



CAIRHE

CENTER FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND RURAL HEALTH EQUITY



CAIRHE: A NEW PHASE, SAME IMPORTANT MISSION



Alex Adams

It has been more than 10 years since CAIRHE began (in September 2014), and we are now excited to be in Phase 3 of our NIH Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant (*see page 2*). With this new phase we will not only continue to support new and existing projects, but also focus more on dissemination of the work done during Phase 2 (2019–2024).

For example, the Turtle Island Tales family wellness program, led by Emily Tomayko, Ph.D., is now in dissemination and implementation research in partnership with tribal communities in four states: Montana, South Dakota, Oregon, and Wisconsin (*see p. 5*). Anna Whiting Sorrell, Ph.D., newly arrived in the Montana IDEa Community Engagement Core (*see p. 7*), is disseminating her Montana Healthcare Foundation-funded report, *Indigenous Strategic Planning Process for Tribes and Urban Indian Organizations in Montana*, at a variety of meetings throughout the state, culminating in a workshop called Finding Our Joy, to be held June 9-12 in Great Falls. This will be done in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council. This workshop is the culmination of Anna's promise to the tribal communities after her work with them led to the realization that there was much unresolved trauma around the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the successful summit in Aotearoa/New Zealand last spring (*see p. 3*), our climate work continues with the upcoming second Climate Change, Indigenous Knowledge and Planetary Health Summit, to be held on the Blackfeet Reservation and hosted by Blackfeet Community College in June. We are also continuing our partnership with the University of Washington School of Medicine on the GROW-RURAL project (*Fall 2023 Newsletter and p. 4*) to improve hypertension care in rural communities. Our dissemination and implementation work also continues through several projects within the HOPE & CAIRHE 2gether (HC2) center, shared with the University of Utah's Huntsman Cancer Institute and Center for HOPE, including Turtle Island Tales and others set in rural and tribal communities in Montana.

Lastly, the Montana IDEa Community Engagement Core (CEC), shared between CAIRHE and Montana INBRE, has been very busy supporting projects and recently conducted its first MSU-wide training in community engagement in research, called Journeying Together, on January 10. This is part of our CEC work to become a larger MSU-supported core facility.

As CAIRHE continues in COBRE Phase 3, we will sustain our work into the future through additional grants and donor funding. We hope you will join us in our exciting endeavors ahead.

Alexandra Adams, M.D., Ph.D.
Director and Principal Investigator

For Healthy Communities Under the Big Sky

CENTER NEWS

CAIRHE BEGINS FINAL PHASE OF NIH COBRE GRANT, TO RUN THROUGH 2029

In September 2024, at the start of its 11th year of existence, CAIRHE kicked off Phase 3 of its Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health. The five-year grant renewal will run through August 2029.

The renewal followed a year of waiting since CAIRHE staff submitted the large application in September 2023, before receiving an outstanding score of 16 last March that made renewal all but certain.

“We are delighted with the opportunity to pursue five more years of our important work in communities around our state and region with NIH support, while simultaneously finding ways to be sustainable as a center even after this phase of our COBRE funding ends,” said CAIRHE Director **Alex Adams, M.D., Ph.D.**

The Phase 3 grant looks quite different from the previous two periods—most notably in its size: just over \$5.4 million, or half the amount of the Phase 1 and 2 grants that covered equal 5-year spans. Designed primarily to maintain the center’s cores, the Phase 3 grant has no funding for multiyear research projects, although annual support for pilot projects (up to 2 years in duration) will continue.

One important aim for CAIRHE during Phase 3 will be the dissemination and implementation of important research outcomes achieved during the previous decade.

“While our investigators have done a great job of disseminating results to the scientific community, we as a center still have work to do in getting our knowledge and solutions out into the communities where they can have a lasting effect on public health,” Adams said.

Adams has served as director of CAIRHE since January 2016.

