



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Waakebiness Institute for Indigenous Health



Ontario NEIHR Theme Leaders/Elders
MINUTES

Date: September 20, 2023

Time: 3:00pm to 5:00pm

Location: Zoom Meeting

In Attendance: Suzanne Stewart, Pauline Shirt, Clay Shirt, Luana Shirt, Rod McCormick, Wendy Phillips

Absent:

ITEM	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION/MOTION /ACTION
Pauline Spiritual opening Individual Check ins		
2. Group Updates	<p>Rod – Doing work with First Nations Health Authority (Authority for all health in BC. Developing a Provincial Suicide Prevention Strategy for Indigenous Peoples, due end of Oct.</p> <p>Working on reform committee for Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), make them a non-discriminating department.</p> <p>Our land-based and planetary solutions, what I am doing is I just finished a lit review on environmental grief.</p>	

The current RA is just finishing the one I've been working on last few years, the Land-Based Healing projects.

Lots of Conferences, 3 trips in Oct. Can't make NGGS in Halifax. Looking forward to the Toronto Indigenizing Health Symposium.

Our university has a retreat at one of the national parks for land-based healing and land-based learning for 50 faculty as part of campus wide initiative. The United Nations Initiative will launch in March. Did a joint project with UN Food and Culture organization. Expanded our knowledge makers, with Australia, New Zealand and the US. Were planting trees, gathering traditional plants, and canoeing. Young Indigenous women, 10 different countries, learning how to do research on food sovereignty and climate change.

UN doesn't say climate change, it says climate resiliency, food sovereignty is called food system security. Use the term women, no LGBTQ2.

Luana – Harvesting medicines, has been a great summer.

Was in Cape Breton Clifford this summer. Paul is the one to talk to about the history of the Mi'kmaw people. Talks about the Kluskap Cave located along the north coast of Unama'ki (Cape Breton, Nova Scotia).

Luana, Pauline and Julia are going to be Minecraft characters. It's a project to share traditional through online media through TDSB. Will be talking about Lake Ontario.

Suzanne – Luana could have a retreat for meeting with theme group, Roy can set that up if you wish.

Clay – Looking forward to going to conference in Cape Breton. My work is still with addictions, and medicines of the south. My focus is working with the medicines and building with those medicines. Opiate Crises we need something radical to help with it.

Rod – For U of T, the most conservative institute in Canada, to be having ceremonies is quite something and not an easy thing to maneuver.

Suzanne - We have done some heavy-duty ceremonies here. They invited us to do this work and respect our practices to do research.

Our group has been involved in KT events. We did a policy forum in July which one of the Ministers of Indigenous Services came to as well as policy people from non-Indigenous sectors. Getting our brochures and printed information, handout policy briefs and reports ready for Pow Wows that are coming up.

Would like to do other things with these groups for the next year. Meet in person of each groups choice, writing retreats, etc.

Wendy – Finished Masters, convocation next month. Program did offer a spot for a doctorate but will apply next year.

Been in contact with the Elders from the Amazon. Difficult because they need a translator. Keep these relationships healthy. Trying to get them up here for a gathering and what interest there is.

Have gardens going on now. Small medicine gardens, make sure they can grow. Make sure plants are in the right eco systems so they can grow. Animals eating them, many plants don't get to mature. Trying to grow wild rice but may take 3-5 years. Good crop of Tobacco, Sage and Sweetgrass.

We have seen many families and individuals for healing, about 4 people a week. Some medicines for trauma, and other medicines for grief. Helping families deal with racism and bullying.

Organizing hunting camps, making sure they have the resources and people.

Indigenous mental health and our relationship to the land. Many people don't understand how important it is to us. The aspects of global healing and is more important now due to climate change.

Gearing up for our fall camps. Hunting camps now, rights of passage later, tattoo artist to work with the people who want these sacred markings. Having Feast for the ancestors, then we have our gathering. Hoping to have funding for our greenhouse, should in the fall sometime and build in the spring.

Rod – Want to meet with our theme group someplace. Will start sending information to Roy to possibly set something up.

Because of our involvement with the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, they invited us to be part of the Global Indigenous Food Summit. Alberta, BC, and Sask, Toronto should join it. International Climate Change in Vancouver a couple of weeks ago and met with Director General and North American Director of the UNFAO. We might redo the Knowledge Makers cohort but involving youth more. Two administrators have Extensive knowledge in Africa about food security. Do a pilot in Africa, and African schools and some here in Canada. Have the youth interview Elders and Knowledge holders about traditional knowledge stories about how they dealt with climate change in the past and environmental disasters and have it as digital story telling.

For the final report for the launch of the journal we could count those journal articles and the Global Summit one's, the one's sent to New Zealand.

Suzanne – Lets set up a meeting about this in the next couple of weeks. Have the Theme group meeting in Ontario.

Pauline – There is a nice place called the Rama Wilderness Camp in Rama.

4. Spiritual Closing- Pauline		

