

Full name(s) of VIU faculty involved in the project and their Department(s): Alison Taplay, Education Assistant and Community Support Program, HHS

Contact person email: alison.taplay@viu.ca

Award: Engage Grant

Number of undergraduate student(s) involved: one

Number of graduate student(s) involved: n/a

Number of community partner(s) involved: one

Abstract for the project:

This project will increase culturally safe and appropriate supports and services for Indigenous children and their families by increasing awareness and understanding of Settler and Indigenous cultural and historical perspectives on child developmental and intellectual disabilities. The project includes a workshop for Tla'Amin Elders, child care providers, and caregivers with guest speaker Alison Gerlach, followed by a World Café. The World Café design principles are adaptable to the local situation and culture and are congruent with Indigenous research methods. This method creates generative dialogue, mutual learning, and results in a practical action plan. The findings and recommendations from the World Café will be shared with leaders, caregivers, and citizens and thereby will inform and improve supports and services to children with disabilities in the qathet regional district. Inspired by Vancouver Island University student, Courtney Harrop's vision for social change, this project continues and deepens the partnership between Vancouver Island University and the Tla'Amin Nation and contributes to the community's journey toward truth and reconciliation. The project name, tiwšamstawłšt, is a word in ayajuthem which, loosely translated, means we will teach each other. It reflects the values that inform the project and that are embedded in Vancouver Island University's commitment to the scholarship of engagement.

Engage Grant Proposal

tiwšamstawłšt

We Will Teach Each Other

Alison Taplay assisted by Courtney Harrop

Vancouver Island University

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Abstract

This project will increase culturally safe and appropriate supports and services for Indigenous children and their families by increasing awareness and understanding of Settler and Indigenous cultural and historical perspectives on child developmental and intellectual disabilities. The project includes a workshop for Tla’Amin Elders, child care providers, and caregivers with guest speaker Alison Gerlach, followed by a World Café. The World Café design principles are adaptable to the local situation and culture and are congruent with Indigenous research methods. This method creates generative dialogue, mutual learning, and results in a practical action plan. The findings and recommendations from the World Café will be shared with leaders, caregivers, and citizens and thereby will inform and improve supports and services to children with disabilities in the qathet regional district. Inspired by Vancouver Island University student, Courtney Harrop’s vision for social change, this project continues and deepens the partnership between Vancouver Island University and the Tla’Amin Nation and contributes to the community’s journey toward truth and reconciliation. The project name, tiwšamstawłšt, is a word in ayajuthem which, loosely translated, means we will teach each other. It reflects the values that inform the project and that are embedded in Vancouver Island University’s commitment to the scholarship of engagement.

Project Description

The scholarship of engagement, or the use of scholarship to understand and solve pressing social, civic and ethical problems is critical to VIU's special purpose mandate (VIU, 2017, p. 4). Consistent with VIU's strategic plan for scholarship, this project, tiwšamstawłšt, which loosely translates as, *we will teach each other*, was initiated by our undergraduate student, Courtney Harrop. As partial completion of the Leadership and Disability Studies diploma (LDS), Courtney articulated a vision for effective and culturally safe services and supports for Indigenous children and then developed a community engaged project with a research component to advance that vision. She evolved a two phase project to raise awareness and generate dialogue about the world views of Indigenous children and Elders. Her proposed events are a workshop for Tla'Amin Elders, child care providers, and caregivers with guest speaker Alison Gerlach, followed by a World Café responding to the research question: how might a greater awareness and understanding of both Settler and Indigenous cultural and historical perspectives on child developmental and intellectual disabilities inform or improve current support to children with these disabilities through a collaboration between Tla'Amin elders and caregivers?

Opportunity and Significance

Employed with the Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program for Tla'amin, Courtney's ideas align with VIU's interest in equity, diversity and social justice and will generate dialogue about reciprocity and reconciliation as identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, specifically in regard to how children with disabilities are supported. Rose Adams, the Manager of the Tla'amin Child Development Center and a valued VIU partner wants this project go forward. However, the scope and complexity of

the project exceed the requirements and support available for the completion of the LDS diploma through a directed study.

