

Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Network



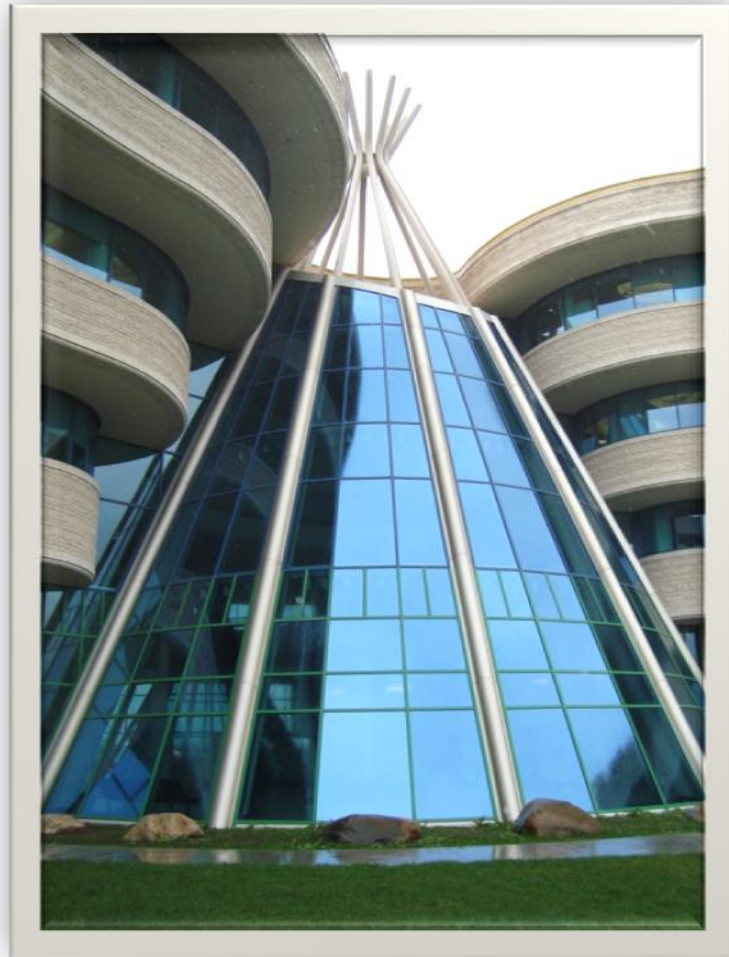
Regina Academic Gathering Notes

Prepared by Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Network

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Title: Regina Academic Gathering Notes

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About the Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Network: The Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Network is an open and inclusive multi-stakeholder network of researchers and practitioners working in urban Aboriginal and Métis communities. This includes organizations; universities; Federal, provincial, Municipal, and Aboriginal governments; private industry; community groups; and NGO's. The network's focus is on mobilizing economic development knowledge and strengthening organizational capacity.

This paper can be found on the network website: <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed>

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Introduction

The Academic Gathering had five goals:

1. Increase Network visibility within academic circles.
2. Welcome 'new' academics into the Network.
3. Showcase graduate student work.
4. Discuss a possible SSHRC major collaborative research initiative application.
5. Demonstrate the valuable perspective that the Network brings via the Learning Circles.

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday April 28th, 2010			
Travel Day	Hotel: Delta Regina, 1919 Saskatchewan Drive		
Thursday April 29th, 2010			
8:30 – 9 am	Breakfast		
9 – 9:30 am	Welcome and Opening Ray Gerow	Traditional Welcome Elder, Isadore Pelletier	Introduction to UAED Network Greg Halseth
9:30 – 10: 30 am	Academic Presentations and Questions Robert Anderson Bettina Schneider		
10:30 – 11 am	Nutrition Break		
11 am – 12 pm	Academic Presentations and Questions Maximilian Aulinger – Research on Food Security		
12 – 1 pm	Lunch		
1 – 2:30 pm	Academic Presentations and Questions Christine Sy – Ph.D. work and Sault Ste. Marie Learning Circle Alan Anderson – Bridges and Foundations Project on Urban Aboriginal Housing in Saskatoon: Economic development aspects, initiatives, and implications		
2:30 – 3 pm	Nutrition Break		
3 – 4:30 pm	Academic Presentations and Questions Charles Horn – Governance Circle: Issues and questions		
4:30 – 5 pm	Wrap Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations for a Network agenda • Foundations for the next SSHRC application 		
6 pm	Dinner – Hosted by Regina Learning Circle The Abbey, 2124 Albert Street		
Friday April 30th, 2010			
8:30 – 9 am	Breakfast Buffet		
9 – 10 am	Defining an Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Network Agenda Facilitated by Greg Halseth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Actions 		
10 – 10:30 am	Nutrition Break		
10: 30 am – 12 pm	Workshop: Putting together a potential SSHRC major collaborative research initiative application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who would lead? • Who would participate, and in what ways? • Who would be the home institution? • What would be the scope and scale of the budget? • Who would be participating in putting together an application? 		
12 – 1 pm	Lunch		
1 pm – 1:30 pm	End of Gathering		

Day One

Introduction to the Urban Aboriginal Economic Development (UAED) Network

Greg Halseth did a recap of the UAED Network: policy, practitioners, and academics.

Several Challenges

1. Keep the energy going.
 - Learning Circles: some are going well, some are getting started.
 - Nurturing Learning Circles.
2. Grow our circles by including two new voices.
 - We have to be on the lookout to grow this dialogue.
 - Many people, boundary of darkness is growing. Greg is eager to connect with other researchers.
3. Continue to push our understanding.
 - We need to come together to push all of that and grow.
 - Keep at the learning edge of policy.
 - Policy must change.
 - Practitioners need to come together and work together.
 - Someone needs to pay for new ways of looking/doing.
 - Buffeted by the global economy.

In Coming Together: Two Goals.

1. Grow our understanding.
2. Need to keep this going. See if we have synergy. Sharing where to go next. One year of funding left.

Academic Presentation: Bettina Schneider

Bettina has been working on two projects: the Regina Learning Circle and the Urban Reserves Research Project.

Regina Learning Circle

The Regina Learning Circle started in June 2009. John McBride facilitated the first few sessions. There was an amazing turnout (20-25 people) and a lot of enthusiasm. There is a high Aboriginal population in Regina. What came out of the group were three mini-circles:

- Capacity Development and Youth.
- Financing Aboriginal Business.
- Affordable Housing.

Mini-groups have been effective for this group because, at larger groups, certain people or topics have dominated the Learning Circle.

There was a lot of energy around the two areas of affordable housing and capacity building.

The Affordable Housing group wants more research done:

- Possibility of a case study.
- Meet with key players in the city.
- Links with the Governance Learning Circle.

There is energy and interest in the topic, “How can we look at governance and Urban Aboriginal economic development?” They want to interview and meet with key players to explore how decisions are made.

Through the UAED Network’s support, they are starting a case study this summer. They are excited to move on it and are supportive of the decision to make the next step.

The Regina Learning Circle is working with the Urban Aboriginal Strategy in Regina.

They are working on a financial education piece and capacity development. They want to develop financial education, including credit repair, home ownership, and programs that would educate people.

Opportunities/ Positives

- Sharing of information.
- Communicating with the network.
- Momentum around affordable housing and capacity building is taking shape.

