florida to all our Indigenous Students

I'm taking some time to focus on my own health and healing in tandem with the new life that spring gifts us with.

I want to send all the grads off with good thoughts and prayers that the next leg of your journey is fruitful and flows with grace and ease. To those of you returning in the Fall let this Summer be one of health and joy as you engage with activities and people that fill you up. And to those of you studying through the summer, take the time to have fun and rest amidst the work.

And to all of us a reminder to do the things that bless the Earth and that honour the elders, yourself as well as the coming faces.

Enjoy life!

STUDENT SECTION ▶



Chyna Steele
Bigstone Cree Nation

Tansi, I am from Bigstone Cree Nation, located on Treaty 8 territory. I was born in Edmonton but raised in a remote community in Northern Alberta. Acknowledging my ancestors and developing a passion to learn more about my culture has helped me find myself after struggling with my identity. I value community so much and would love to learn more about other Indigenous Peoples and Nations across Canada. I think it's important to develop a family with the Indigenous students at MacMed, it will be home away from home so please don't hesitate to reach out for anything, even if it is just to say hi!

Kwe'

I am a first-generation university graduate and first year medical student at the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine. I was born and raised in Newfoundland, where my family and community still are. I am a proud Indigenous advocate and one of the VPs of Indigenous Health on the McMaster Medical Student Council. I truly value community and connection and would love to chat or meet with any Indigenous students who are interested in medicine, advocacy or just a coffee. I usually attend all IHLL Gatherings so please come out and say hello!

The Learning Lodge would also like to congratulate Kelsey for being awarded the Dr. Michael and Mrs. Janice Brent MD Bursary. This bursary, established in 2022, is intended to support an Indigenous MD student through their three years of training. The decision to award the bursary was made by members of the UGME Program, the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge, and Indigenous Student Services.



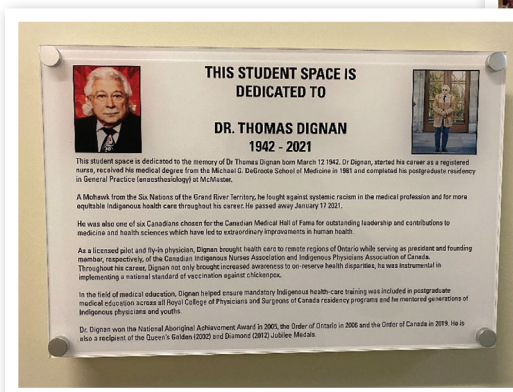
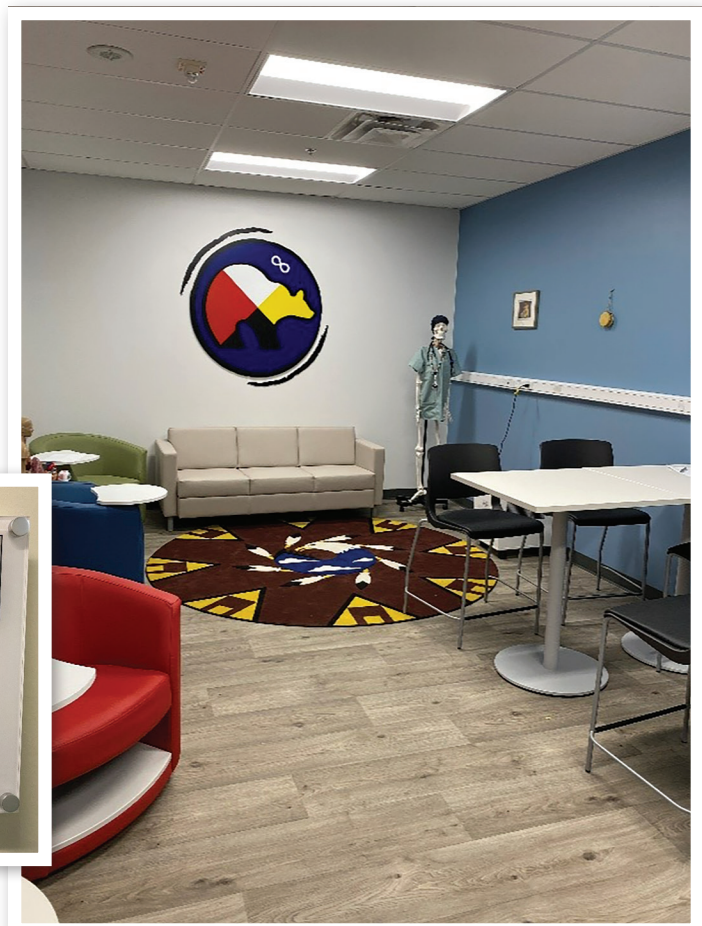
Kelsey Allen
Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation

