



ISBNPA

Indigenizing Wellbeing Research Circle SIG

📖 **Reading time:** 10 minutes

📧 **Spread the word** - forward this newsletter to colleagues who might be interested in joining

Newsletter May 2026

ISBNPA Indigenizing Wellbeing Research Circle SIG

A Message from Our Co-Speakers, Robert Hogg and Alex McComber

Tēnā koe, Wa'tkwanonwera:ton,

Greetings to you. We trust this message finds you and your loved ones in good health and good spirits. It is with warmth and excitement that we welcome you to the very first edition of the ISBNPA Indigenizing Wellbeing Research Circle (IWRC) Special Interest Group newsletter.

We are honoured to introduce ourselves as your IWRC Co-Speakers for the year:

Robert Hogg is of Māori descent (an Indigenous person from Aotearoa New Zealand). Robb has iwi (tribal affiliations) to Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe. Robb feels a great sense of honour and privilege to be one of the co-creators and co-speakers of the IWRC.

Alex M. McComber is Kanien'keha:ka (people of the flint), Rotisken'rakéhte (bear clan), from Kahnawà:ke (by the rapids) Territory along the St. Lawrence River near Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Alex is honoured to serve as interim Co-Speaker while our IWRC co-creator, Dr. Brittany Wenniseriiotha Jock, Kanien'kehá:ka, is on maternity leave.

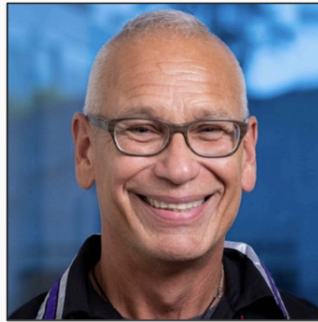
Dr. Brittany Wenniseriiotha Jock is Kanien'kehá:ka, Bear Clan, from Akwesasne Territory. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at McGill University and a member of the Centre for Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment (CINE). Wenniseriiotha is currently on maternity leave from her role as co-speaker.

At the heart of the IWRC is a commitment to centring Indigenous knowledges, sovereignty, and self-determination. We honour the voices of Indigenous Knowledge Carriers and support the next generation of Indigenous scholars. Our work is grounded in the diverse cultural teachings, practices, and

worldviews of our Peoples and communities, and is rooted in our relationships with the land, with one another, and with all creation. Above all, our shared purpose is to support the wellbeing of future generations of children and youth. We welcome all those who feel connected to and inspired by these ways of doing research to join our Circle.

We look forward to connecting with you, learning from your experiences, and working together to support new and ongoing initiatives across the intersections of behavioural nutrition, physical activity, and Indigenous wellbeing. In this inaugural issue, you will meet our current IWRC members, learn more about our Circle’s upcoming involvement in the 2026 ISBNPA conference in Cádiz, read about our presence at the 2025 ISBNPA conference, learn about our upcoming IWRC webinar in May, and find out how to get involved in our IWRC Member Spotlight.

We invite you to explore this newsletter, connect with our Circle, and join us. We look forward to meeting many of you in Cádiz for ISBNPA 2026.



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| <p>Co-Speaker: Robert Hogg</p> | <p>Interim Co-Speaker: Alex M. McComber</p> | <p>Co-Speaker: Brittany Wenniseriiotha Jock</p> |
| <p>MEdL, PhD candidate, Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa New Zealand.</p> | <p>Alex M McComber M.Ed. Community Researcher, Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Program, Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory, Quebec, Canada Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences McGill University</p> | <p>Assistant Professor Department of Family Medicine Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences McGill University</p> |

** The leadership titles “Co-Speaker” (as voices that represent IWRC) is used rather than Chair to highlight our distinct knowledges and perspectives of leadership within Indigenous societies**



Circle Keeper: Cameron Hare

Cameron Hare, who is Red River Métis from Manitoba, and Ontario, Canada, serves as the IWRC Circle Keeper.

As Circle Keeper, Cameron supports IWRC coordination, maintaining communications and member connection. He will be your main point of contact with the IWRC for questions and information updates. He can be reached at hare.cameron@queensu.ca



The “Circle Keeper” is derived from the role of “Firekeeper”, part of many Turtle Island (North American) Indigenous traditional societies. The Firekeeper tends to the ceremonial fire and supports the people gathered around it by ensuring its strength through supportive actions, respecting protocols, and providing people with the sacred space around the fire.