This grant provides a vehicle to establish a robust team to ensure appropriate attention to process and Indigenous research approaches is provided by VIU and by Tla'amin. The grant strengthens relationships between the university and the nation as well as among the settler and Indigenous professionals and caregivers concerned about supports for children with disabilities. This investment will stimulate new insights to inform practice in the area of disability supports for children.

Literature Scan

Literature relevant to this project documents the history of injustice that resulted in a larger representation of Indigenous children with disabilities in care often due to lack of services in their home community. These children are invisible in the system limiting information that could help inform culturally safe services and supports (Ball, 2008; Leitch, 2007). As well Indigenous children often receive early childhood education from non-Indigenous professionals. Gerlach (2018) noted that perspectives on disability that inform current practice seldom take into account the impacts of colonization on the health and well-being of Indigenous families and children. She documented the profound impact of the related structural inequities and goes on to recommend ways forward including decolonizing research methodologies. By following an Indigenous research agenda, this project seeks to build capacity and healing, and bridge community development with reconciliation ((Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).

Method

tiwšamstawłšt is a qualitative, cross sectional study taking an inductive approach that relies on grounded theory (Bryman, Bell and Teevan ,2012). Research participants are Tla'amin

elders, and caregivers of children with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Data will be collected at a World Cafe, hosted after a presentation by guest speaker, Alison Gerlach. Utilizing the design principles developed by Brown and Isaacs (2005), the method is aligned with Indigenous culture as it provides some structure but not too much. According to Steier, Brown and da Silva (2015), “the practice of the World Café rests on (1) a flexibility for adaptations to local situations and local knowledge, and (2) an ongoing conversation, for researcher-practitioners between design principles and local practices” (p. 214). Design principles include: set the context, create hospitable space, explore questions that matter, encourage everyone’s contribution, cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives, listen together for patterns, insights and deeper questions, harvest and share collective discoveries. For this project, an emphasis on creating safe space will include cultural components like cedar boughs on tables and providing a brushing at the end of the event as well as ensuring the availability of counseling services. Data will be recorded on flip chart paper and a graphic recorder will also capture the shared conversations, and group harvest of ideas on a larger wall chart. A project timeline is provided as Appendix A which also includes the project’s steps to mobilize knowledge.

Anticipated Outcomes and Impact

This project will generate dialogue about historical and current Indigenous perspectives about children with disabilities so that caregivers and community members can apply the collective wisdom to advance changes that result in more culturally safe and appropriate ways of providing disability supports. Anchored in respect, relationship building and dialogue, we anticipate emerging outcomes beyond the findings and recommendations of this project because of the potential for transformative learning.

Budget

Item	Detail	Amount	Contributed By Community Partner	Requested
Student Wages (Courtney Harrop)	\$25/hr. x 30 hours	\$750	\$375	\$375
Community Partner Wages (Rose Adams)	\$50/hr. x 20 hours	\$1000	\$1000	0
Community Partner Wages (Janet Newbury)	\$50/hr. x 20 hours	\$1000	0	\$1000
Meeting Space	Tla'amin Salish Centre	\$250	\$250	0
Participant Lunch	Up to 30 participants x \$15	\$450	\$225	\$225
Supplies	Flip chart paper, markers, handouts, photocopying	\$100	\$100	0
Graphic Recording	Wayne Hanson	\$800	\$400	\$400
Total		\$4350	\$2350	\$2000

Budget Note: Tla'amin Child Development Center is providing the budget for the Alison Gerlach workshop.

Research Project Team

“Great things happen when inquisitive minds come together” (VIU, 2017, p. 8). The research team will include Courtney Harrop, Alison Taplay, Janet Newbury, Rose Adams, and Wayne Hanson. In addition, the team will consult with Alison Gerlach.

Courtney Harrop, Student

Courtney has a certificate in Education Assistant and Community Support from Vancouver Island University and is currently completing the Leadership and Disability Studies program through a directed study at VIU. Courtney is passionate about trauma informed practice, social justice, decolonization and reconciliation. She is currently working in the Aboriginal Supported Child Development program at the Tla’amin Child Development Center, coordinating supports, programs and services for children with developmental delays, and intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families. Courtney is also a volunteer firefighter and first responder with the Tla’amin Nation Fire Department, has recently coordinated “Understanding Through the Lens of Trauma”, a two day trauma informed conference hosted in the Tla’amin Nation, as well as the Firefighter Mental Health and Critical Incident Stress Management event for firefighters and their families with guest speaker Jeff Cartwright.