Challenges

The Learning Circle has been a challenge at times. John McBride's skills as a facilitator are appreciated, "He has been essential in helping people to make decisions." There have been challenges with regards to commitment and where we are going. People cannot commit to meetings unless they know where we are going. They need to provide direction in order to sustain the momentum.

The big question is who is the coordinator? Bettina has brought people on board. She is trying to bring in committed people to help share responsibilities. If it falls on one person, it potentially leads to burnout.

Do we want to be a research group or do we want to be an action group? At the September meeting, the group was divided on this issue. Half of the group wanted to focus on research, while the other half wanted to focus on action.

Key Recommendations to INAC

Find mechanisms to support people in Learning Circles who already have full-time commitments.

Urban Reserves Research Project

Bob Anderson, Oksana Starchenko, Bob Kayseas and Bettina Schneider.

They are looking at the development of urban reserves in this area.

- They are interested in exploring how many reserves are in Saskatchewan.
- They started with Saskatoon.
 - English River, White Cap Dakota and Musqueam.
 - Want to expand the case study to Regina.
- They are exploring what defines an urban reserve.
- Alan wants to network with them so they are not reinventing the wheel. He is still heavily involved in this topic. They are trying to consolidate the Bridges and Foundations project. University of Toronto Press.
- Oksana reviewed the population using census data.
 - Has there been economic benefit here?
 - Where is the impact?
- The report is inconclusive because of two factors; inconsistent data and economic information wasn't available to them. Interviews.

Questions and Comments:

Social impacts play out differently. The enterprise responsible for operations is focused on on-reserve capacity building. Kids on-reserve have different goals now because of access to mentoring support.

These reserves have been created as commercial and institutional enterprises. Is this self-ghettoization?

Someone wants to expand on research. They have met with INAC's Urban Reserves Creation Office.

Ray attended an INAC session where one of the participants, Wendy Corant John, mentioned that her resources were office buildings. That was all they could claim.

At a visioning session, Chief Sophie Pierre noted that anybody asking for funding from the band had to fit INAC's criteria. They determined which human resources they would need and funded those positions.

Wanda: A Poverty Committee at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) thinks that migration from cities back to reserves will increase over the next few years.

The Frontier Centre for Public Policy suggested that if you are not economically viable, you should look into creating urban reserves.

There are governance options. In remote communities who do not have any options, this may be something to consider. There could be support that is not there when you move to the city by yourself. It would facilitate ongoing contact with the community and with Elders.

Giving a community tools to analyze opportunities they can access is an invitation to engage in the economy.

Alan: Examples of economic diversification on-reserve. There is a feeling that the only way to be successful is to move to the city.

It will be interesting to see how this plays out.

Wanda: Could the community get on board? Could the community see value?

Ray: We need to give individuals choices. We do not want people to be 'forced' from reserves and to be ghettoized. If they moved because it was their choice, they would have healthier environments.

Charles: Check out the economy in BC in general, not just in terms of First Nations.

Map the flow of money and control its circulation. We need a coordination strategy between urban and rural areas.

Bettina:

- The urban is rural here.
- Not all urban reserves are equally urban.
- 10 out of 34 urban reserves in Saskatchewan are in small towns and villages.
- Look up north. Reserves in NAD are considered urban.
- Look at the way urban is defined.

Alan: Even some of the urban reserves in urban areas are on the fringe of the city.

Bettina: Because of the tricky way the word urban is used, they are studying urban reserves in non-urban areas.

Ray: Saskatchewan examples might not work in BC. How are they buying land on other people's territories and asserting their rights? This creates a reserve that is not in your territory.

Alan: Moving into the city undermines band consciousness. This gets to be difficult. The Saskatoon Tribal Council supersedes bands.

Ray: Look at Prince George as an example. The Tribal Council is trying to assert their authority, and Lheidli T'enneh is trying to assert authority over urban Aboriginals.

Bettina: This is where the above-mentioned strategy to purchase land not in your territory in order to make it an urban reserve comes into effect.

Greg: Five themes of this discussion are:

1. The importance of the 'infusion of new ideas'.
2. The notion of voluntary relocation. Urbanization is a more efficient way to extract wealth and reduce costs. Instead of building the foundations for a strong economy, its easier to force people to move to urban centres. This is purposefully creating an environment where they are forced to consider urbanization.
3. Definitions of urban. This is an opportunity to explore and critique artificially imposed definitions and their effects on the lessons.
4. Social aspects. Send available documentation to Greg. The government is siphoning money and capacity.
5. Viability. Entire communities may need to be moved because they are not viable. Who created the conditions for viability?

Academic Presentation: Maximilian Aulinger

An Analysis of Urban Food Security Initiatives in Winnipeg

A person or members of a household are food secure when food can be obtained that is affordable and available in the community. Affordable food should include all healthy items, such as fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, and grains. These items provide the body with the necessary daily amounts of vitamins, minerals, proteins, and carbohydrates that produce energy and prevent illnesses. Being food secure also means that a person should not have to travel outside of his or her community to obtain healthy foods. The cost of transportation (bus fare or gas money) is often expensive and reduces the amount of money that can be spent on food items.

Food security involves planning ahead to make sure that healthy food can be acquired on a regular basis. This requires the Federal, Provincial, and Municipal governments to listen to, and work alongside, grassroots, community-based organizations run by and for Indigenous peoples. Such a relationship should recognize the distinct cultural values, social expectations, and economic practices of Indigenous peoples and their communities. It is within these communities, urban or rural, that the impact of hunger and illness is felt on a personal level. The people who are directly affected should be the ones whose voices and actions guide the policies and the programs that provide communities with the required supply of nutritious food.

These programs or practices are ongoing because they depend on continuous community decision-making and participation as well as inter-generational skills and knowledge transfer. Through these actions, Indigenous peoples practice their fundamental rights to determine community systems of governance, the maintenance of social networks, and the power to define/redefine an urban identity. Individual and collective empowerment is ultimately at the centre of what generates food security. Through the strengthening of relationships based on trust and mutual co-operation, community members are not forced to sacrifice their pride or values just to survive from day-to-day or meal-to-meal.

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre (Ma Mawi) in Winnipeg is one such community operation that offers an almost daily breakfast and lunch program, which encourages families to eat together. For single mothers, especially those who have teenagers who are more independent than young children, finding the time to socialize with their kids is often difficult because of work, travel, or household duties. Sitting down for a meal removes possible distractions and gives parents the time to listen to what their children have to say. Being heard not only makes younger generations feel that they are valued, but that they have support as well. With that support comes a sense of being included. When this connection is not present amongst parents and their kids in the home, youth are more likely to turn outwards and search for a connection by joining gangs.

Ma Mawi recognizes that when households are not food secure, the consequences are felt both immediately and in the long-term. While the breakfast and lunch programs keep people in the community fed, community kitchens offer participants a chance to learn

valuable skills, to gain food knowledge and to socialize. For a person who feels overwhelmed or unsure about how to cook meals for their family, learning in a group may demonstrate that he or she is not alone. Community kitchens are formed around the idea that everyone involved will contribute their own suggestions or knowledge, regardless of their cooking skills. It is the process of participating, supporting one another, or perhaps doing a certain task for the first time that is encouraged. Community kitchens are also an opportunity for trust and friendships to be developed between people who may not have previously known one another. By socializing, single mothers do not have to feel like cooking is a chore in which they are isolated in their own homes. Community kitchens can also lower the cost of grocery bills. If each participant donates a certain amount of money, a wider variety of foodstuffs can be purchased. Once the cooking has been finished, the various meals are divided and each participant takes home a portion of each dish. How much is taken depends on the size of the family. This reduces the stress about having to worry about whether or not the household will have enough food to last until the next time when more can be acquired. Community kitchens, such as the ones offered in two of Ma Mawi's locations, are intended to place the power of decision-making and involvement back into the hands of the people who are directly affected by food insecurity.