Student Work Opportunity

The Learning Lodge is looking for a student to fill a Student Summer work position in the office. The Indigenous Health Learning Lodge is looking for a student to fill a Student Summer work position in the office. This is an exciting opportunity to be part of an innovative team within the Faculty of Health Sciences at McMaster. Some of the experiences that will be a part of this position include research, development, and other support within the office. If you are interested in applying for the position or would like some further information, please contact us at IHLL@mcmaster.ca

Student Space

The Tom Dignan Student Lounge is currently open to students 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Access to the student lounge is currently done through an access code, to utilize the student lounge please email IHLL@mcmaster.ca and we will provide you with the code to access the space. The student lounge is conveniently located within the IHLL office and students are encouraged to visit the space to study, heat up lunch, make coffee or tea, and chat with fellow students and IHLL staff.





Laura Banfield

white settler by way of loyalist and Irish immigrant roots from Prince Edward County Ontario

**Librarian, Health Sciences Library,
McMaster University**

How does the role of Indigenous Ally apply in your current role?

The role of Indigenous Ally is central to my current role as I move into a position responsible for strengthening the relationship of the Health Sciences Library with the Indigenous Health Learning Lodge. This involves working with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in navigating the information landscape as pertains broadly to Indigenous health and wellbeing. Navigating this landscape is about how and where to find information, and work with different worldviews, methods, and forms of knowledge, and their integration and use. Continuing to build the library collection and find ways to increase access to relevant and appropriate content is critical.

I am very excited and humbled to be assuming this responsibility, I cannot wait to see what happens.

What is the most challenging aspect of trying to influence and change inequitable health systems towards being more culturally safe for Indigenous people?

Within the health care system, I see the most challenging aspect as being hesitancy. Hesitancy to share power and to consider what could be, in the absence of a guarantee of a large-scale example of success. I believe this hesitancy to forge a path that brings small scale successes towards a normative experience for all Indigenous People, continues to cause harm and should be challenged.

In my current role, the most challenging aspect is that I am not in a position to have a direct influence. Rather, as a librarian and as an ally, I hope that I am influencing positive change through my education and research roles in support of future and current practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and administrators, and those I encounter as a patient myself, regardless of their background or experience.

How would you encourage your colleagues to become more involved in Indigenous allyship initiatives?

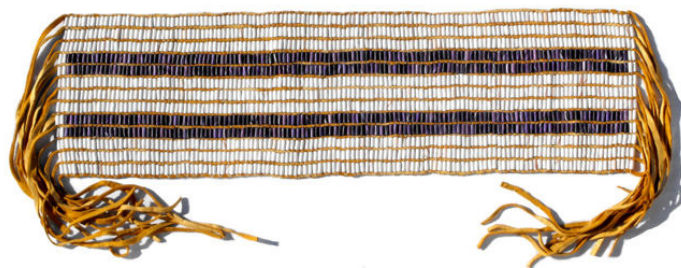
Be present, listen, learn, and honour relationships. Look to where your sphere of influence and action exists within the library and campus communities – there may be an initiative or network you can join, a project you can initiate, or an internal adjustment to your own practice. Show up at events and meetings, you never know what opportunities may arise. Stop waiting.

Research Hub Highlight: Two-Row Approach:

The IHLL Research Hub is always looking for ways to highlight Indigenous teachings and methodology and learning ways to incorporate them into research. For this newsletter, we want to highlight the Two Row Wampum philosophy and how it can be adapted into a research methodology.



Dr. Jennifer Walker
Research Development Lead



A Two Row Wampum philosophy is based on the 1613 Tekéni Teyohà:ke Kahswénhtake/Two Row Wampum, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch that represented an acknowledgment of the cultural and ideological differences between the two groups and their commitments to live in harmony on Turtle Island. The Two Rows, representing two separate vessels traveling in the same direction in parallel, each carry the respective values, ideologies, and cultures of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples, and create a collaborative space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous research approaches, partnerships, and networks.

