



Alaska Indigenous Research Program: Promoting Resilience, Health and Wellness
May 4-8, 2020
PRESENTER BIOS

Danica Love Brown, MSW, CACIII, PhD

Danica is a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma born and raised in Northern New Mexico. Ms. Brown is the Behavioral Health Manager at the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, and has worked as a mental health and substance abuse counselor, social worker and youth advocate for over 20 years. She has a history of working in the areas of prevention, drug and alcohol/mental health treatment, community and restorative justice, and sexual health with Native American and adjudicated youth. She specializes in working with culturally and socio-economically diverse populations and Tribal communities. Danica is an Indigenous Wellness Research Institute ISMART fellow alumni, Council of Social Work Education, Minority Fellowship Program fellow alumni and Northwest Native American Research Center for Health, fellow alumni. Her research has focused on Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Decolonizing Methodologies to address historical trauma and health disparities in Tribal communities and she loves puppies.

Anne M. Jensen, PhD

Dr. Anne M. Kakianaq Jensen is Senior Scientist/Cultural Resource Manager of the Utqiagvik Alaska Native village corporation's subsidiary, UIC Science, LLC. She holds a PhD in Anthropology and is a Registered Professional Archaeologist. She has appointments as Affiliate Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and as Research Affiliate at the Museum of the North, both at University of Alaska Fairbanks, as well as a Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology at Bryn Mawr College. She has spent 37 years doing archaeological and ethnographic research at sites throughout Alaska. Anne has been the Principal Investigator for excavation projects at Pingusugruk, Ukkuqsi, Ipiutaq, Nuvuk and Walakpa, all of which are significant eroding coastal sites on the North Slope. She is currently the PI or Co-PI on several NSF-funded projects, including one which is now analysing the results of the excavation of a rapidly eroding Thule cemetery and a newly discovered frozen Ipiutak habitation site at Point Barrow done at the request of and with the participation of the descendant community. Her current research focuses on the effects of climate change on Arctic archaeological resources, human adaptation in changing Arctic and subarctic environments, paleoeconomy and environments and Traditional Knowledge of Iñupiat and Inuit peoples.

Cheryl Barnabe, MD MSc FRCPC

Dr. Cheryl Barnabe is a Métis rheumatologist with a graduate degree in Clinical Epidemiology. She is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Medicine and Community Health Sciences, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary. She is a Vice-Chair in the Department of Medicine (Indigenous Health), past-Chair of the Quality Care Committee for the Canadian Rheumatology Association, and a member of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada Indigenous Health Committee. Dr. Barnabe's research program, 'Arthritis Care for Indigenous Populations', has contributed knowledge on

the epidemiology of arthritis and contemporary outcomes of inflammatory arthritis conditions for Indigenous people. In response to the identified accentuated disease burden, she co-develops promising health services interventions to bridge the care gaps that exist, and leads delivery of curricular initiatives for rheumatology residents and practitioners to support the provision of culturally safe arthritis care environments. She is the principal investigator of the Alberta Indigenous Mentorship in Health Innovation (AIM-HI) Network, a CIHR-funded Indigenous Mentorship Network Program, to recruit and retain Indigenous scholars in health research. Dr. Barnabe has received several national awards, including a CIHR Canada Research Chair in Rheumatoid Arthritis and Autoimmune Diseases (Tier 2, 2018-2023), the Killam Emerging Research Leader Award (2018) and is a member of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada (2018).

Alexandra King, MD, FRCPC

Dr. Alexandra King is a citizen of the Nipissing First Nation (Ontario). Alexandra is the inaugural Cameco Chair in Indigenous Health at the University of Saskatchewan. She works with Indigenous communities and relevant stakeholders to understand the health and wellness needs of First Nations and Métis peoples in Saskatchewan and the structural changes needed for improved Indigenous health outcomes. Alexandra brings leadership skills in culturally safe and responsive research and care, Two-eyed Seeing (bringing together Indigenous and Western worldviews or forms of knowledge) and Ethical Space— which needs to be created when peoples with disparate worldviews are poised to engage each other.

As a First Nation researcher, Alexandra is a Principal Investigator on various CIHR research grants related to Indigenous people and HIV, HCV and co-infections. Other research interests include Indigenous wellness and Indigenous research ethics, and much of her research is community-based interventions grounded in Indigenous epistemology, culture and wellness. Alexandra also teaches Indigenous health and contributes to the University of Saskatchewan's decolonization, reconciliation and Indigenization.

