

2015-2016

# Highlights Report

Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research



**Arctic Institute of  
Community-Based Research**  
*For Northern Health and Well-Being*

*A unique northern organization working to improve community health and wellbeing in Canada's North through partnerships, collaboration and the co-production of knowledge and relevant solutions.*

Our priorities are:

- Food Security & Food Sovereignty
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Youth Engagement & Mental Health
- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Climate Change Adaptation

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Community-Based Research**  
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- Kluane First Nation
- Selkirk First Nation

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For more information, please visit our website: [www.aicbr.ca](http://www.aicbr.ca)

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## Message from our Co-Directors

### Welcome!

Welcome to our Highlights Report for 2015 and the first half of 2016. We're very pleased to share our activities, and to gratefully acknowledge our partners and our funders. As you'll see, we've been busy and productive!

This past year has seen a change as we've moved to a co-directorship approach, which is working very well. Our team has also been strengthened with the addition of a research and communications coordinator.

We would be pleased to answer any questions you may have about our activities described in this Report, and as always, we welcome new partnership opportunities!

### Home Improvements: A New Sign!

AICBR has a new addition to our home: a new sign! We are proud to boast this beautiful piece of art outside of our office.



## Our Team



**Jody Butler Walker**

Co-Founder & Co-Director



**Norma Kassi**

Co-Founder &  
Director of Indigenous Collaboration



**Katelyn Friendship**

Co-Director



**Marilyn Van Bibber**

Research Associate



**Molly Pratt**

Research & Communications  
Coordinator



**Beverley Baker**

Bookkeeper

## AICBR's Board of Directors *(as at June 2016)*

- **Jennifer Jones**, Chair (2015-present)
- **Ron Pearson**, Co-Chair (2007-2016)
- **Shyloh Van Delft**, Youth Rep (2015-present)
- **Brenda Reeves**, Secretary-Treasurer (2015-present)
- **Jennifer Daniels** (2012-2016)
- **Daphne Pelletier-Vernier** (2014-present)
- **David Hik** (2014-present)
- **Chris Hawkins** (2012 -2016)
- **Alison Perrin** (2015-present)



February 2015 Board Meeting (from left to right): Katelyn Friendship (AICBR), Ron Pearson, David Hik, Jody Butler Walker, Felicia Bailey-Cashin (2012-2015), Dennis Zimmerman (2014-2015), Heidi Swanson (University of Waterloo), Ellorie McKnight (University of Alberta), Jennifer Jones, Norma Kassi (AICBR), Jennifer Daniels, Kim Solonick (2014-2015).

### Thank you!!

We would like to give special acknowledgement to our longest standing Board member, **Ron Pearson**, and to our outgoing Board members **Jennifer Daniels** and **Chris Hawkins**. Thank you for your ongoing support and important contributions to our organization!

## Organization Background

The Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research was co-founded as a non-profit organization by Jody Butler Walker and Norma Kassi in 2007, and has continued to grow since then.

We work with northern Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, non-governmental organizations, governments (Indigenous, Territorial, Federal), academics, graduate students, research organizations, and the private sector.

We are a unique northern organization working to improve community health and wellbeing in Canada's North through partnerships, collaboration, and the co-production of knowledge and relevant solutions.

## Vision

Our **vision** is the meaningful engagement of northerners in health, natural, and social science research focused on northern priorities, with results contributing to all northerners living healthy lives.

## Mission

Our **mission** is to facilitate, promote and conduct community-based, northern-led research aimed at improving the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous northerners and the health of northern environments.



## Research Approach

AICBR focuses on ensuring good research practices and gives priority to the following:

- Adhering to principles of Community-Based Research
- Participatory Evaluation
- Community Capacity Building
- Knowledge Exchange and Mobilization
- Ongoing Partnership Development
- Inter-sectoral Collaboration
- Collective Impact

## Current Priorities

- Food Security and Food Sovereignty
  - Strategy Development
  - Climate Change
- Healthy Lifestyles
  - Active Living
  - Healthy Eating
  - Literacy
- Youth Engagement and Mental Health
- Chronic Disease Prevention





## Research Approach

Based on consultations with participants at an AICBR conference held in 2012, the following principles of community-based research were adapted for the Yukon context and then adopted by AICBR.

