

Office of Aboriginal and Northern Studies: Director's Report 2007

This past year the Office of Aboriginal and Northern Research began the first year of research funded by two separate SSHRC grants—the Aboriginal Research Program Grant and the Northern Research Development Grant, which allows for the continued development of the Innu Environmental Guardians Program. Our current funding allows us to expand our research collaboration to work with Innu youth at risk, involving them in educational programs and working with them to determine alternative educational paths to meet their needs.

Two educational modules were developed in cooperation with SMU faculty and staff (Margaret Harry, Alexander MacLeod & Linda MacDonald), the Innu Nation (Richard Nuna, Valerie Courtois, & Larry Innes), Environment Canada (Rochelle Owen) and Tshikapisk Foundation. The first module, Fieldwork in Archaeology, was held at Kamestastin in Northern Labrador along the shores of an ancient meteoric lake where at least 7500 years of Innu archaeological history has been documented. The instructor was Dr. Stephen Loring, Smithsonian Institution archaeologist along with Innu instructors. With the Environmental Guardians and their families, seven youth fully participated in the module and the archaeological research, one of the youth receiving university credit for his participation. During the module, a 5,000 year old ulu was unearthed, and two of the youth discovered a 2,000 year old bi-face (stone blade), seen below.

The second module was a Caribou Management Module taught by Stu Luttich, former provincial biologist. The module was held in a field tent approximately 20 minutes from the community of Sheshatshiu, Labrador, and focused on methods to determine health indicators for the endangered Red Wine Woodland caribou herd. Five Innu youth participated, and assisted in the documentation of the program, and are currently preparing a presentation on their experiences for Environment Canada. I had the opportunity to talk about the SSHRC funded research during an interview on CBC Radio Newfoundland in May 2006, and again on CTV “Breakfast Television” with Crystal Garrett regarding the field trip to Kamestastin with the Innu Environmental Guardians Program.

Additional Scholarly Activities

I continue to serve as Saint Mary’s representative at the University of the Arctic and attended a meeting in Bodo, Norway in November. I was invited to join a UArctic “thematic network” dedicated to local and regional development in the north. As a consequence, I presented at the “Borealis” conference on Local and Regional Development in the North hosted by Finnmark University College in Norway, March 2007. A representative of the Innu community of Sheshatshiu co-presented on our research with the Innu Nation.

On April 3, 2007, I was pleased to represent SMU at the Association of Atlantic Universities Meeting of University Aboriginal Education Program Leaders to discuss increased support and access to post secondary education for Aboriginal peoples.

Upcoming Scholarly activities:

Transnational Governance Mechanisms in Borderland Regions, Saint Mary's University, May 2&3, 2007. Meeting the Environmental and Human Challenges of Circumpolar Regions

Panel discussion with Margaret Harry, Alexander MacLeod of SMU, and Richard Nuna and Anthony Jenkinson of the Innu Nation. Finding Our Way. Finding our Future. Researching Alternative Educational Paths for Innu Youth, at the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference May 5, 2007.

Canadian Archaeological Association May 16, 2007 with Stephen Loring and two Innu Nation Environmental Office representatives

June 2007 UArctic Members Council meeting in Achanglesk, Russia.

We are also pleased to announce that the Native Dance web site (www.nativedance.ca) has been launched. The website was developed as part of a partnership spearheaded by Carleton University. Publications

"Preserving the Whole: Principles of Sustainability in Mi'kmaq Forms of Communication." In, *Indigenous Worldviews: Scholarly Challenges to Anti-"Indian" Hegemony*, ed. by

Wahinkpe Topa (Four Arrows) a.k.a. Don Trent Jacobs, University of Texas Press, June 2006.

with Geoff Howell, Dave Wilson, and Peter Penashue. "The Ashkui Project: Linking Western Science and Innu Environmental Knowledge." *Local Science vs. Global Science: Approaches to Indigenous in International Development*, ed. by Paul Sillitoe, Ph.D. New York: Berghahn Books (Oxford). August, 2006.

"Review of Angela Wilson Waziyatawin, *Remember This! Dakota Decolonization and the Eli Taylor Narratives*." In *Oral History Forum*. Canadian Oral History Association. Vol. 26, 2006.

"Legends as Maps". Proceedings from the Debert Research Workshop, Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, Truro, NS.