This philosophy can be adapted into a research methodology that respects and values Indigenous ways of knowing, ensures community engagement throughout the research process, and recognises the distinct, but complimentary Indigenous and non-Indigenous streams to create a beneficial research relationship.

At its core, this approach reflects the inherent right of Indigenous nations to self-determine their involvement and independently lead research. It creates an ethical space for dialogue to recognize the inherent differences, but also the inherent values that Indigenous and non-Indigenous methodology can bring to the table, and creates an environment for inclusive, respectful, and reciprocal relationships.

Through the Two Row philosophy, and its incorporation into more research projects, it is the hope that Indigenous communities will feel empowered to lead their own research initiatives, engage in that research through a uniquely Indigenous lens, and build respectful and mutually-beneficial relationships with non-Indigenous researchers and allies.

This philosophy is fundamental in the work of not just the research hub, but the IHLL as a whole, and is a key component that guides the strategic development and operational planning of the IHLL. It is our hope that this integration will exemplify Indigenous ways of knowing, while fostering relationships and partnerships across the traditionally Euro-centric academic environment.

◀ **Two-Row Wampum Belt:** The two purple rows running alongside each other representing two boats. One boat is the canoe with the Haudenosaunee way of life, laws, and people. The other is the Dutch ship with their laws, religion, and people in it. The boats will travel side by side down the river of life, represented by the white rows. Each nation will respect the ways of each other and will not interfere with the other.

RESEARCH ▶



Graphic Recording Workshop

At the end of March, IHLL hosted a graphic recording workshop with Pamela Hubbard. The two-day workshop taught participants the history and details of what graphic recording is and allowed participants to learn basic techniques and begin to practice their new skills. With their newfound knowledge, we hope the participants will be able to engage in meetings, gatherings and even research and provide a unique perspective to capture information.

OTHER NEWS ▶



Dr. Chelsea Gabel
Associate Professor
Department of Health, Aging and Society
Indigenous Studies Program

The Learning Lodge would like to congratulate Dr. Chelsea Gabel as the new lead of the Indigenous Mentorship Network of Ontario and co-lead of the NEIHR National Coordinating Centre.

The Indigenous Mentorship Network of Ontario (IMN-O) is now at McMaster with Dr. Chelsea Gabel as its new lead after a successful 5 years at Western University. The IMN-O currently has scholarships available for Indigenous undergraduate students, graduate students and health professionals. Please visit imn.mcmaster.ca for more information.

Dr. Gabel is now also the co-lead, with Dr. Bobby Henry of the University of Saskatchewan, of the NEIHR (Network Environments for Indigenous Health) National Coordinating Centre (NCC). The NCC serves as a hub for the network and coordinates national activities and supports the National Gathering of Graduate Students. Visit the NEIHR NCC website here for more information on NEIHR NCC activities.

Chelsea has a long association with the NEIHR program. As a graduate student, she received student support through the Ontario node of the original NEAHR network, the Indigenous Health Research Development Program. The network provided networking and collaborating opportunities that would otherwise not have existed that have supported her work for many years. She is excited to take on these roles as the support of graduate students, training and national and international networking opportunities create strong foundations for success in health research in both academic and community environments.

YEAR IN REVIEW ▶



Celebration of the naming of the Learning Lodge in traditional languages with Dr. Karen Kill and Valerie King.

Learning Lodge staff at the Indigenous teaching circle for an Orange Shirt Day event. ▶



Students painting a rock orange at the Indigenous teaching circle in honor reconciliation day.



Dr. Jennifer Walker and Dr. Johnathan Bramson celebrate her appointment to an Indigenous research chair position. ▶



YEAR IN REVIEW ▶



◀ The Learning Lodge hosted a welcome Gathering event with performances from Circadia Indigena.

The Learning Lodge hosted a Community of Practice dinner for Indigenous health practitioners and Indigenous faculty. ▶



◀ Dr. Bernice Downey shown gifting a book to Rob Innes during the Indigenous Studies Program celebration week event.



Dr. Bernice Downey and Dr Karen Hill are seen with Elva Jamieson celebrating her reception of an honorary doctorate. ▶



Indigenous students getting prepared for welcome week standing in the Dr. Tom Dignan > Learners Lounge.



Dr. Bernice Downey seen speaking < at the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute research day event.

A gathering for Indigenous Nurses > at McMaster hosted by the Learning Lodge.