Spread throughout Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods, there are community gardens of various sizes. These plots provide fresh vegetables, herbs, and, in some cases, medicines for residents. The food that is grown is either divided amongst specific organizations or available for people living in the community to harvest. Much like community kitchens, the planning, building, and maintenance of the gardens is a group effort. Participants do not have to be skilled or knowledgeable gardeners. While someone may be aware of what to plant during specific times of the year, another person may be able to build a wooden box that contains the soil, to sow the seeds, or to water the beds. Every harvest, therefore, is a reflection of the hard work, co-operation, and responsibility of all those involved.

As food security is concerned with healthy living, the gardens are a unique opportunity to be physically active while socializing with family, friends, relatives, or other community members that one may not yet know. Although they require a commitment of time, the outcome is the ability to acquire healthy food that is not only grown locally (fresh and free of chemicals) but also available year after year.

Without a store or market that is close to one's home, the threat of food insecurity increases. The Neechi Foods Community Store not only stocks locally grown vegetables and fruit, but carries a large selection of culturally familiar foods such as wild rice, blueberries, fish from Manitoba lakes and rivers, and game meat. Each of these items is considered a land-based food and contains large amounts of the vitamins, minerals, fiber, and protein which make up a healthy diet. Neechi's commitment to the urban Indigenous community is not only expressed through its selection of foods, but by employment as well. As a co-operative, the people who work there are also the ones who influence much of its business policy and what it offers to the community. One such practice, which is uncommon in businesses owned by non-Indigenous peoples, is the system of trade.

Neechi's employees are well aware that although many Indigenous peoples living in the inner city are financially poor, they have many talents and skills. Certain items that can be sold in the store are exchanged for a food credit. For single mothers who cannot afford to buy vegetables or use the community gardens in the winter months, they may still be able to supply healthy food items to their family through a store credit. By promoting reciprocity, residents are recognized for their contributions within the community, rather than just the poverty that degrades them. In doing so, support networks are created by and for Indigenous peoples, which promote empowerment based on their values and expectations.

Figure 1 shows that individual, household, and community food security is interconnected with multiple factors that are constantly changing in relation to the needs/expectations of community members and related community development initiatives.

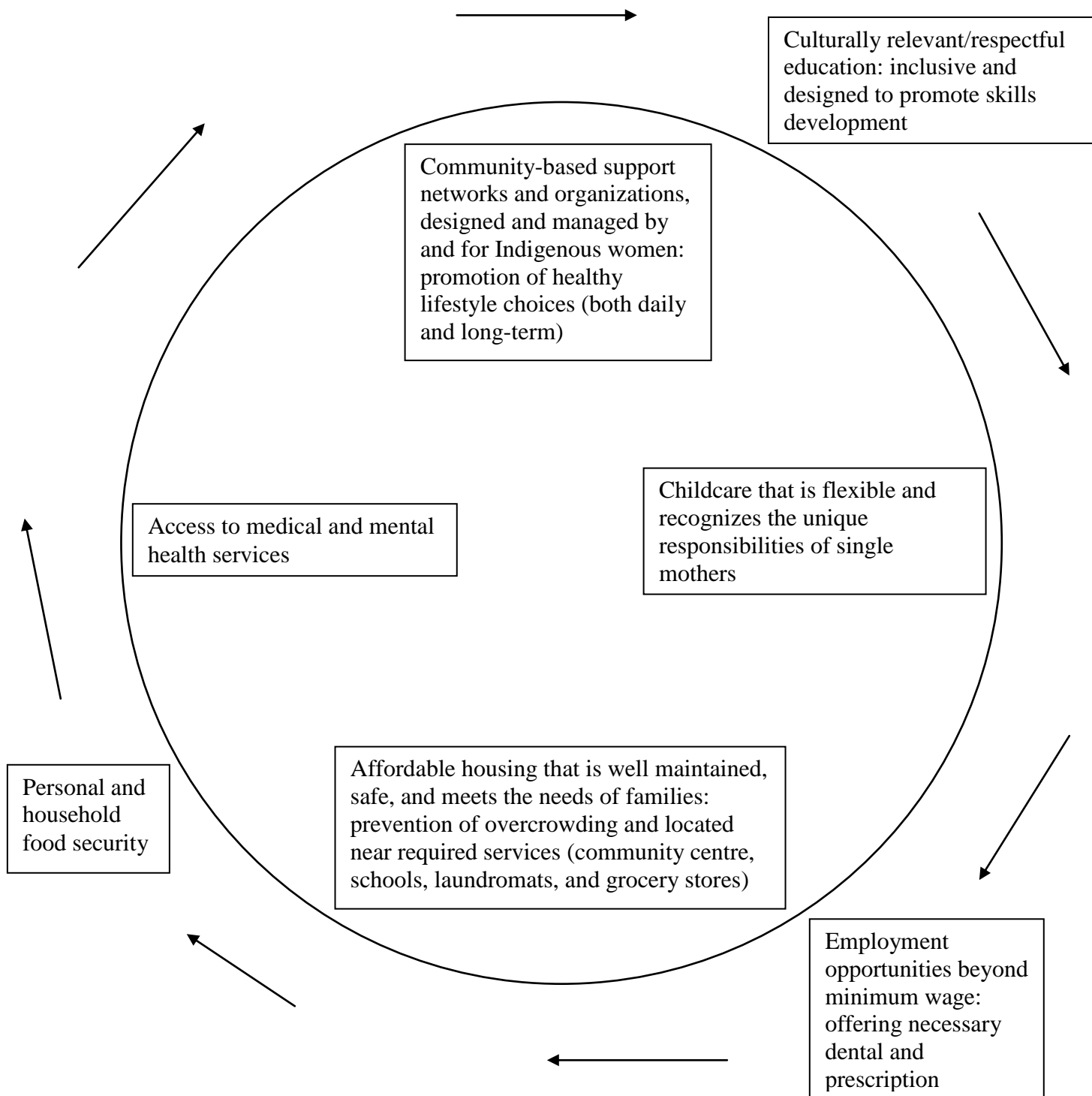


Figure 1: Interconnected Factors of Food Security

Source: Aulinger, M. 2010. *An Analysis of Urban Food Security Initiatives in Winnipeg*. Available online <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaid/harvest/uaid-suaed-student-research/uaid-sp-aulinger>.

Figure 2 shows how programs or services that suffer from a lack of funding and community control lead to personal, household, or community food insecurity.