CENTER HOSTS HOPE & CAIRHE 2GETHER ANNUAL MEETING AT MSU IN SEPTEMBER

On September 23-24, 2024, CAIRHE hosted the annual meeting of HOPE & CAIRHE 2gether (HC2), the joint center involving partners at the [Center for Health Outcomes and Population Equity](#), or HOPE, at the Huntsman Cancer Institute of the University of Utah.

Funded by a \$9.6 million grant from the National Cancer Institute, HC2 aims to address health in areas struggling with persistent poverty, including populations in Montana and other states (see the *Fall 2023 newsletter*). The grant’s co-principal investigators are **Alex Adams, M.D., Ph.D.**, director of CAIRHE, and **David Wetter, Ph.D.**, senior director of cancer health equity science at the Huntsman Cancer Institute and director

of the Center for HOPE.

“Our annual meeting in Bozeman this year really helped our two teams get to know one another better and share common interests and goals,” Adams said. “After nearly two years of this large center

grant, we are learning how to capitalize on each other’s strengths and outstanding people, and the result has been some very promising work to date.”



HC2 leaders, investigators, and staff pose on the MSU campus in September.

Maya Bronston

HC2 received its initial grant in May 2023. Its Year 3 will begin in May 2025.

At the annual meeting, 19 investigators and staff from the University of Utah traveled to Bozeman and the MSU campus, along with three members of the HC2 Community and Scientific Advisory Board, who traveled from Utah and other states. Eleven faculty and staff from CAIRHE and MSU participated over the two days, which included presentations by research and pilot project leaders, as well as brainstorming sessions for new work to come in cancer control and prevention.

Early-career faculty, postdocs, and graduate students known collectively as “HC2 Scholars” also convened as part of their career development program funded by the grant.

The center published its third request for pilot project applications last fall. Open to any investigators at MSU with research interests in cancer and social determinants of health, this funding opportunity will next be available in Fall 2025.

PALMER RECEIVES FIRST R01 GRANT

Cara Palmer, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Psychology and a former CAIRHE [pilot project leader](#), was awarded her first R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health in September 2024. Her co-PI is Candice Alfano, Ph.D., of the University of Houston.

The \$3.6 million award from the NIH’s National Institute of Mental Health supports a five-year project titled *Developmental Impacts of Sleep on Positive Valence Systems and Socioemotional Functioning during Pre-Adolescence*.

According to Palmer, a pattern of shortened weekday sleep and weekend recovery



Cara Palmer

(Continued on p. 4)

CENTER NEWS

BRIDGING WESTERN SCIENCE AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FOR PLANETARY HEALTH: MY AOTEAROA FULBRIGHT EXPERIENCE, FEBRUARY-MAY 2024

By Alex Adams, M.D., Ph.D.

The Fulbright program was founded by U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright in 1946. One purpose of the Fulbright Act (1961) is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange. As part of the program, competitively selected U.S. citizens, including students, teachers, professionals, scientists, and artists, may receive scholarships to study, conduct research, teach, or exercise their talents abroad, and citizens of other countries may qualify to do the same in the United States.

Generally, Fulbright Scholars are professionals who spend 4 to 6 months in a country. The application process takes 9 to 12 months from applying to a decision, and each country has slightly different processes for selection once you get through the initial application. You also need to have a sponsoring university and faculty sponsor, as well as a significant reason for working in that country.

Overall, my intentions for the Fulbright were: 1) Increase the scientific knowledge base about successful models and methods for incorporating Indigenous knowledge into mainstream health promotion and planning. This will be useful for wellness promotion and climate change adaptation and mitigation planning in U.S. and NZ communities; and 2) Increase connections and ongoing knowledge exchanges between U.S. and NZ Indigenous scholars.

During my time before the Fulbright, several things happened that expanded my initial focus from examining examples of Māori knowledge incorporation into NZ food systems to improve health more toward increasing the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge



Adams (center) poses with other Fulbright faculty and students in Wellington, New Zealand.

into Western climate science. Both intentions were fulfilled but accomplished differently than I initially anticipated. The urgency of the current planetary health crisis and the need to bring Indigenous knowledge and ways into these conversations prompted several changes in my work.