- Community members and researchers work together in all stages of projects.
- Community members/research participants are actively involved in decisions about the research process from the beginning; and the process is responsive to cultural and community values.
- The research process strives for consensus and enables participation of all people.
- The relationship between researchers and community members is built on respect, trust, and learning with and from each other.
- The research project lays the ground for the exchange of knowledge, skills, resources, and ownership between stakeholders and within a mutual agreement.
- Those involved in the research project have the responsibility to provide reciprocity.
- The research process builds the capacity of community people to participate in and use the knowledge produced by the research.
- There is continuous discussion/verification of data between all partners in order to generate meaningful, useful, and accessible results to inform community actions.
- The research benefits and serves the community directly and addresses their interests and needs.
- Research builds on and contributes to the strengths and resources of the community.
- Health is addressed from positive, ecological and cultural beliefs and values.

## Key Partners

AICBR has been fortunate to partner with multiple Indigenous governments and communities, territorial organizations, national organizations and international organizations over the past 9 years. For 2015-2016, key project partners include:

- Kluane First Nation, Burwash Landing YT
- Boys & Girls Club of Yukon
- BYTE-Empowering Youth
- Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon
- Yukon Research Centre
- Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch
- Yukon Government-Community Services (Sport & Recreation Branch)
- Yukon Government-Education
- Yukon Government-Health & Social Services
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (Regional Dietitian)
- Ecology North
- Northern Nutrition Association
- NWT Recreation and Parks Association
- Side Door Youth Centre (Yellowknife)
- Yellowknife Farmers Market
- Government of Northwest Territories-Municipal and Community Affairs
- Government of Northwest Territories-Health & Social Services
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Ottawa
- University of Toronto, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Esri Canada
- Grassroots Enterprises / Campus for Communities
- Northern Roots
- Arctic Food Security & Nutrition Network
- Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security
- Community-Based Research Canada Food Secure Canada
- Food Secure Canada
- Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation
- Selkirk First Nation, Pelly Crossing YT
- Volunteer Yukon Bureau
- Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition
- Yukon Literacy Coalition
- University of Waterloo
- University of Western Ontario

# Key Funders



Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada



Health  
Canada

Santé  
Canada

# Canada

# Yukon

Health and Social Services

## Growing Forward 2

A federal-provincial-territorial initiative



Community  
Development  
Fund

Fonds de  
développement  
communautaire

# Yukon

Economic Development  
Développement économique



## Graduate Students

### Ashley Bray



Ashley worked with AICBR from January-April 2016. She completed the healthy eating program gap analyses for our Healthy Living Inventory, as well as contributed to office operations and the planning of a community gardener gathering. Ashley has recently completed her Master of Public Health Community Nutrition Degree from the University of Toronto. Ashley is interested in disease prevention, food security, and enabling people to make informed decisions about their health.

### Kathryn Estey



Kathryn Estey recently completed her Masters of Public Health at the University of Toronto, in the specific stream of Social and Behavioural Health Sciences with a Global Health emphasis. Kathryn contributed to our “Working Together to Achieve Healthier Lifestyles in Yukon and Northwest Territories Communities” project by completing a literature review on sustainability, as well as an evaluation of Yukon Health Research priorities.

### Ainslie Cruikshank



Ainslie is a graduate student in the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. During the summer of 2015, she worked with AICBR and Kluane First Nation on a Community Food Sharing project. . The project followed up on actions identified in Kluane First Nation's food security strategy to strengthen community food sharing.