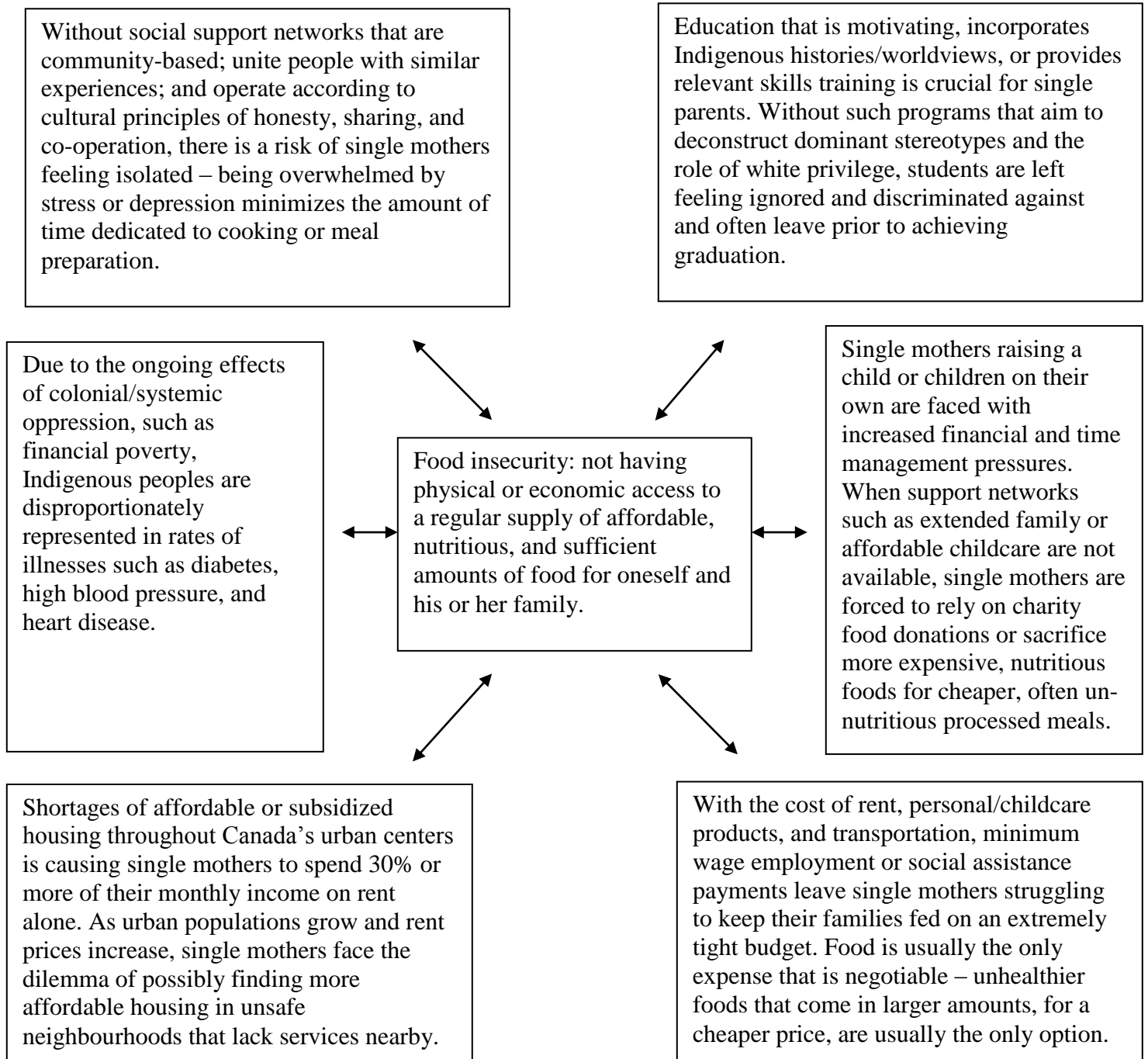


Figure 2: Food Security Programs and Services

Source: Aulinger, M. 2010. *An Analysis of Urban Food Security Initiatives in Winnipeg*. Available online <http://abdc.bc.ca/uaed/harvest/uaed-suaed-student-research/uaed-sp-aulinger>

Academic Presentation: Christine Sy

Christine presented two topics, an update on the Sault Ste. Marie (SSM) Learning Circle and her Ph.D. work.

Sault Ste. Marie Learning Circle

The Circle

- Began in March 2009.
- John McBride facilitated the first Circle.
- Christine Sy facilitated Circles from March to August 2009 and Natalie Waboose from September to December 2009. Bonnie Gaikhezheyongai has consistently supported the Circles via the NORDIK Institute.
- There is a diverse membership from SSM and the urban First Nation community with some involvement from the local Tribal Council made up of seven First Nations and representation from a Chippewa Tribe in the U.S.

Update

- The SSM Learning Circle methodology is based on traditional rocks (asinaan). Asinaan (from gichi gaming, Lake Superior) are the grounding centre through which knowledge is shared and collective knowledge is created. Over time, some of the rocks were removed and replaced with rocks that were symbolic to members.
- The Circle has great energy. Participants immediately came together and identified the need to balance process with action.
- We work well together. There is high motivation and energy. The Circle met every month through the summer and shared meeting places.
- Reciprocal sharing of knowledge takes place across members from their shared and diverse histories and experiences in Bawating/SSM.
- The creative energy is vibrant and strong.
- Several projects linked to economic development were envisioned within the first six months.

Projects

- A monument or statue that signifies Indigenous historical and contemporary

presence in SSM.

- A tourism project also locates and identifies the presence of Aboriginal people in the urban downtown area to balance the existing historic tourist sites that document settler presence.
- A history project to uncover the history of an Anishinaabek burial ground and what happened to it during urban development.

Prioritized Environmental Scan

- The Circle identified a need to know where we are at right now in terms of UAED and decided to request an environmental scan.
- A proposal was submitted and supported by the UAED Network.
- Derek Rice, a graduate student in economics, was the lead on this project with assistance from Natalie.
- The purpose was to answer the question: “In terms of UAED, where are we right now?”
- The draft was presented to the Circle in December 2009. Edits are currently being made and the final draft will be presented in May 2010.

Environmental Scan

- Documents the history of Bawating/SSM that traverses international and rural-urban reserve borders.
- Produces a snapshot of the historical leaders that impacted the area.
- Lists significant events (i.e. treaties, residential school, and Shingwauk Anishinaabe kinoomaage gaming).
- Traces the impacts of economic development by settlers/colonists/industrial developers (i.e. significantly mining).

Scan

- Draws on statistical data about the contemporary demographics and socio-economic status of the urban Aboriginal population (not in the US).
- Provides descriptive information about local Aboriginal collectivities: political, social, economic, cultural, spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual.

Update

- The Circle agenda at this point is to finalize the environmental scan and continue in strategic planning initiatives.
- Now that we know where we are:
 1. Where do we want to go?
 2. How do we want to get there?
- We are hopeful that this meeting will re-invigorate the momentum.

Ph.D. Research Presentation

Sugar Bush Harvest: Tracing Shifts in Anishinaabe Women's Labour from Bawating to Sault Ste. Marie

Context

- The starting point for this research begins with my own observations that the landscape of urban workplaces is diverse in its regard for Indigenous knowledge (IK).
- I am most compelled by 1) the marginalization or erasure of IK in the workplace (one of many sites of economic development for the individual, the family, and the community); 2) the resistance to creating space for the presence and practice of IK in the workplace.
 1. Note: For the purposes of UAED, the 'workplace' may be considered an existing site of economic activity that may be developed.
- Concepts of racism, sexism, patriarchy, classism, and intersections thereof were helpful in explaining these problems to some extent.
- However, these concepts did not satisfy my need to explain the problem of a particular paradoxical reality that I was living and witnessing in the stories of other Anishinaabe women.