First, my faculty sponsor at the University of Auckland, Dr.

Boyd Swinburn, was finishing his work in Hawke’s Bay more quickly than anticipated, so there was not an opportunity for me to work with him on that project. Second, I was asked by the National Institutes of Health, the National Academy of Medicine, and others to speak about Indigenous knowledge, climate change, and planetary health on several occasions in the six months leading up to the Fulbright. Thus, my Māori colleagues, Dr. Ihi Heke and Paora



The Apumoana Marae in Rotorua was the site of the Summit held in March 2024.

Te Hurihanganui, and I decided to hold the Indigenous Knowledge, Climate Change, and Planetary Health Summit in Aotearoa (NZ) during my Fulbright to not only fulfil my Fulbright goals but also to better understand how we could incorporate Indigenous knowledge into climate change and planetary health conversations with Western scientists.

The Summit was jointly organized by me; Maya Bronston of CAIRHE; Steven Davis, MSU assistant dean of the Honors College and engineering graduate student; and our Māori colleagues. In holding this Summit, we brought together Māori and Native American knowledge keepers, Native language teachers, and both Western and Indigenous scientists from the United States and New Zealand. Formal presentations and immersive outdoor learning in the lands and waters connected participants to our first teachers (in the environment) via transformative conversations.

This successful Summit resulted in several new collaborations and furthered our ongoing collaborations. First, Menominee tribal members who attended the Summit hosted an Indigenous Forestry conference in Wisconsin in June 2024, and Māori forestry colleagues they met at the Summit attended. Second, Steven Davis furthered his work on an Indigenous climate change model. Third, our team presented the findings of the Summit at the International Indigenous and Tribal Climate Change Conference in Alaska in September 2024. Fourth, we are planning a second Summit to be held in conjunction with Blackfeet Community College in June 2025. Several of our Māori colleagues traveled to Montana in June 2024

(See “Fulbright Recap” continued on p. 8)

CENTER NEWS

sleep among youth begins to emerge as early as 8 years of age and has been shown to blunt positive emotional experiences, increasing risk for mental health disorders. Her study aims to provide an understanding of how this sleep pattern produces acute and long-term changes in positive valence systems in both social and non-social contexts during a period of increased reward sensitivity. Results will provide needed insight into sleep's role in psychiatric risk during a period of the lifespan marked by rapid changes in socioemotional functioning.

A full story about Palmer's grant and her work as co-director of the MSU Sleep Research Lab is coming soon from MSU News.

CAIRHE PRESENTS SUCCESSFUL PIRL WORKSHOP IN NOVEMBER, ITS FIFTH

In November CAIRHE and its partners at Arizona State University and the National Institutes of Health hosted 12 investigators from across the United States at Promoting Indigenous Research Leadership, or PIRL, a three-day workshop designed to promote the research careers of Indigenous and other early-career faculty working with Native communities. The workshop was held in Tempe, Ariz., for the second year in a row.

Faculty participants traveled from the East and West coasts, Alaska, the Southwest, and the Midwest to attend the event, held November 18-20 on the ASU campus. Participants assembled each day in campus facilities of the Labriola National American Indian Data Center, located in the ASU Library.

Eight senior mentors from across the country—each with a track record of funding success with the NIH and other agencies—gave presentations on various career and grant-writing topics and engaged in one-on-one and small-group mentoring with the investigators.

CAIRHE Director **Alex Adams**, M.D., Ph.D., CAIRHE External Advisory Committee member **Donald Warne**, M.D., MPH, and ASU's **Angela Gonzales**, Ph.D., again served as the workshop's co-chairs.

"Many who have been involved with PIRL since the beginning felt that this year's workshop was one of our best," Adams said. "The week always ends with so many feelings of positivity and empowerment, with these promising early-career faculty ready to go back to their respective universities and continue their important work."

This year's participating investigators represented 10 different universities, including ASU, the University of Michigan, Washington State University, the University of Alaska-Anchorage, and George Mason University.