## Projects & Activities

### Working Together to Achieve Healthier Lifestyles in Yukon & Northwest Territories' Communities

**Funder:** Public Health Agency of Canada

**Timeline:** 2013-2017

**Key Objectives:**

- Northerners in YT and NWT communities follow healthier lifestyles.
- Communities, organizations, government departments and businesses in YT and NWT work in partnership to foster healthier lifestyles in communities.

**Guiding Principles:**

- Health Equity
- Inter-sectoral Collaboration
- Community Driven
- Strength and Asset-Based
- Culturally-Relevant

**Pillars:**

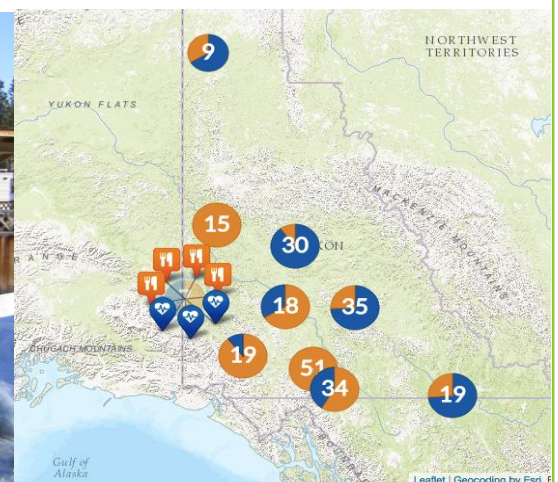
- Active Living
- Healthy Eating
- Literacy

**Approach:**

This initiative involves identifying ways to support, promote and facilitate healthier lifestyles in communities, through the strengthening of partnerships between organizations, governments, and communities. We are particularly interested in sustainability and are working with others to understand the factors that contribute to maintaining lasting long-term outcomes in our communities. As lead and support for the project, AICBR is following a Collective Impact approach, working with those who share a common agenda and offer mutually reinforcing activities, and is facilitating ongoing communication between partners.

## Project Highlights:

- Increased healthy eating and active living behaviours by supporting **programs** such as Yukon-based “Kids in the Kitchen”, “Walk the Peel”, Selkirk First Nation family cooking classes, and the E’Sah Summer Project in Ross River.
- A baseline inventory of active living and healthy eating programs for Yukon and Northwest Territories was completed and integrated into a **Healthy Living Inventory** and Mapping Tool. ([www.aicbr.ca](http://www.aicbr.ca))
- **Community Gardening Gatherings** in both Yukon and Northwest Territories.
  - Working Together to Grow More: Yukon Community Garden Gathering (2014)
  - Working Together to Grow More 2: Community Gardeners & Economic Development Gathering (2015)
  - Working Together to Grow More 3: Community Garden Gathering (2016)
  - Ecology North Fall Harvest Fair and North Slave Community Gardening Gathering (2015)
- Co-facilitation of **Food Network Yukon** bi-monthly meetings.
- Support to the development of a **Yellowknife Food Charter**.
- Increased connectivity and **collaboration** between multiple sectors.
- Increased understanding of factors of **sustainability** and **scalability** of successful health interventions through a community-based research lens and in a rural, remote, Northern context.
  - Case Study: Success Stories from Ndilo and Dettah How School Gardens and Community Gardens are Growing Healthier Communities
  - Case Study: Kids in the Kitchen
  - Case Study: Weekday Warriors After-School Program
  - Case Study: Growing Together at Weledeh: Weledeh School Garden Program



## Projects & Activities

### **Kluane First Nation: Nourishing Our Future: Building on Kluane First Nations Community Food Security Strategy & Youth Engagement in Traditions related to Fisheries and Fish Health in Kluane Lake (2015-2016)**

#### **Funders:**

Dän Keyi Renewable Resource Council; Yukon Fish & Wildlife Enhancement Trust; Northern Contaminants Program, University of Waterloo (2015-2016)

\*AICBR was contracted by Kluane First Nation to complete this project in partnership with them.