Malcolm King, PhD, FCAHS, Professor

Dr. Malcolm King, a member of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, is a health researcher at the University of Saskatchewan, joining the Department of Community Health & Epidemiology in October 2017. There, he serves as the Scientific Director of SCPOR, the Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research; he also continues to teach and research in Indigenous health, with a particular focus on wellness and engagement. Dr. King's international Indigenous health interests include improving Indigenous health through workforce development and provision of culturally appropriate care, and developing Indigenous health indicators to monitor progress in programs aimed at achieving wellness and health equity. From 2009 to 2016, Dr. King led the CIHR Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health as its Scientific Director, spearheading the development of a national health research agenda aimed at improving wellness and achieving health equity for First Nations People, Métis and Inuit in Canada. Dr. King was honored with a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 1999, and in 2016 he was named a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

Sharon Jinkerson-Brass



Sharon Jinkerson-Brass is a member of Key First Nation in Saskatchewan. Sharon has a background as a Cultural Facilitator, Administrator, Artist, Writer and Filmmaker. Sharon's practice is firmly rooted in the teachings of her Anishinaabe grandmother Rebecca Brass. Sharon is an advocate for Indigenous Health Services that integrates our ancient approaches and practices into mainstream settings. Sharon has made several documentaries, presented at multiple conferences, written papers and created community awareness on the topic of culturally appropriate healthcare. In addition, Sharon has been active in the traditional community of Matriarchs in the Downtown East side of Vancouver, British Columbia and she also returns home to participate in her family's ceremonies. Sharon believes that a relevant, sustainable cultural foundation is the key for wellness for her people and all people.

Stacy Rasmus, PhD

Dr. Stacy Rasmus is the Director of the Center for Alaska Native Health Research (CANHR) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She holds a joint appointment with the Northwest Indian College, in western Washington State. Dr. Rasmus has worked with American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities for over two decades and has built an international program of research focusing on the promotion of Indigenous strengths, wellbeing and resilience in Alaska, the Arctic and the Pacific Northwest. Dr. Rasmus is trained in the social and behavioral sciences with specific expertise in the translation of Indigenous knowledge and practice into health interventions that are community-driven and culturally-centered. She currently leads several NIH, NSF and SAMHSA grants that together engage AIAN populations in research and evaluation initiatives to eliminate disparities in youth suicide and substance use disorders, with a special focus on alcohol, opioids and co-occurring disorders. In addition to her research program, Dr. Rasmus also co-directs the American Indian and Alaska Native Clinical Translational Research Program (AIAN CTRP), a collaborative training program building research capacity in Indigenous communities in Alaska and Montana.

Jessica Ullrich, PhD

My ancestral roots are Inupiaq from Kingigin (Wales) and Sitnasuak (Nome) on my maternal side. My great grandparents were Helen and Willie Senungetuk, my grandmother is Nancy Felton and my mom was Cathie Maki. I also have ancestral roots from Switzerland, France and Germany on my paternal side. I am a tribal member of Nome Eskimo Community. I grew up in the urban settings of Anchorage and Wasilla. When I first visited Kingigin and Sitnasuak, I experienced the generational memory of these lands and waters in a way that helped my life finally make sense. I have always loved the ocean and mountains and this landscape completely surrounded these communities. My upbringing has created stark juxtapositions in my positionality. I have felt like an insider/outsider in many contexts; Native at home/Non-Native at school, rural at heart/urban in my physical spaces with frequent escapes to the mountains, forests, tundra, and water. This feeling of being a shapeshifter in different settings has helped me bridge gaps between what people call "two worlds" of Indigenous and western paradigms. Now my existence lies within one wholistic sense of place and belonging. I have 9 years of child welfare practice experience in Anchorage, Alaska working for the Office of Children's Services (OCS). I recently graduated from the University of Washington with my doctorate degree in social welfare. My passion has been to safely reduce the disproportionate number of Alaska Native children in out-of-home care. I believe shifting the focus to wellbeing and healing is going to be central to making this vision a reality for our sacred children.



Jordan Lewis, PhD, MSW

Dr. Jordan P. Lewis, Unangax, from the Native Village of Naknek, is with the Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team and Professor with the University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus. Jordan is the former Director of the UAA National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders and Professor with the WWAMI School of Medical Education at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Trained as a cross-cultural community psychologist and social worker (BSW, MSW), and a credential professional gerontologist (CPG), Dr. Lewis's has worked with Alaska Native Elders for many years in numerous capacities, including federal policy in Washington, DC, state and local capacities with education and program development, and tribal health programs in rural and urban Alaska. Dr. Lewis's research identifies characteristics that enable Alaska Native Elders to age well and become role models for their families and communities. Using the lessons and experiences of elders, Dr. Lewis develops generative-based approaches for family and community members to improve the health of all generations, from long term care programs, dementia caregiver education programs, peer-based alcohol interviews, to community-based programs to support aging in place. His past research has explored cultural understandings of successful aging, intergenerational programming in tribal communities, as well as collecting stories to improve program and service delivery in long-term care settings. Jordan received his BSW from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, MSW from Washington University in St. Louis, and PhD from University of Alaska Fairbanks.