



ᐱᐠᓂᓂᓂ  
waniska

## Waniska launched on June 21!

*Waniska* is an Indigenous-led centre for research on HIV, hepatitis C virus (HCV) and other sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBI) focused on Saskatchewan (SK) and Manitoba (MB).

The launch of the *waniska* Centre was June 21, 2021, at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. We had a small live crowd and streamed the event live.

It featured ceremonialists, performers and speakers from First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures in SK and MB. Jen Quesnel, a Saskatoon-based Métis journalist, moderated this uplifting, yet humbling, event.

The link to watch the video can be found [here](#).

## Elder and Youth Guiding Council

The *waniska* Centre is forming an Elder and Youth Guiding Council to honour the voices of both Elders and youth and to facilitate intergenerational knowledge exchange. This initiative is led by our Community Partners. The formation of the Elder and Youth Guiding Circle is almost complete. Six of eight Council Elders and youth have so far agreed to assist *waniska*:

Memphis Geddes, SK  
Calvin Racette, SK  
Daniel La Fontaine, SK

Audrey Eyahpaise, SK  
Gayle Pruden, MB  
Nadine Ross, MB

## Developmental Evaluation

*Waniska* is adopting a developmental evaluation approach to support our innovative Centre and continuing to adapt our approach according to our goals, aims and direction from community. This approach will be grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and conducting research.

## POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**Postdoctoral Fellowship (PDF)** in land- and culture-based Indigenous healing and wellness. The fellow will undertake independent research on land-based research for Indigenous health and wellness as it relates to HIV, HCV and STBBI and other related comorbidities. That posting, can be found [here](#).

**Research Coordinator** at Ongomiizwin Institution, University of Manitoba. The Research Coordinator will supervise community-based and located research with research partners. The posting can be found on the UofM website.





## Community Guiding Circles

*Waniska* will be assisting research teams with the formation of Community Guiding Circles (CGC) for their projects as part of the initiative to give Indigenous persons with lived/living experience, Elders, Knowledge Holders and youth more of a voice in co-designing and joining research projects. They will help facilitate reciprocal knowledge development and sharing.

The CGC members will be given opportunities to take part in various training to orient them to the landscape of research, policy and programming. This could include sessions on research methods, the history of HIV, HCV and STBBI, public speaking and peer mentorship, as examples, with the goal of bolstering confidence and knowledge of research with Indigenous peoples in HIV, HCV and STBBI.

In similar fashion, academic researchers will be encouraged, and provided the means, to better understand Indigenous knowledges and research approaches for working with Indigenous community members, including those with lived/living experience and Elders/Knowledge Holders, in the areas of HIV, HCV and STBBI with training sessions facilitated through *waniska*.

If you or someone you know would like to take part in training and share your voice in our research projects, please contact us!

- Dallas Montpetit: [dmontpetit@allnationshope.ca](mailto:dmontpetit@allnationshope.ca)
- Melissa Morris: [mmorris@kanikanichik.ca](mailto:mmorris@kanikanichik.ca)
- Rebecca Zagozewski: [r.zagozewski@usask.ca](mailto:r.zagozewski@usask.ca)

## Requests for proposals

We are looking for two consultants for our Canadian Hepatitis C Network Roadmaps to eliminate hepatitis C by 2030:

- [Consultant for CanHepC Prairie Roadmap](#)
- [Consultant for CanHepC National Indigenous Roadmap](#)

## We want to hear from you!

One of our aims is to provide networking opportunities and learn from organizations on their programs, projects and initiatives.

Please let us know about your programs, projects and initiatives so that we can learn and share these wise practices with other organizations.

## Contact us

[www.waniskacentre.ca/contact](http://www.waniskacentre.ca/contact)  
[info@waniskacentre.ca](mailto:info@waniskacentre.ca)  
University of Saskatchewan  
104 Clinic Place  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7N 2Z4



# Research Updates

## Research Projects

### *CanHepC Roadmaps*

Alexandra King, Renée Mashing and Carrielynn Lund are co-leading the development of both the National Indigenous and Prairie Region Roadmaps, respectively. These Roadmaps will build on the momentum of the national *Blueprint to inform Hepatitis C elimination efforts in Canada* with regional focuses to attain consensus on priority recommendations for the elimination of hepatitis C and planning efforts by 2030. Our Roadmaps teams are forming and we are requesting proposals for consultants for these projects (see section: Request for Proposals). If you're interested in being involved, please email [info@waniskacentre.ca](mailto:info@waniskacentre.ca)

### *"Follow the Call of the Drum" Workshop*

All Nations Hope Network has received funding through the Feast Centre Indigenous COVID-19 STBBI Response Grant. They will host a drum making workshop and are looking for participants. More information can be found [here](#).

### *Apibkatatan (Weaving Our Baskets): Intersectional trauma-healing and wisdom*

Our application for the CIHR Spring 2021 Project Grant funding call was successful! This population-level intervention research will support the wholistic wellness journeys of Indigenous women whose lived experience includes involvement with the criminal justice system (CJS). This project will design and deliver a land- and culture-based healing (L&CBH) curriculum, which includes gender-affirming and trauma-informed expressive therapy (ET) for Indigenous women residing in *kisiskâciwan* (Saskatchewan, SK), primarily in Saskatoon. The research team has partnered with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Women's Secretariat and the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan (EFry).