This Paradoxical Reality

The reality of being *Indigenous* means having history, stories, ceremonies, knowledge, responsibilities, gifts, language, kinship ties, songs, and practices that emerge from a particular ecological area.

- It is about being all this and still *existing within that homeland*;
- It is about being an Indigenous *woman* (or transgender person or man) in that homeland—which means that while you share an Indigeneity in a communal sense with other human beings, being a woman nuances this Indigeneity.
- It is about being an Indigenous woman and engaging in *life-sustaining and life-giving activities* in your homeland.
- It is about having both these activities and Indigeneity be *mediated by non-Indigenous others* (e.g. person/people, organizations, practices, ideologies, and objectives) such that your good quality-of-life (e.g. *minobimaadziwin*) is diminished without your consensus.

Desire for Reconciliation

- The purpose of my research is to work towards reconciling this paradox.

- The objective of my M.A. was to find some satisfactory explanation for the existence of this paradox.
- The objective of my Ph.D. is to be a part of restoring Indigenous women's economic sovereignty/autonomy/quality-of- life within their homelands.

Explaining the Paradox

- Conducted a thematic analysis of secondary, peer-reviewed literature published between 1980-2008 on Indigenous women's work in Turtle Island (Canada and U.S).
- Reviewed literature whose primary sources are dated from 1624 – 1997.
- Identified six themes but only examined five.

Themes

1. The shifting relationship between Indigenous and newcomer systems of economic activity.
2. Women's work as a social economy.
3. Identity.
4. Colonial, state, and legal interference and influence.
5. Strategy, strikes, and social change.
6. Migration and mobility (unexamined).

An Explanation and Understanding

Indigenous women participated in economic systems within their own communities and within their homelands. The activities were largely informed by the natural resources of their particular region and included traveling for trading purposes. The arrival of Europeans yielded new relationships and resources for Indigenous groups in which Indigenous women were key participants in economic activity. These relationships were highly structured by Indigenous concepts of the holistic nature of kinship ties and economic partnerships. The quality of these relationships was diverse and shifted in several ways across contexts and conditions.

Ultimately, Indigenous women became alienated from their economic resources (and later their beneficial economic partnership with newcomers and Métis and creole neighbours), as well as the social networks that inform and structure economic activities. Women entered into new economic systems generated from colonial forces (i.e. forced

relocation, reservations/reserves, enfranchisement, land allotment, residential schools, urban relocation). Today, the landscape of economic activities is diverse; however, stats show that while economic participation is improving for Indigenous women in Canadian society compared to other Canadian groups, their socio-economic well-being is not on par. There is no research that compares today's socio-economic well-being of Indigenous women to the 'original' socio-economic well-being or self-identified well-being.

Gaps in the Literature

- Impact of colonial borders on women's economic activities (i.e. international, provincial, reserves/reservations, and treaties).
- Impact of Canadian/US treaties on women's economic activities.
- Regional analysis of Indigenous women's economic activities.
- Indigenous theory and methodology to explain Indigenous women's economic activities.
- Women defining and envisioning their social-economic well-being.

From Explanation to Reconciliation

- My Ph.D. research has the overarching objective of revitalizing Indigenous women's socio-economic sovereignty, autonomy, and quality-of-life within their homelands or treaty territories.
- It includes conducting a regional case study of Anishinaabe women's labour at the site of the sugar bush harvest from Bawating to SSM.
- My work asks, 'How can Indigenous women's minobimaadziwin be known over time through an examination of their labour at the sugar bush harvest?'

Foundational Considerations

- My research engages the paradox through Anishinaabe theory and methodology, oral history, and knowledge.
- This is compatible with my desires to restore Anishinaabe knowledge that was disrupted through my mother's line, the vision of Trent University's Ph.D. Indigenous Studies program, and an Indigenist research agenda.
- It will be interdisciplinary, combining (Indigenous) feminist theory, literary theory and methodology, and historical methods.

Why the Sugar Bush Harvest?

Several sources indicate that this was an economic activity that was led by Anishinaabe women prior to colonial contact. Sugar groves (i.e. the capital) were passed through the women's line, production and distribution of maple sugar was overseen by women, and transmission of knowledge was passed through women to their daughters and their daughters' families.

Anishinaabek Intellectual Traditions

- Enaatig miinawaa zisabaakode nibi theory and methodology is the Anishinaabe explanation and process that I propose to develop and utilize in this project. It stems from the Anishinaabek ontology that the land is a part of our kinship ties, our teacher, and our source of knowledge and life (even in the cities).
- Oral history – gichi Anishinaabek and settlers
- IK consists of Anishinaabemowin, songs, stories, ceremonies, dreams, and the relationship with land.

Euro-Canadian Intellectual Traditions

- Indigenous feminist theoretical concepts of colonialism and patriarchy are employed to explain women's alienation from socio-economic economic well-being;
- Historical methods: textual and photographic archives from local and regional institutions, HBC and INAC, missionary journals.
- Interviews with both Anishinaabek women and their families and Settlers in the area who have maple sap harvest businesses.
- Literary/arts based theory and practice—story 'writing' and telling in the final dissertation; in terms of dissemination, I hope to translate the final dissertation into an art exhibit, manuscript of poetry or a script for Indigenous theatre—medicine bundle of knowledge (Shirley Williams, 2006).

Value and Implications

- Increase the critical analysis of our economic activities; philosophies and practices can become 'transferrable skills' to contemporary economic sites.
- Increase the knowledge of where we have come from and what we have become alienated from; strengths in diverse partnerships.

- From here, we can begin to restore economic autonomy, sovereignty, and dignity by revitalizing and applying IK.
- Project: Restoring the maple sap harvest in the Bawating area today may be a viable option for Indigenous women, their families, and their communities. This research would provide a foundation and framework for how to do that in a way that creates a path towards Anishinaabek sovereignty.

Academic Presentation: Alan Anderson

Bridges and Foundations Project on Urban Aboriginal Housing

Saskatoon has a high percentage of Aboriginal people. A high percentage of people live below the poverty line. A high percentage of Aboriginal youth are pursuing higher education. The goal of the project is to build relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations. The goal was not to build houses but to create relationships.

In terms of Urban Aboriginal Economic Development:

1. Demographics

The Urban Aboriginal population continues to grow. Far more band members live off-reserve than on-reserve. The ones where the majority of people still live on-reserve tend to live in the North. The Aboriginal population is youthful and half of the population in Saskatchewan is under the age of twenty. Youth are increasing their level of education. That opens the job market and means more occupational diversity.

2. Connection between Reserve and Cities

Whitecap is a developed reserve, with a population of about 200 members. On-reserve, there is a state-of-the-art casino, hotel development, industrial centre, state-of-the-art sport centres, etc. This is a good model. All of this development did not have an effect on migration. People in the city would not move back but they maintained contacts in the community. Permanency vs. transiency.

3. Family, Women, and Youth

Housing initiatives.

4. Affordable Housing

What's affordable? Condo conversion means limited availability. Bridges and Foundations organized a meeting on financial funding. The workshop brought together bankers, home builders, and Aboriginal organizations. They discussed how difficult it was for Aboriginal people to become homeowners in the city.

5. Housing Provisions

Housing providers who provide housing to urban Aboriginal people are considered 'slumlords'. The provisions are inadequate and not up to fire codes. They worked on housing designs for special populations (e.g. students and Métis Elders).