The workshop was made possible through generous institutional support from **Alison Harmon**, Ph.D., and the MSU Office of Research and Economic Development; the National Cancer Institute; and ASU. Three NIH program officials—**Shobha Srinivasan** from the National Cancer Institute, and **Kathy Etz** and **Sarah Vidal** from

the National Institute on Drug Abuse—attended and served as presenters and mentors during the event.

"Once again, we couldn't have staged PIRL in the way we did, where investigators have to pay very little to attend, without the support from MSU, NIH, and ASU," Adams said. "It really does



Participants and mentors assembled at PIRL 2024 in sunny Tempe, Ariz.

show how committed MSU and many NIH program officers are to upholding Indigenous researchers and the important work they will be doing in Indigenous communities for the decades to come."

PIRL 2024 was the fifth installment of the workshop presented by CAIRHE. The previous events were held in November 2023 in Tempe, Ariz.; October 2022 in Grand Forks, N.D.; October 2021 in Bozeman; and February 2019 in Bozeman. Plans for the next PIRL will be posted in the first quarter of 2025 on CAIRHE's [PIRL home page](#).

NEWS BRIEFS

CAIRHE and MSU will host the annual meeting of the **Rural PRO-CARE health equity and research network** on April 26-29, 2025. As announced in the Fall 2023 newsletter, the network funded by a \$20 million grant from the American Heart Association is developing and testing technology-based implementation strategies to promote uptake of evidence-based interventions for cardiovascular care within rural practice in the United States.



Marg Hammersla

The University of Washington School of Medicine serves as the coordinating center for the network consisting of five projects across the country.

CAIRHE and Director **Alex Adams**, M.D., Ph.D., serve as research partners on the UW-based study known as GROW-RURAL. **Marg Hammersla**, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Mark and Robyn Jones Col-



CENTER NEWS

lege of Nursing, co-leads Aim 3 of the GROW-RURAL project with Adams.

The annual meeting in April will bring as many as 80 people to Bozeman from the University of Washington, Oregon Health & Science University, Duke Clinical Research Institution, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, and Palo Alto Veterans Institute for Research. Events will begin with a Community-Based Participatory Research workshop on Saturday, April 26, followed by a rural nursing workforce development event led by the Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing on Sunday. The two-day meeting of network partners will take place on Monday and Tuesday, April 28-29.

Venues for the four-day event will include Inspiration Hall in Norm Asbjornson Hall, as well as various rooms in the Strand Union Building. A Sunday evening reception will be held at the Museum of the Rockies.



Elizabeth Shanahan

CAIRHE has welcomed **Elizabeth Shanahan**, Ph.D., and **Mark Quinn**, Ph.D., as the newest members of its Advisory Committee. Shanahan is associate vice president of research development and professor of Political Science at MSU. Quinn is professor of Microbiology, director of the WIMU veterinary medicine program at MSU, and chair of the MSU Institutional Review Board. On October 2, 2024, they joined the rest of the Advisory Committee—existing members **Julie Baldwin**, Ph.D., **Dennis Donovan**, Ph.D., **Donald Warne**, M.D., and **Jack Westfall**, M.D.—for their annual fall meeting in Bozeman.



Mark Quinn

The **Turtle Island Tales** project, led by **Emily Tomayko**, Ph.D., assistant professor in MSU's Department of Food Systems, Nutrition, and Kinesiology and a CAIRHE investigator, with a team of others from CAIRHE, is in the second year of its "reach, adoption, and implementation" work funded by HOPE & CAIRHE 2gether. The project aimed at lowering the risk of cancer in Indigenous populations across four states has



Emily Tomayko

partnered with families and teachers in the Menominee, Warm Springs, Red Cliff, Cheyenne River, and Blackfeet communities. Last fall the team made site visits and completed teacher trainings as part of its goal to move beyond the successful Turtle Island Tales mail-delivered program to implementation in Head Start schools.