**Timeline:** 2015-2016

#### **Key Objectives:**

- To engage youth in local fishing practices and discussion to ensure long-term capacity for stewardship of local fishery resources
- To assess levels of contaminant concentrations and nutrients in commonly consumed fish in Kluane Lake
- To understand local observations of changes in quality, quantity and fish health
- To ensure Traditional Knowledge of fishing locations, seasons, methods, and preparation be passed from Elders to youth
- To enable understanding of Elders, youth, and community members regarding where contaminants in fish come from, how they can build up in fish, and what the benefits and potential risks and of eating fish are
- To discuss potential climate change impacts affecting access to local traditional foods
- To build capacity of local Yukon students and community members in western science research practices, such as analysis of fish age and growth, including first-hand lab analysis experience
- To promote consumption of locally harvested traditional foods, including fish

**Approach:**

For many years, Kluane First Nation has not been able to harvest any salmon from their waters. Kluane Lake is the largest lake contained entirely in the Yukon and fish from its waters make up an important part of the health, culture and lifestyle of KFN people. Recently, concerns about contamination of Kluane Lake fish were raised in the community and many changes have been noticed in the health and quality of the fish. The overall goal of this project was to understand levels of contaminants in fish from Kluane Lake and reassure and promote the importance of consuming traditional foods. Part of this research project included conducting interviews with KFN citizens as well as with others in the community about local observations of changes in quality, quantity and fish health and any concerns about contaminants in traditional foods. The project assessed the nutrient values (omega-3 fatty acids, selenium and zinc) as well as contaminant levels (mercury, organochlorine pesticides, trace metals) in Lake Trout and Lake Whitefish in Kluane Lake. The study helps to answer questions raised within the KFN community and provides a better understanding of local perceptions about nutrients and contaminants levels in the lake and in traditional food sources and hopes to bring a renewed understanding and reinforcement, especially for the young people, about the importance of protection and long-term stewardship of the local fishery.

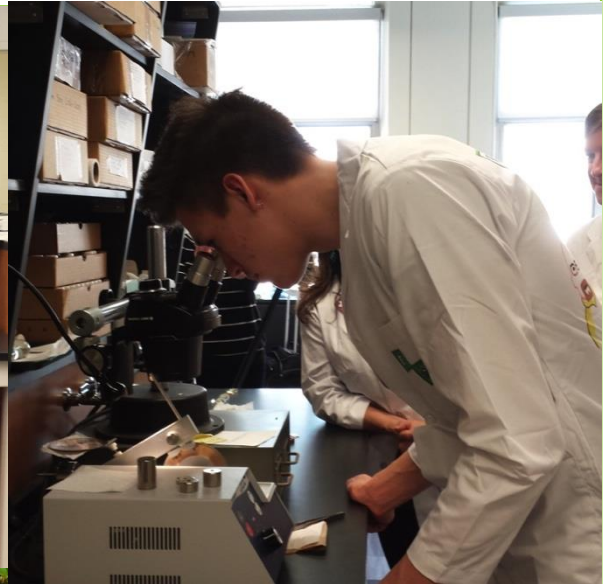
This project is a partnership among Kluane First Nation, Dän Keyi Renewable Resources Council, Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research, and University of Waterloo. It combines the principles of community-based and scientific research with Indigenous traditional knowledge. A local Advisory Committee was established and the Chief, Executive Council and the Elder's Council were kept informed throughout and were able to offer their guidance and verify the results.

**Outputs:**

- Community Report
- Contaminant & Nutrient Results
- Poster presentation:  
Contaminants, nutrients and the traditional value of food fishes in Kluane Lake, Yukon Territory
- Photovoice slideshow
- *Nourishing Our Future* DVD







## Projects & Activities

### **Selkirk First Nation: Keeping Our Traditions for the Health and Wellbeing of Future Selkirk First Nation Generations: “What do we do at the fish camp when there are no fish?”**

**Funder:** Health Canada-Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program for Northern First Nations and Inuit Communities

\*AICBR was contracted by Selkirk First Nation to complete this project in partnership.