Indigenous Research Wellbeing Circle Team Members

Our Circle’s organizing team is made up of members who meet regularly to guide the direction of the IWRC, support membership engagement, and help plan the Circle’s initiatives, events, and conference activities.

| | |
|---|--|
| Brittany Wenniseriiotha Jock Jonel Beauvais Jessica Shenandoah Lucie Lévesque Dave Bergeron | Te Awerangi Hogg Robert Hogg Alex McComber Erica Hinckson Cameron Hare |
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IWRC in Cádiz

IWRC looks forward to meeting you at ISBNPA 2026 in Cádiz, from May 27-30, where we invite you to attend our numerous IWRC sessions and conference activities!

The IWRC are currently exploring opportunities for us to gather formally and informally; to build relationships between members, to share our research and project work, and to discuss matters of mutual interest in Indigenous Peoples’

health and wellness in nutrition and physical activity. Invitations to these events and gatherings will be shared when confirmed. In the meantime, here are some of the IWRC sessions and activities at-a-glance. More information can be found in the [ISBNPA scientific program](#).

| Date/Time | Session Title | Location |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| Wednesday, May 27, 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM | Pre-conference workshop: Sustaining Wellbeing through Mentorship and Intergenerational Knowledge Exchange: Indigenous Perspectives from Turtle Island, Abya Yala and Aotearoa New Zealand | Room 8 |
| Wednesday, May 27, 1:45 to 3:15 PM | Opening Ceremony | Auditorium |
| Wednesday, May 27, 3:30 to 4:45 PM | Award Session: Awards 2: Socio-Economic Inequalities and Indigenizing Research *Includes oral presentations related to Indigenizing Wellbeing research | Room 2 |
| Friday, May 29, 5:30 to 6:30 PM | Symposium: Relational Pathways to Wellbeing: Revitalizing Indigenous Mentorship, Rites of Passage, and Community Health Promotion | Room 6 |
| Saturday, May 30, 12:30 to 1:30 PM | Closing Ceremony | Auditorium |
| Wednesday, May 27 to Friday May 29 | Indigenous Wellbeing Research Circle information booth | Near the poster session |

[See IWRC Highlights from ISBNPA2025 HERE](#)

IWRC at ISBNPA 2025 Conference

The IWRC had a strong presence at ISBNPA 2025 in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Robert Hogg, in collaboration with local Māori leaders led the entire cultural overlay of ISBNPA 2025, which showcased Indigenous ways of doing through the conference opening, activities, presentations, workshops, discussions, and learning spaces. Māori leadership ensured that Indigenous voices, protocols, and ways of being remained at the forefront.

Opening Ceremony

The conference officially opened with a Māori pōwhiri (welcoming ceremony) at the Aotea Centre. This included Circle Co-Speaker Robert Hogg and other tangata whenua (the people of the land, or hosts) bringing everyone together through ceremony, offering greetings to manuhiri (visitors), welcoming them onto whenua Māori (Māori land), by spiritually grounding the gathering.

Circle Co-Speaker Alex McComber was one of the speakers who responded to the welcome by sharing gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the visitors to Aotearoa New Zealand and acknowledged all aspects of creation through the Oheonon Kiamawētēwētē ("Words Before All Else"). Kanier'kaha ka women shared an appreciation welcome song from the Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse) Britany Wenneriosiotha Jock, Jonel Beauvais, and Jessica Sheendath.

This opening created a respectful and relational space for the gathering and set the stage for the conference theme: Manaaki tāiao, manaaki tāngata, manaaki moke nei ("Take care of the environment, take care of the people, take care of the future"). The conference theme for ISBNPA 2025 was developed by our Circle Co-Speaker Robert Hogg, in collaboration with the Local Organising Committee and the ISBNPA Executive Committee.



JOIN OUR MAY IWRC WEBINAR

We will be hosting an online webinar on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 (UTC-4), open to all IWRC members. This gathering will introduce the IWRC's vision, goals, and objectives, while also creating an opportunity to meet other Circle members, share perspectives on Indigenous wellbeing and research, and begin building relationships with one another in advance of the ISBNPA 2026 gathering in Cádiz.