CAIRHE has welcomed **new pilot project leaders** for the 2024-25 year. **Elizabeth Johnson**, Ph.D., RN, assistant professor in the Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing, has begun the second



Elizabeth Johnson

and final year of her pilot work at the Phillips County Hospital in Malta, Mont. Her latest project, "Pilot Integration of Virtual Sun, Window at a Critical Access Hospital in Montana," will assess the effects of virtual sunlight and virtual window fixtures on both patient outcomes and provider well-being.

Marg Hammersla, Ph.D., RN, assistant professor in the Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing, has begun a first-year pilot

project titled "Improving Transition to Cancer Survivorship Care through Engagement and Collaboration."

Her study will involve cancer survivors, oncology providers, and primary care providers to improve cancer survivorship care transitions in Montana. **Linying Ji**, Ph.D., assistant professor of Psychology, leads another first-year project, "Sleep of First-year College Students from Rural Areas." Ji's study aims to understand sleep health conditions and explore key barriers and facilitators of sleep health among first-year college students from rural areas who attend MSU.



Linying Ji

CAIRHE has again issued its **annual Request for Proposals** for one-year pilot projects from MSU faculty engaged in community-based public health research. Proposals should be consistent with CAIRHE's mission of reducing health disparities in Indigenous and/or rural communities, and they should have a high likelihood of leading to independent funding from external (non-MSU) sponsors.

Funding usually ranges from \$20,000 to \$40,000 in direct costs for the project year, beginning September 1, 2025. The deadline for a required letter of intent is February 3, 2025, with an application deadline of April 1.

In addition to funding from the National Institutes of Health, being a CAIRHE project leader offers faculty a range of support services from the Center, including mentoring by senior investigators and collaboration with a community of scholars who share similar research interests. For complete details and instructions, visit the [CAIRHE RFP website](#).

Elizabeth Rink, Ph.D., professor of Human Development and Community Health, was named leader of the Fulbright Arctic Initiative, a flagship science diplomacy and cross-cultural exchange program between the Arctic Nations. Rink has worked as a researcher in Greenland for close to 20 years and has conducted research in Finland for the past decade. She was also a scholar in the second Fulbright Arctic Initiative group in



Elizabeth Rink

CENTER NEWS

2018-19 and co-led the third group from 2020-23. She is a former CAIRHE project leader and a current member of its Mentor Council. She recently submitted an R01 renewal application at the end of her first R01 grant that implemented a sexual and reproductive health intervention among youth on the Fort Peck Reservation.

Several CAIRHE investigators, past and present, received **college or university awards and grants during 2024**. ... **Scott Monfort**, Ph.D., associate professor of musculoskeletal biomechanics in the Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Department of the Norm Asbjornson College of Engineering, received the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, part of the Founders Day Faculty Awards presented in Spring 2024. The criteria for the award include superior student mentoring, creative course programming, and exemplary contributions to the teaching profession that include activities that transcend the classroom. He was also part of a team that received an MSU Research Collaborative Grant. ... **Maggie Thorsen**, Ph.D., an associate professor in Sociology and Anthropology, was honored by the College of Letters and Science (CLS) for Excellence in Integration, or demonstration of student engagement in valuable learning processes that integrate teaching, outreach, and research activities. Thorsen was recognized for the collabora-



Scott Monfort



Maggie Thorsen

tive work between her Fall 2023 section of a senior thesis capstone course and the Human Resource Development Council. She designed a semester-long project for the course, charging students with helping HRDC document long-term outcomes for clients who use their services. ... **Kelly Knight**, Ph.D., also an associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, was recognized by CLS in Spring 2024 for Excellence in Teaching that Speaks to MSU's Land Grant Mission. Since she joined the faculty in 2014, Knight has mentored 40 undergraduate students in research or independent studies, including them in all aspects of her research process as she works to better communities, according to her nomination. ... **Cara Palmer**, Ph.D., **Neha John-Henderson**, Ph.D., and **Linying Ji**, Ph.D., all of the Department of Psychology, were part of a team that received an MSU Research Collaborative Grant. ... **Miranda Margetts**, Ph.D., assistant research professor at CAIRHE, is PI of a new grant from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. Margetts also submitted an administrative supplement grant application through CAIRHE that is currently under review. That project, if awarded, would begin this summer and run for one year, building on Margetts's previous work as a CAIRHE pilot and research project leader. The work would inform a future K01 or R01 application involving her study team across the United States. 🌱



Kelly Knight



Miranda Margetts

CAIRHE RESEARCH IN PRINT

Here are select recent publications resulting from CAIRHE-supported research.