**Timeline:** 2015-2016

#### **Key Objectives:**

The goal of this project was to seek community strategies for keeping Selkirk First Nation traditions and practices while adapting to climate change. The strategies that were developed were built upon the priorities of the First Nation to revitalize their connection to the land and traditions for the benefit of the community and youth.

- Engage community members to collectively address issues of climate change
- Build capacity for youth in understanding climate change and conducting research
- Build relationships and cohesion between community members centered on sharing ideas and spending time together
- Presentation of youth perspectives on mental wellness through photographs
- Compile community strategies on “what to do at the fish camp when there are no fish”
- Community adaptation plan for climate change and the role of fish camps in youth mental health
- Increase understanding climate change and health from a regional, Northern perspective

#### **Approach:**

This project was a joint partnership between Selkirk First Nation and AICBR. It used a mixed methods approach of community-based participatory research and Indigenous methodologies; this meant that the community was intimately involved in every stage of project development from planning the research questions, implementing research activities and analyzing and approving the data. The researchers from AICBR worked closely with the local Advisory Committee on ensuring all activities were designed with community needs in mind and were carried out in the most ethical and culturally appropriate manner; this ensured relevancy of findings and community ownership over the research process.

**Outputs:**

- Literature review on climate change and mental health of Indigenous youth in Northern Canada
- Community climate change adaptation report, titled: "Adapting to Climate Change and Keeping Our Traditions"
- A fish camp guidebook, titled: "Keeping Our Traditions at the Fish Camps: Our Ancestors' Gift to Our Youth"



## Yukon Food Security Roundtable

**Funder:** Public Health Agency of Canada; Yukon Government: Community Development Fund; Yukon Government: Health Investment Fund, Sponsor: Air North

**Timeline:** 2016

### Key Objectives:

- To bring people together across various sectors to increase awareness about food insecurity issues, share current food security-related activities, identify factors that limit or facilitate food access and availability for Yukon residents, and strengthen existing food networks
- To use results of Roundtable to feed into a larger pan-Northern event in 2017
- To contribute to a more comprehensive Northern picture of food security as part of the emerging National Food Policy that the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-foods has been mandated to develop

### Approach:

AICBR hosted three food security events May 18th - 19th, 2016: a Yukon Food Security Roundtable, an Evening on Food Security, and a Food Security Open House. The **Yukon Food Security Roundtable** was an opportunity for delegates from multiple sectors across the territory to come together to share current food security-related activities, identify factors that limit or facilitate food access and availability for Yukon residents, and to prioritize next steps. The roundtable welcomed participation from 79 delegates from across the territory, including representation from 16 Yukon communities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous government and non-government officials, non-profit sector, academics, food producers, and concerned citizens, as well as federal government and non-government representatives. On the final afternoon, AICBR opened up the Roundtable space to the public, with an **Open House**. Here, members of the public were encouraged to share their voice and experiences on the topic of food security. The **Evening on Food Security** was hosted with support from the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation. Four speakers from across Canada and Alaska shared their work related to food security at this very well attended event.

## Outcomes:

A vision statement and ranked priorities and values for a food secure Yukon were developed out of roundtable discussions. Each person at the table answered the questions, what does food security look like for me and my family, my community, and my territory? These answers were then compiled, analyzed and synthesized into a vision statement and 15 values and priorities. Participants were then asked rank the 15 values/priorities into 1st, 2nd and 3rd most important to them.