Rose Adams, Manager, Tla’amin Child Development Center

Rose is not only a leader with Tla’amin Health, but also a well-known community developer. She has agreed to sponsor Courtney’s practicum and has lent the support of her position in the organization and in the community to advance this initiative.

Alison Taplay, HHS Faculty

Alison is a professor and scholar with Vancouver Island University. She sees teaching as curating a stimulating learning environment that is student centered, inclusive, relational, and process oriented. In this space responsibility for learning is shared, critical thinking is fostered,

reflection is valued, and boundaries are eliminated so that new knowledge and ways of being can emerge. She builds on her 30 year career in the disability sector providing direct support and then leading the development of community based services including the supports that helped Ontario and BC close institutions and later some of the first creative individualized service models. As a passionate community developer she brought her expertise to some of the first customized employment concepts in Ontario. Her master's degree is in Leadership. Her research interests combine community development and participatory methods to increase social justice. She sees innovation and engagement as essential tools for advancing the well-being of organizations, communities and the full inclusion of all citizens. Relevant examples of her research include *Rediscovering Innovation through Engagement* which sparked change at inclusion Powell River in 2010, and *Defining Diversity: Creating Community* positioned as part of a larger project¹ to advance diversity and asset based thinking to spark contributions to social and economic well-being in Powell River, and *Illuminating New Economic Possibilities*, a collaborative project to further engage the Powell River business community in advancing local, sustainable development.

Dr. Janet Newbury, Adjunct Faculty, Vancouver Island University

Dr. Janet Newbury currently teaches and conducts research in the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, and is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Graduate Studies. She has also taught at Royal Roads University and Vancouver Island University. She has worked in group homes, camps, an after-school program, an orphanage, and a family resource centre, and as family initiatives worker and family enhancement worker.

¹ <https://wordpress.viu.ca/ddcc/>

The focus of her research and practice has shifted to community engagement as it relates to health and wellbeing, and to democracy in general terms. Her work experiences and research interests have led her to explore the connections between community-based approaches to economic and social development and the wellbeing of children, youth, and families. Through this work she has participated as co-founding member of the Post Growth Institute, a research associate with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, an associate with the Taos Institute, and a member of the global Community Economies Collective. Her writing has been published widely for both academic and popular audiences. She is currently the secretary of the board of directors for both the Powell River Division of Family Practice and the Sunshine Music Festival Society, and the president of the board of directors for the Powell River Historic Museum and Archives. She is involved in a number of other community efforts that prioritize intergenerational and intercultural engagement centering decolonization, dignity, and belonging, and is extremely grateful to live and work on the traditional and treaty territory of the Tla'amin Nation.

Wayne Hanson, Graphic Recorder

Wayne Hanson is a teacher of languages. After graduating from the University of BC, Wayne enjoyed a 35 year career as an educator. His teaching experience is diverse both in levels and geographic locations, including Powell River. During that time he was also a professional development leader and curriculum developer for the province of British Columbia. In addition to his contributions to K to 12, Wayne has worked with instructors and students at VIU (previously Malaspina Community College) and North Island College. He continues to work as a private tutor. Wayne is also an established graphic recording artist or graphic facilitator. He uses this skill to contribute to the lives of individuals who have disabilities and to community

development events by providing a visual portrait. For example, Wayne created the graphic record of the Defining Diversity: Creating Community project Groundswell Conference which can be seen in the documentary film². He has also provided graphic facilitation or recording using the Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) tool for individuals with disabilities as well as for group strategic planning. Wayne describes his work like this. "This is similar to the function of a recording secretary at a meeting. The finished product that we end with in graphic recording has much more in the way of images.....a visual portrait of the event. This is said to access different parts of the brain and allows people to think differently and more creatively. It is an alternate way of looking at the collective knowledge of the group. The finished product is a combination of image, word, colour, pattern and size, to provide information that is more easily interpreted by individuals." His work is consistent with the graphic recording recommended for a World Café event. <http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/graphic-recording/>

Dr. Alison Gerlach

Alison Gerlach is an Assistant Professor who joined the SCYC in August 2018. Alison's current program of research and scholarship focuses on informing systems change for equity-oriented child- and family-centred care in diverse early years and healthcare contexts with Indigenous and non-Indigenous families and children who experience structural forms of marginalization and a greater risk of health inequities.