Davis, Lauren, Scott, Brandon, Linse, GM, & Buchanan, R. [From Surviving to Thriving: A Trauma-Informed Yoga Intervention for Adolescents and Educators in Rural Montana](#). *Education Sciences*. 2024; 14(12).



Knight, Kelly, Ellis, Colter, Miller, T, Neu, J, & Helfrich, L. [Does Where You Work and What You Do Matter? Testing the Role of Organizational Context and Job Type for Future Study of Occupation-Based Secondary Trauma Intervention Development](#). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 2024; 39(7-8):1623-1648.



Webber, Eliza, Bishop, S, Drain, PK, ... **Warne, Teresa**, ... & **Adams, Alexandra**. [Critical lessons from a pragmatic randomized](#)

[trial of home-based COVID-19 testing in rural Native American and Latino communities](#). *Journal of Rural Health*. 2024; Sept. 40(4):709-719.

Drain, PK, **Adams, Alexandra**, Kessler, L, & Thompson, M. [A Call to Improve Usability, Accuracy, and Equity of Self-Testing for COVID-19 and Other Rapid Diagnostic Tests](#). *Health Equity*. 2023; 7(1):731-734.



John-Henderson, Neha, & Ginty, AT. [Profiles of historical loss and childhood trauma as predictors of mental and cardiometabolic health in American Indian adults](#). *SSM—Mental Health*. 2023; Dec. 4:100252.



Alvarado, G, Hilton, A, Montenegro, A, & **Palmer, Cara**. [Passing on the Zzz's: Adolescent sleep attitudes are associated with sleep behaviors and parental prioritization of sleep](#). *Sleep Health*. 2024; Jun. 10(3):286-290.

PEOPLE

THREE FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH CAIRHE ACCEPT PRESTIGIOUS NIH APPOINTMENTS

In early 2025, three MSU faculty tied to CAIRHE—including Director **Alex Adams**, M.D., Ph.D.—have accepted full-time or advisory roles at the National Institutes of Health.

On January 13 Adams received a letter of invitation from outgoing U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra to serve on the Advisory Committee to the Director of NIH. The prestigious appointment is for up to four years as one of 20 appointed members on the Committee. The Committee provides advice to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Assistant Secretary for Health, and the Director of NIH on matters related to planning, execution, conduct, support, and evaluation of biomedical research, medical science, and biomedical communications.

The Committee also makes recommendations concerning program development, resource allocation, NIH administrative regulation and policy, and other specific or general aspects of NIH policy. Adams will travel to Bethesda, Md., on average three times per year for Committee meetings.

Appointees are described as “authorities who are knowledgeable in the fields of research pertinent to the NIH mission.”

Meanwhile, **Vernon Grant**, Ph.D., previously a full-time assistant research professor at CAIRHE, has accepted a new position as tribal health research strategic coordinator at the NIH and its National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS). Although the new job is full time, he will continue to reside in Montana and maintain his faculty association with MSU and CAIRHE.

Grant will have responsibility for providing scientific leadership and direction to the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of tribal health research supported by NIGMS. This will include developing priorities and goals, as well as strategic collaboration with closely aligned programs across the NIH and other Federal agencies. He will also be responsible for “formulating, planning, directing, and evaluating broad NIH-wide or trans-Institute program objectives, policies, and activities for a portfolio of nationally recognized tribal health research projects, research programs and other grants/awards, cooperative agreements, and/or contracts, including the discovery, development, and evaluation of scientific areas critical for eventual prevention and therapeutic strategies.”