### ...ENSURING THE NORTH CAN PROVIDE FOOD FOR THE NORTH

*We believe in a food secure, food producing and food sharing Yukon where the land and the waters are harvested and protected. Through the wise use of resources, every person has dignified, affordable access to sufficient food to sustain a healthy, happy, and productive life. Yukon leaders and citizens work collaboratively to ensure food is generated by a robust network of local gardeners, farmers, hobby growers, hunters and fishers, businesses and advanced systems that preserve and distribute food.*

1. Access for All
2. Self Sufficiency
3. Support for Local Food Producers
4. Addressing Planning and Policy Development
5. Encouraging Community Gardens and Greenhouses
6. Reducing Waste
7. Emphasizing Healthy Food
8. Education and Training
9. Promoting Quality Food Preparation, Preservation and Storage
10. Collaborating to Share Food and Time
11. Harvesting the Land
12. Affordability
13. Building Leadership Capacity
14. Engaging Family
15. Consideration of Promising Practices

See also: <http://www.aicbr.ca/outcomes> for more outcomes of this initiative!





## Workshops & Conferences

### **Community-University Partnerships Expo** (presentation) Ottawa, ON May 2015

- Working Together to Achieve Healthier Lifestyles in Yukon and Northwest Territories' Communities

### **International Congress on Circumpolar Health** (presentations, posters) Oulu, Finland June 2015

- Together for Healthier Lifestyles: Collaboration with multiple sectors in Northern Canada linked to healthy eating, active living, and health literacy.
- Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

### **Science Community of Practice (SCOPE)** (presentations, posters) Whitehorse, YT September 2015

- Together for Healthier Lifestyles: Collaboration with multiple sectors in Northern Canada linked to healthy eating, active living, and health literacy.
- Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

### **North Slave Community Gardener Workshop** (presentation) Ndilo, Northwest Territories September 2015

- Working Together to Grow More Yukon Community Gardening Gatherings

### **Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon Gathering** (presentation) Marsh Lake, YT October 2015

- Healthy Living Inventory

### **Northwest Territories Recreation & Parks Association Conference** (presentation) Fort Simpson, NWT October 2015

- Healthy Living Inventory

### **NRCAN Pan Territorial Climate Change Adaptation Workshop** (poster) Whitehorse, YT October 2015

- Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

### **Creating Common Ground: The Community Mapping National Summit** (presentations) Montreal, Qc November 2015

- Keeping Our Traditions: The role of maps in Indigenous Traditional Practices
- Healthy Living Inventory

**CoPEH Canada Ecohealth in Action Webalogue: Exciting Intersections for Ecohealth in Action: Northern remote communities + youth + new ways of engaging** (webinar presentation)

November 2015

-Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

**Northern Land-Use Planning Conference** (presentation) Whitehorse, YT February 2016

-Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

**Integrated Chronic Disease Prevention: The Value Proposition, CDPAC Pan-Canadian Conference** (presentation) Toronto, ON February 2016.

- Working Together to Achieve Healthier Lifestyles in Yukon and Northwest Territories' Communities

**Alaska Food Policy Council Conference** (presentation) Anchorage AK February 2016

- Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

**Indigenous Health Conference** (presentations) Toronto ON May 2016

- Working Together to Achieve Healthier Lifestyles in Yukon and Northwest Territories' Communities
- Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory
- Keeping Our Traditions for the Health & Wellbeing of Future Selkirk First Nation Generations: "What do we do at fish camp when there is no fish?"

## Publications

Butler Walker, J., Kassi, N., Van Bibber, M., Friendship, K. 2016. Case Study 1. Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research. In Tandon, R., Hall, B., Lepore, W. & Singh, W. (Eds) *Building Capacity for the Next Generation of Community-Based Researchers*. Canada: University of Victoria and PRIA.





## Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our funders, partners, board members, and colleagues for the ongoing support and contribution to our organization.

AICBR has been very productive over the last nine years, and we are looking forward to continuing our work on healthy lifestyles, food security, climate change, youth and mental health, in addition to other exciting projects and opportunities that arise in the near future.

AICBR continues to seek funding for all aspects of the organization's growth and development.

By working together, we can all contribute to the health and wellbeing of people living in the Canadian North.





## Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research

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