6. Aboriginal Participation in Home Building

A study was completed about increasing Aboriginal participation in all aspects of home building activities by providing apprenticeships.

7. Aboriginal Participation in Economic Development

The number of Aboriginal owned businesses is growing by leaps and bounds. Aboriginal participation in community development is sorely lacking. Why or how should Aboriginal people be involved? There are lots of projects *for* Aboriginal people and not a lot of projects *by* Aboriginal people.

8. Urban Reserves

Bridges and Foundations is interested in complexities in dialogue.

9. Race Relations and Crimes

Lastly, how do we make sense of those issues in order to inform policy recommendations? How do we see the big picture? People are open-minded about relating to non-Aboriginal people. There is an emergence of an Aboriginal middle class, although he still sees a percentage of Aboriginal people renting and not buying homes.

Bridges and Foundations

Bridges and Foundations is an initiative of the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) together with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the University of Saskatchewan. The goal of Bridges and Foundations is to build sustainable relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations to design and develop culturally-supportive communities and quality, affordable housing options.

The project seeks to develop a better understanding of how to establish and sustain culturally inclusive partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations, working to improve the quality-of-life through affordable, quality housing options in Saskatoon.

Opportunities to Participate

- Graduate Scholarships and Internships
- Community Research Partnerships
- Aboriginal Community Consultation
- Institution Research Partnerships
- Apprenticeship Consultation and Bursaries
- Community and Housing Design

Planning Circle Partners

- University of Saskatchewan
- Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
- Saskatoon Home Builders Association
- Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
- Quint Development Corporation
- Saskatoon Tribal Council

- Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
- Affordable New Home Development Foundation
- SaskNative Rentals
- Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership
- City of Saskatoon
- Saskatchewan Indian Federated College
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology

Points of Information

- Saskatchewan has one of the largest and fastest growing Aboriginal populations in Canada.
- Half of the Aboriginal populations are urban. Saskatoon is holding one of the largest Aboriginal populations of any Canadian city.
- One in five households in Saskatoon is earning less than \$25,000 (1996). In Canadian municipalities, Saskatoon has the highest proportion of Aboriginal populations (64%) living below the low-income cut-off (LICO).
- 40.9% (1996) of the Aboriginal population in Saskatoon are youth.
- Challenges include inadequate housing, abandoned properties, and growing homelessness.
- Opportunities include close collaboration between Aboriginal organizations, the City of Saskatoon, the University of Saskatchewan (including Bridges and Foundations) and local community-based organizations to meet the challenges and build sustainable communities.

The Bridges and Foundations Project on Urban Aboriginal Housing commenced in early 2001 as an undertaking of the SSHRC's CURA program, and was also funded by the CMHC together with partner organizations. Collaborating in the project were several universities (University of Saskatchewan, First Nations University of Canada, and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies), Provincial and urban Aboriginal bodies (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Saskatoon Tribal Council, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, and Centre Urban Métis Federation Inc.), the City of Saskatoon (particularly the Planning Department), homebuilding and housing associations (including the Saskatoon and Region Home Builders Association, Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership, Affordable Home Development Foundation, SaskNative Rentals, National Aboriginal Housing Association, and the Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan), and local community organizations (Quint Development Corporation and neighborhood associations).

The primary goal of the project was to build sustainable relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations to design and develop culturally supportive communities and affordable housing options. The project research, which concluded in early 2005, attempted to discern the differences between the availability of affordable housing and community services in Saskatoon and the needs of the city's Aboriginal residents. The project succeeded in gathering a large volume of pertinent information on

urban Aboriginal housing and demographics, living conditions, and quality-of-life, giving this city a detailed knowledge of the characteristics and needs of its Aboriginal population. Research was aimed at providing an accurate and updated demographic profile of Aboriginal residents, exploring Aboriginal living conditions and housing needs, and providing practical analysis of housing design and supply for Aboriginal residents. The more than fifty research reports and publications of the project also included:

- Band-contracted surveys,
- Comprehensive and in-depth neighborhood surveys,
- Evaluations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal collaboration,
- Studies of the special needs of students and particular challenged populations such as Elders,
- Housing design workshops,
- The development of apprenticeships in the homebuilding industry,
- Explorations of financial and funding options for home ownership,
- Re-examinations of community-based research from an Aboriginal perspective, and
- Many other relevant topics.

Many of these reports are available electronically from the project website: bridgesandfoundations.usask.ca. Hard copies are also available upon request from:

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Bridges and Foundations Project on Urban Aboriginal Housing List of Reports

- Final Report: Bridges and Foundations Project on Urban Aboriginal Housing
- Socio-Demographic Study of Aboriginal Population in Saskatoon
- Affordable Home Ownership for Aboriginal People in Saskatoon: Financial and Funding Options
- Summary and Analysis of Bridges and Foundations: CURA
- The Building Skills, Building Homes Project: A Community Education Study in Alternative Lifestyle Practices through Straw Bale Construction
- Core Neighbourhood Development Council
- Aboriginal Women Fleeing Violence in Saskatoon
- Partnerships in Urban Aboriginal Housing Projects: A Theoretical Perspective
- The City as Home: The Sense of Belonging Among Aboriginal Youth in Saskatoon

- Aboriginal Post-Secondary Student Housing
- First Nations University of Canada Saskatoon Campus Housing and Daycare Research Project
- Community Voices Within Saskatoon's Inner-City Neighbourhoods: Capacity and Needs Assessment
- Residential Urban Reserves: Issues and Options for Providing Adequate and Affordable Housing
- An Analysis of Race Relations in Saskatoon Saskatchewan: The Contributions of the Housing Sector
- Métis Student Housing Research Project: Housing that Supports Métis Students' School Success
- Urban Aboriginal Housing Design Charrette
- Migration and Mobility between Reserve and City: A Survey of Whitecap Dakota/Sioux First Nation Residents in Saskatoon
- First Nations Housing in Saskatoon: A Survey of Cress Housing Clients
- Aboriginal Housing Needs in Saskatoon: A survey of SaskNative Rentals Clients
- Saskatoon Aboriginal Neighbourhood Survey: A Survey of Aboriginal Households in City Neighbourhoods
- Apprenticeship Consultations
- Community Housing and Design Options
- Management and Coordination Of Apprenticeship Training Opportunities For Aboriginal Students in Residential Construction
- Saskatoon Urban Aboriginal Documentary Photography Project
- Affordable Housing and Home Ownership: Business Case Development for the Saskatoon Market
- Urban First Nation Residential Development Manual
- Métis Elders Circle Housing Research Project
- Patterns and Influences of Home Ownership and Renting in Pleasant Hill
- Aboriginal Involvement with Apprenticeship in Residential Construction in Saskatoon
- Family Friendly Housing Initiative
- Aboriginal People and Housing: An Exploration of the Perceptions of Saskatoon Habitat for Humanity
- Muskeg Lake First Nation Affordable Housing Program
- Survey of Urban Housing Needs of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation
- More than Four Walls and a Roof: A Resource Manual for the Development of Homeownership Cooperatives (not available online)
- HIV/AIDS and Aboriginal Women in Saskatchewan: Colonization, Marginalization, and Recovery

Academic Presentation: Charles Horn and Ray Gerow

Paper to be Presented at the Academic Conference

Charles is presenting a paper at an academic conference in Quebec this summer. The structure of the paper is important.