Kaylin Greene

Finally, **Kaylin Greene**, Ph.D., former associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and a former CAIRHE project leader, has accepted a new position as an epidemiology program manager at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at NIH. She left MSU in early Janu-

ary but will remain in Bozeman to work remotely for NIDA.

In her new position Greene will work on the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study, a nationally representative longitudinal study of tobacco use and health in the United States led by NIDA and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

WELCOME TO CAIRHE:

Anna Whiting Sorrell, Ph.D., has joined CAIRHE as assistant research professor, while also serving as a community research associate in the Montana IDeA Community Engagement Core. In May 2024 Whiting Sorrell was the first graduate of MSU's Doctor of Philosophy in Indigenous and Rural Health program. Over her distinguished career, she has served in multiple prominent public



Anna Whiting Sorrell

health leadership roles at the tribal, state, and national levels. She is an enrolled member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

A special report outlining outcomes from her dissertation research, titled *Indigenous Strategic Planning Process for Tribes and Urban Indian Organizations in Montana*, is now posted on the [Core's website](#).



Julie Gameon, Ph.D., joined CAIRHE in September as assistant research professor. Previously she was a research scientist at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, and before that an MSU doctoral advisee of **Monica Skewes**, Ph.D. She is also a 2023 alumna of the Promoting Indigenous Research Leadership (PIRL) workshop presented by CAIRHE.

Before her move to MSU, Gameon received a K01 grant from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, which she is now in the process of transferring to MSU. That grant (K01MD019282) will provide her with mentoring and training toward a successful career in health equity research with Indigenous populations. Her research addresses the negative health effects associated with grief among Indigenous communities. 🌱



Julie Gameon

DID YOU KNOW ?

To date, former CAIRHE project leaders have been awarded a total of **6 R01 grants** from the National Institutes of Health—including the first 4 in CBPR ever awarded at MSU.

THE LAST WORD

("Fulbright Recap" continued from p. 3)

to begin Summit planning with Blackfeet Community College and Montana State University. Fifth, as we filmed all the Summit talks and filmed six interviews with knowledge keepers and scholars, we are working to create an educational platform that can be used to teach others.

After organizing and convening this weeklong summit at the Apumoana Marae in Rotorua in March, I spent the remainder of the Fulbright attending several Māori food sovereignty and health conferences, as well as participating in multiple Atua Matua (Indigenous knowledge and health) trainings by Dr. Heke in various marae around New Zealand. I also met with multiple Māori and non-Māori academics working in the field of climate change and health. I spoke at the University of Otago, the University of Auckland, and at several marae.

The Fulbright was an amazingly rewarding personal experience. I visited or stayed in five different marae and stayed in the cities of Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, Rotorua, and Tauranga, as well as several very rural areas outside of major urban areas for various trainings and meetings. I attended multiple meetings, where I met many different people and was able to share stories and cultural knowledge. I interacted with multiple different iwi (tribal) communities and participated in multiple Māori ceremonies, including the Māori king's visit to Kawhia. I became much more comfortable with te reo Māori, maturanga Māori, and the overall Māori and Pākehā culture of New Zealand.

Some adaptations included getting used to using public trans-

portation as my major method of getting around Auckland and the north island; managing the various Airbnb stays; managing New Zealand currency and banking; and using medical care at one point. In general, these were relatively simple once I got the hang of it, and it all became easier each month. It took a while getting used to the overall culture of summer in Auckland vs. living in Montana, where our culture revolves around winter; so physically that was challenging at first and then I loved it, especially that I experienced two seasons and feijoa season! It was also not an experience of "settling in," as I stayed in 14 different places in 4 months, but it was enriching and productive.

Getting used to that flow and living out of a suitcase was new—even for someone who travels a lot for work. I have made many great new friends and colleagues and solidified my major collaborations with my prior colleagues in New Zealand, and I am eager to continue our collaborative work. 🌻



Blackfeet Elder Darnell Rides at the Door presents at the Summit.

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