## Research Grants

As part of *waniska's* initiative to support Indigenous early researchers and scholars, Jaida Beaudin, Grant Coordinator, engages with communities to discover the research needs most important to Indigenous people. Jaida brings together community groups, academic scholars and students to support our research aims and bring about equitable change in programming and services through grant applications.





## ***Waniska* Guiding Oversight Council**

Alexandra King, Chair, Cameco Chair in Indigenous Health and Wellness, USask

Malcolm King, Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research, USask

Josee Lavoie, Ongomiizwin Research Centre, UofM

Linda Larcombe, Manitoba HIV-STBBI Collective Impact Network, UofM

Albert McLeod, Two-Spirited People of Manitoba, MB

Mike Payne, Nine Circles Community Health Centre, MB

Margaret Kisikaw-Piyesis, All Nations Hope Network, SK

Jaqueline Flett, Sisters of Fire, MB

John Kim, Public Health Agency of Canada, MB

Alexandria Wilson, Aboriginal Education Research Centre, USask

Brenda Elias, Community Health Sciences, UofM

Laverne Gervais, Ka Ni Kanichihk, MB

## **Research Team**

Rebecca Zagozewski, Research Manager, USask

Cydney Leibel, Clerical Assistant, USask

Creeden Martell, Communications Assistant, USask

Sarah MacDonald, Communications Officer, USask

Dallas Montpetit, Community Coordinator for All Nations Hope Network, SK

Melissa Morris, Community Coordinator for Ka Ni Kanichihk, MB

Jaida Beaudin, Grant Coordinator, USask

Harvey Thunderchild, Project Officer, USask

Kehinde Ametepee, Project Officer, USask

### Student researchers:

Taiwo Ametepee, Research Associate, USask

Nathan Oakes, PhD Candidate, USask

## **Our Partner Organizations**

### **All Nations Hope Network (ANHN)** ([www.allnationshope.ca/](http://www.allnationshope.ca/))

Dallas Montpetit, Community Coordinator, has immersed herself into the community of All Nations Hope Network by attending ceremonies, meetings and going medicine picking. Dallas has been working with her team at ANHN on two CIHR Project Grant applications and an additional CIHR Project grant with *waniska*. More information on these will become available if the grants are successful.

The ANHN was successful in a grant application to Feast and is organizing the “Follow the Call of the Drum” workshop (more information found under Projects). She is now working to recruit participants and organize this workshop. Additionally, Dallas has become part of the Sask Stories team, a project with *pewaseskwan* - Indigenous Wellness Research Group at USask. Dallas has also presented tobacco to the Saskatchewan Elders and youth for the Elder and Youth Council and they have all accepted.

### **Ka Ni Kanichihk** ([www.kanikanichihk.ca/](http://www.kanikanichihk.ca/))

Melissa Morris, Ka Ni Kanichihk Community Coordinator, is in the process of recruiting for the Elder and Youth Council. She has been leading Ka Ni Kanichihk’s PEER Indigenous women and Two-Spirit HIV group, Sisters of Fire, through weekly sharing circles and accessing resources. She is also creating community connections by attending the CAAN AGM in Fort Qu’Appelle, SK.





## New team member

“Hi! I'm Melissa Morris, Community Coordinator with the *waniska* Centre through Ka Ni Kanichick. As an IPHA it's always been my goal to work in the STBBI community. As well, I have a strong interest in Indigenous community-based research. Working with the *waniska* Centre is a perfect blend.”

Melissa is of Métis and Jewish descent. She was born in Winnipeg and lived on the west coast for many years, including residing in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside for 12 years. Melissa moved back to Winnipeg 12 years ago to live a healthier life and walk down her Red Road, in harmony with her culture and ceremony. Her interest in the Community Coordinator position stems from the Elder and Youth Council, which she hopes will allow her to further explore Indigenous health and wellness, with a specific focus on STBBI.

## Upcoming Conferences



The 2021 WIPCVH mini conference is **November 23, 2021** and features Indigenous speakers addressing how to refocus on hepatitis testing, treatment and care and what lessons can be learned from COVID-19. There will also be ceremony and performances from Indigenous artists.

Registration is open. Please sign up and share with your networks:

<https://wipcvh.org/virtual-mini-conference/>



### SAVE THE DATE

PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE  
ON HIV & HEPATITIS C  
WISE/PROMISING PRACTICES

**Nov. 25-26, 2021**

DAKOTA DUNES RESORT  
WHITECAP DAKOTA FIRST NATION, SK

This provincial conference is hosted by Saskatchewan (Sask) Stories, a three-year (2019-2022) project supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and hosted by the *pewaseskwan* Indigenous Wellness Research Group at the University of Saskatchewan. <https://indigenouswellness.ca/>

The goal of this project is to co-develop an online participatory space of information about programs, projects and initiatives (PPIs) aimed at people living with HIV/HCV in Saskatchewan.



## *Waniska!*

[www.waniskacentre.ca/contact](http://www.waniskacentre.ca/contact)

*Waniska* is a command used in the Cree and Saulteaux languages, which means wake up, or arise. It is a concept filled with optimism for the new day, which we greet with renewed energy and passion. It is a verb, reflecting that as Indigenous people, our knowledge is action oriented.

## 'Wake up': a command, a call to action, a name

The *waniska* Centre will develop partnerships with communities and community-based organizations that will help tackle HIV/HCV/STBBI inequities using a Two-eyed Seeing approach. Two-eyed Seeing brings together Indigenous and Western world views or forms of knowledge; we privilege Indigenous ways and interweave relevant Western ways and ensure that the best practices from both cultures are employed.