Why are we forced to engage with urban Aboriginals?

- What is the current state of the field we are in?

What have we learned about Urban Aboriginal economic development?

- Relating back to the state of the field.

Where will we go with this?

- Bring in new pieces of work that aren't normally connected with the field.

Necessity of urban focus

- Demographic
 - The majority of Aboriginal people do not live on-reserve.
 - FACT – The Aboriginal community in Canada is urban.
 - Anything that does not engage with this fact is missing the point.

Urban has its own specificity

- It cannot be described by way we talk about people on-reserve. We cannot understand urban except in limited ways.
- Not only do other frameworks not apply, but we need to challenge those frameworks.

What is the state of the field?

This is a story about origins.

Reality – detailed demographics

- Mobility.
- Quality-of-life indicators.
- Etc.

Detailed analyses of particular cities. Push-pull analysis.

1. Recognition in literature that organizations matter (Harvard Study).

2. Policy Matters.

3. Case study approach.

- Bodies of literature

Limits to field

Cannot expect an urban community to play the role like the Harvard study.

Governance Circle

[ad verbatim]

All variations on the theme, “who represents urban Aboriginal people?”

Ray Gerow:

That speaks towards the topic of urban Aboriginal governance. It is scary, for one thing. As soon as you bring the topic up, people ‘run screaming’ because they are scared. Urban Aboriginal organizations do not want to see any kind of urban governance structure because they see it as a threat to their existence. Governments, our elected governments, First Nations governments, think the same thing. They would rather be able to say: “We do not know who to go to, so we are just not going to go to anybody”. It is something that I think needs to be addressed, something that I live on a day-to-day basis. There is not a day that goes by where I do not pay submission to scholars because of the lack of our governance structure. I am not talking about having a grand chief of Prince George and a council, I am just talking about how we as urban Aboriginal people get engaged in the conversations about what is happening and what is affecting us on a day-to-day basis. That is what I call governance. How do we give a voice to our entire population? I have learned more from listening to the academic side of the governance conversation and the fact that right now our governance is coming at us from a deficit based position. It tends to be our social organizations, our social service agencies in the communities, which are the voice of our people. Those agencies, by virtue of the services they deliver, know what is going on with about five to ten percent of our population, that is the negative aspect of our lives. That is the voice that people hear when you go to an Aboriginal organization to get input on something. They approach it from that perspective. I am trying to find a way to get that voice better heard.

We have talked about our tribal councils a couple of times, and I think that is a perfect example of governance from that end in our urban Aboriginal setting. Again, our Tribal Council, to put it in perspective, the territory where Prince George sits is Lheidli T’enneh territory. They do not belong to a tribal council. The Tribal Council’s nearest band is 110 kilometers away from the city, and yet the Tribal Council continually goes around from meeting to meeting, trying to exert its authority in Prince George. We keep saying: “You have no authority in Prince George, other than what any other Aboriginal person has who lives in Prince George. Just because you happen to have an office in Prince George, as opposed to Vanderhoof or Burns Lake where it should be, does not give you the right to think you can govern us.” It is difficult, because we do not have an answer to it. Charles had mentioned before that we always have the question but we do not always have the answer to the questions.

As our governance conversation was carried on, we started talking about a 30,000 foot level, a 20,000 foot level, a 10,000 foot level, and on the ground. Right now, the voice that is being heard is the voice from on the ground, which is good, but it is not a balanced voice of the entire Aboriginal population. Then we have a big gap: between the ground and up to about 20,000 feet, we have nothing. The 20,000 foot level is the Provincial level of umbrella organizations (e.g., Friendship Centre Association and UNN) and whatever might exist in our province that represents the various on the ground

organizations. At the 30,000 foot level, we have the Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and other elected First Nations bodies. The 30,000 foot level does not even know that there is a ground. They have lost touch, from an urban perspective, with the fact that there are Aboriginal people living off-reserve. Unfortunately, that is the voice that people go to nine times out of ten. Governments in particular go to that voice to try to get input for their actions. If they do not go to that level, they tend to go to the 20,000 foot level, which consists of the Friendship Centre Associations and others at the Provincial level. They have their ear to the ground a bit more, but it is still not nearly where it needs to be. I think what we are looking at from an urban Aboriginal governance perspective is how to fill that gap at about the 10,000 foot level. How do we create a structure that is at about 10,000 feet, so that it is close enough to the ground to know what is going on in town but they can also see the higher levels of the community and not be lost up in the Provincial level? How do we create a collective voice at that 10,000 foot level so that we can get a balanced approach as needed on each conversation, so that we can engage the entire population in that conversation? We do not have the answer to that yet.

The reason I know that this can work is that when the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) first came to Prince George, it was very effective. We really engaged that entire cross-section of our Aboriginal population in Prince George in the conversation. In Prince George, we took the engagement up to the 30,000 foot level of the city, which really is the 10,000 foot level from a Provincial perspective. We brought our conversation up to that level, and it was a really healthy conversation. We were looking far into the future as to how we could start making changes in our community. Then the organizations got involved and dragged it right down to the ground. Instead of having an UAS, we ended up with a pot of money that happened to be called UAS. The typical fighting around that pot of money happened, and we lost the strategic part. Again, the question is, how do we get the community back up to the 10,000 foot level again so that we can have that healthy conversation that is not based on who gets what money out of the pot?

Charles Horn's Comments:

What is at stake at that middle level? The problem with on the ground issues and services delivered by social service organizations is that they are highly tactical. They are all about getting another contract, providing a service, or rescuing this particular family. It is almost a survival mode kind of level. That misses the ability to think strategically, which means getting up the next level and to get beyond the cut and thrust of contracts and survival mode, and to think strategically. How do we position ourselves over time? How do we adopt an approach that makes sure that we maximize our benefits in the face of these circumstances? For example, strategic thinking would be to communicate to government departments, as the UAS was designed to do, that there is a lot of money flowing into the community, but the community does not have the ability to use it and prioritize. Government should do something in terms of procurement processes, because the community can only submit proposals to government budgeting teams.

The UAS promise was to get to that level where you can begin to think at that next level up and limiting the administrative burden upon organizations. This is the kind of

discussion that you cannot do as a simple survivor. That was what the UAS promised until it fell apart and became another funding stream. That strategic level is quite doable and is one of the areas where we could make progress in a policy perspective. We could argue that this capacity is important to the community, it is not there right now, and it cannot come into play on its own. It has to have resources or supports that are independent of contracts, because otherwise you are just back into the play of interest over contracts. I think this 10,000 foot level has a practical policy dimension which is sellable.

Ray Gerow's Comments:

Something like the UAS actually has a negative effect in the community over time. When you try to do that kind strategic thinking, at the end of the day, all you are doing is applying to that pot of funding. For example, in their strategic thinking in the last couple of years, they have decided that they want to put a big thrust on keeping Aboriginal kids in school, which is great. But they did not engage with the Aboriginal Education Board, which was already in place to do just that within the education system. The various organizations around the table strategized around how they could do that, using their organizations so that their organizations could then apply to the pot of funds. This leads to a situation where numerous organizations compete for a pot of money while ignoring the bigger picture. They want to find a way to 'plan strategically' for the future, but only if it benefits their organization. At the end of the day, this will likely not benefit Aboriginal children because it is not coordinated enough to have as much of a benefit as it should. Half the time, we forgot the objective of the Aboriginal Education Board or other entities. Having to ignore those things or battle those things in order to get the community healthy takes up much of our time as well.