During this IWRC webinar, we shall:

- Introduce ourselves and begin forming meaningful connections around the Circle
- Share the background and vision of the Indigenizing Wellbeing Research Circle
- Discuss the values that guide our work
- Reflect on how Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing shape wellbeing research and practice
- Share what it means to engage in work that is by, for, and with Indigenous Peoples and communities

Zoom Link and Information:

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86059072532?
pwd=p7FjObMcFLEt1ZzorAFQac2HedQHJ.1&from=addon](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86059072532?pwd=p7FjObMcFLEt1ZzorAFQac2HedQHJ.1&from=addon)

Meeting ID: 860 5907 2532

Passcode: 075436

Webinar Date/Times:

- Eastern North America (EDT): Tuesday, May 12, 4:00–5:00 PM
- South America East / Brazil (BRT): Tuesday, May 12, 5:00–6:00 PM
 - Central Europe (CEST): Tuesday, May 12, 10:00–11:00 PM
 - Australia Eastern (AEST): Wednesday, May 13, 6:00–7:00 AM
 - New Zealand (NZST): Wednesday, May 13, 8:00–9:00 AM

IWRC Member Spotlight

Jonel Beauvais

Jonel Beauvais is a Wolf Clan, Kanien'kéhaka (Mohawk). Who is the proud mother of three



children and chosen auntie, sister and friend to many. She works diligently to empower and induce healing within all Native/Indigenous communities in order to prosper in the Haudenosaunee teachings of good medicine and good minds.

Her inspiration for community engagement was founded in supporting the families of Ohero:kon. She has dedicated seven years as a council member and Lead Auntie for all adolescent girls entering their first year of fasting in Ohero:kon “Under the Husk”, which is the Rights of Passage for youth in Akwesasne. Through ceremony these youth commit to four years of fasting in which they attend weekly gatherings throughout the winter months where traditional/modern teachings are presented to the young fasters and their families. All with the intentions of receiving a vision, insight or guidance on the purpose of their journey into adulthood.

Her passion is to share her life experiences as a Mohawk woman who has witnessed, lived, and survived the violence of Indigenous oppression and genocide. Her path is to offer education, encouragement, and insight for those struggling spiritually and emotionally. Her intentions are to revive the human consciousness to the laws of the natural world. Her vision is to share the brilliance of Haudenosaunee protocols to peace, to nurture Indigenous/Non-Indigenous communities back to the wise ways of being in alignment with Mother Nature. Her vision is to make sure the children yet to come will trace the White roots of Peace and continue to flourish in our ways of life.

Erica Hinckson

Professor Erica Hinckson is of Greek-Cypriot/Guyanian descent, raised in Cyprus, and has lived and worked in Aotearoa New Zealand for nearly three decades. She is a non-Indigenous academic, and her work focuses on physical activity, urban health, healthy and sustainable cities, and community science, with equity, place, and community voice at the centre. Her contributions to healthy and sustainable urban change were recently recognised in Miami, where the Global Observatory of Healthy and Sustainable Cities, of which she is Co-Director, received the Nobel Sustainability Trust Award for Outstanding Research and Development in Intelligent and Sustainable Urban Solutions.



Erica continues to approach allyship as a learning journey, shaped by relationships, trust, humility, and action. During her time as president of ISBNPA, she helped create space for Indigenous leadership, visibility, and self-determination within the Society, including supporting the establishment and visibility of the Indigenous Working and Research Circle. Being an ally means opening doors, sharing influence, advocating within systems, and supporting Indigenous colleagues to lead in ways that reflect their own knowledge, priorities, and aspirations. In Aotearoa, her work through Te Hotonga Hapori-Connecting Communities research programme and Community Science Aotearoa has focused on culturally responsive, community-led approaches to liveability, wellbeing, and urban change.

She is deeply honoured to be part of the IWRC as an ally and sees this work as one of the most meaningful contributions of her academic and leadership journey.

Be Featured in Our IWRC Member Spotlight

We are creating space in the IWRC Newsletter to highlight the exciting work of IWRC members. We invite you to submit a paragraph (250 words), that describes your project, the community and team, and some of the highlights of the work. We welcome photos, video clips, and or other related art and media. Please send your Spotlight package to the IWRC Circle Keeper Cameron Hare: hare.cameron@queensu.ca for inclusion in the next IWRC Newsletter.

Thank you for reading our inaugural IWRC newsletter!

We warmly invite all ISBNPA members who are interested in Indigenizing Wellbeing research to join our Circle. Please share this newsletter with your colleagues who may be interested in this kind of research.

[Click here to visit the IWRC website](#)

For future contributions, questions, or comments, please contact Circle Keeper, Cameron Hare: hare.cameron@queensu.ca



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