Alison's work draws on 25 years of providing occupational therapy with dis/abled children in diverse community and family contexts, and in partnership with Indigenous

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[https://admin.video.ubc.ca/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner_id/149/uiconf_id/23448688/entry_id/0_mgs2b1p6/embed/iframe?&flashvars\[streamerType\]=auto](https://admin.video.ubc.ca/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner_id/149/uiconf_id/23448688/entry_id/0_mgs2b1p6/embed/iframe?&flashvars[streamerType]=auto)

organizations and First Nations in British Columbia. Alison is particularly interested in the continuities between children's early experiences of adversity, dis/ability, and health inequities and the development of inclusive, responsive, and equity-oriented structural, organizational, and practice level approaches. She is committed to community-based participatory research that engages with communities, organizations, families, and children as research partners.

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from https://research.viu.ca/sites/default/files/strategic_plan_srca_approved_2017.pdf

Appendix A – Project Timeline

Phase	Task	Timeline	Responsibility	Deliverable / Output
PROJECT SET UP	VIU Hires undergraduate student, Courtney Harrop	April 1–5	AT	Hiring process complete
	Tla'amin Child Development Student contracts with consultant, either Janet Newbury or another more appropriate researcher		RA, CH in consultation with AT	Confirmation of research team Employment contract established
	Team Meeting		AT, RA, CH, JN, WH	Establish rapport, process for working together, role expectations, time lines
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	Finalize guide for World Cafe	April 8-12	RA, CH, JN	Guide with process and 4 questions.
	Finalize REB Application including appendices (consent form)	April 8-19	CH, AT, JN	Application submitted to REB by May 3 rd deadline. Approval Letter.
	Finalize date for World Café	May 17-24	RA, CH	
	Alison Gerlach Community Education Event	May 25	RA, CH	Event attendance record and feedback forms documenting impact.
	Promote the World Café – recruit participants or establish interest list (depends on REB approval)	May 25	RA, CH	Participant List Ready for Consent Process
	Contact interest list with invitation to participate in World Cafe	May 27 – June 7	RA, CH	
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	Consent process	June 22 OR 29	RA, CH	Signed, witnessed consent forms
	World Café – as per Guide		RA, CH, JN, AT	World Café conducted with more 15 or more participants.
	Graphic Record of the process and data collection and the findings as they emerge		WH	Wall Chart and flip charts documenting event. Photographed.
	Flip Chart Record of key points from each table and from the room.		RA, CH, JN, AT	
	Facilitated data analysis by group		CH, JN	Identified themes / findings. Action plan to raise awareness and change practices.
	Feedback forms completed by the group including opportunity for “any other thoughts”		RA, CH	Summary of feedback
	Team meeting to review data and feedback forms, make any adjustments	July 2-5	RA, CH, JN, AT, WH	Finalize action plan and determine final report format and content. Update graphic record. Photographed.
PROJECT WRAP UP (KNOWLEDGE MOBILIATION)	Final Report	July 19	CH	Submit report to team and instructor
	Submit articles to PR Living Magazine and Neh Motl Newspaper	July 19	AT	Two articles in local publications
	Journal Article	July / August	JN	TBD
	Distribute Final Report to Participants, Ministries, Child Care Providers, Early Years Planning Table	August	CH, RA	Widespread access to the report and action plan.

Note: CH = Courtney Harrop, RA – Rose Adams, AT = Alison Taplay, JN = Janet Newbury, WH = Wayne Hanson



March 12, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is confirmation of my support as a community partner for the research project, 'tiwšamstawłst' and the World Café VIU student Courtney Harrop is currently working on. Courtney is diligently working towards to her Leadership & Disabilities Studies diploma which is a fit for her work with Tla'amin Health and the Tla'amin community as a whole. Alison Taplay is Courtney's supervisor and are working closely together on this project to create success.

I am also in support of the application for the Engage Grant which Alison Taplay is applying for. I endorse the work that Courtney and Alison are doing on this project, and I have confidence the Engage Grant will allow Courtney and Alison to supply sustenance to their work in the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this Engage Grant request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rose Adams".

Rose Adams
Child, Youth & Family Manager