Wrap Up

- Foundations for a UAED Network Agenda
- Foundations for a next SSHRC application

Day Two

Environics Study

The participants were asked what they thought of the Environics Study. Here are some of the responses.

1. There is a lot of demographic data out there and not a lot of qualitative data. Some methodological and technical questions remain open.
2. Mixed feelings. While this study is not groundbreaking, one interesting perspective was the methodology. They provided information on the way young urban Aboriginal people are thinking. Media attention was good.
3. Raises the profile of the issue. Good resource to argue the case. None of the findings were surprising, but it's good to refer to.
4. Too much money was spent on this study because it is a one-time thing. Our Learning Circle findings were reflected. There was a sense of a relationship to a place. This is good for supporting rationales for future research projects. I agree with the critique about the demographics. It reinforced what we know. It gives it clout.
5. Echoing the comments made with people at OTC, this study tells us what we know. Slick consultants, they play a high level game. Aboriginal people are an industry for people to study and organize conferences about.
6. What about reactions from AFN, CAP, and Friendship Centres? He thinks that Friendship Centres want to see the CAP squirm.
7. When they want to do something, they do it. When they do not want to do anything, they will commission a study.

Directions for the Network

1. Research Topics

- Housing.
 - Access.
 - Affordability.
 - Home ownership responsibilities.
- Food.
 - Health.
 - Cost.
 - Tale of social enterprises.
 - Basic information (e.g. how to build a garden box).
- Urban Reserves.
 - Bettina to collaborate with Alan.
- Health and Wellness.
 - Relationship between personal and physical health.
- General Role of a Community Development Foundation.
- Social Economy Business.
- Emergence of an Aboriginal Middle Class.
 - Children are the future.
 - Large component of the population is transforming.
- Governance.
 - Representation.
 - Appropriate voices.
 - Dismay – national Aboriginal organizations rooted on-reserve are the Aboriginal voice.
 - People can pick and choose what they want to hear.

2. Reactions

Areas of Urgency.

- Social economy.
 - Strength is tying it to an Aboriginal economy.
 - Difference between a social enterprise and a for-profit business.

First Nations are subject to the Indian Act. Chaos and ongoing dysfunction are the result. The majority of First Nations people has difficulties and need stability and long-term planning outside of Indian Act. If they cannot address on-reserve issues, how can they

address the better educated off-reserve people? Non-profits face the same challenges. Instability at the board level combined with an entrenched set of beliefs.

Management and some reserves (Whitecap) employ a staff of professional managers who are not Aboriginal. Are there mentoring strategies? Are they training the next generation?

Succession planning has gone very wrong. One example is that of a CEO and a team who operate the Tribal Council like a private enterprise fifteen years. The public cannot get access to information, and there is no annual report. People who ask for information are sent to the Chief. It is set up to his advantage. He can control who will be the next Chief. It is so out of control that people have left and formed their own Council, there are two Tribal Councils in a community of 20,000 people. This is a good example of how not to run things. See Bob Kaysea's dissertation.

UAED:

- Can you identify good and bad stories that we can learn from?
- Publications: Strategic Conversations conference.
- Website links to other materials.
- CUISR – Self-sustaining community based research.

Reflections on other elements of research topics:

- Social enterprise for reasons other than profit (women in Egypt)
- Strategic alliances.
 - Matt FNU.
 - Really powerful package of work about how to meet needs.
- Home building business for profit.
 - Problem of building affordable housing.

Charles:

Question of how organizations can add a business arm to their bodies. Social enterprises are rare.

For people who are purely profit driven, show them the value of social enterprises.

Social enterprises run their businesses differently.

Home-ownership should not be the end goal. Is there a way to give Aboriginal people pride in ownership? Home ownership is a form of empowerment.

Housing is the framework for a network agenda and the vehicle is social enterprises.

- Aboriginal business people do things differently.
- Urban Aboriginal governance that is not a service delivery model.
- Home ownership.
- Social enterprise approaches.
- Need to provide homes for people who move back and forth.

Ray:

Maslow's hierarchy of needs argument.

Milton:

In the First Nations worldview, there are teachings and words that have existed for a long time to express values connected to the understanding of livelihood and economic independence. These common values likely exist in all Indigenous cultures when deeply examined. The following are some key Cree (plains dialect) words that were captured in the Office of Treaty Commissioner publication Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan in 2000:

Okimaw/Onikanew	The leader.
Iyinihiwin	The ability to develop a keen mind.
Waskawihin	Inner energy to move or develop a sense of personal initiative.
Miyo-wicehtowin	The principle of getting along well with others, developing good relations, and expanding the circle.
Wahykohtowin	Good relationships.
Manatishihin	Respect.
Manacihitowin	Treating each other with care and respect.
Kwayaskatishihin	Honesty and fairness.

What we are learning in Saskatchewan via our Elders' teachings is that the core values entrenched in the culture existed long before contact and before the early fur trade era. We need to restore these values once again if we are to enjoy and reap the benefits of economic development opportunities in general.

Ray:

Vince's example of welfare camps.

Bob:

We don't need to research any more. We know! We need to do!

MCRI Proposal, LOI Stage. (Reference to the Introduction. How do these communities come to grips with?)

It's working with the broader economy.

Boardwalk.

Good synergy between groups, may be partners.

Alan:

Actions – better links in site and policy

3. Actions

Fall 2010

- National Gathering.
- Meeting with senior policy people.

Feedback

- Policy Topics.
- Policy Communications.
- Potential Venues.

Policy Topics

- Core topics they want to hear.
- Try to understand how UAED will buy them some happiness (reducing pressure on social programs, etc).
- Try to have a better sense.
- Looking for little pieces of information that they can use in their own battles.
- Generalities won't get you anywhere.
- Has to be short and to the point.
- Policy briefs.

Need to clarify – what are our lessons?

So what? What is at stake here?

We want to be different – we have a holistic approach. We have a tool (learning circles). We want to carve out a different approach with vigor. We want to achieve change.

Little Axe Analogy:

Policy – small chops, make them count.

Being critical but casting the idea of change – give guidance, be helpful not critical.

Bob:

Boardwalk.

CCAP is trying to partner with Aboriginal businesses and communities. Communicative power to partner with Vancity.

Milton:

World Business Conference, Indigenous Leader Development Institute.

Greg:

After this next year, we need leadership to step forward.

1. How can it be a better network?
 - a. Constraints on people's lives.

- b. Academics not engaged.
- c. Is there a better group of leaders?

2. How might be potential leaders and potential future leaders?

Bob:

Turnout is not a reflection on the work we've done. The field is tiny. FNU could be there centre of the network.

Charles:

What do we have to do differently to engage academics? People are busy.

Percentage engagement of a tiny field.

Alan:

As a think-tank it's great. Meetings are very productive. Piggyback on academic meetings for formal presentations. People have to view this as a priority, make time for it.

Ray:

Why am I still here? To get access to academics and have conversations.

Alan:

Community-based work is so rewarding.

We need to get to the personal level. What is in it for me? What is this going to offer? Keep in mind that the group is young. People are still learning about this group. Getting a sense of where the group is going.

- Repackage ourselves.
- Strategic direct marketing.
- Promote the website.
- Create an association (suggestion shot down by Alan and Greg).
- Structure to attach ourselves to a journal.