

CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

A Message from CIER Director, Dr. Sandra Styres:

I hope this message finds you well as the Mother Earth awakens from her long slumber! It has been a year of rejuvenation in what was, for many, a return to in-person learning. It was so nice to see the OISE building filled with activity once again. Indeed, the Centre has also seen a lot of updates since the last newsletter came out last April! In June 2022, we were pleased to host the launch of the Deepening Knowledge Project (DKP) website, the new digitally immersive Land-Centred educational and research space on the 10th floor (Peoples Place of the Sacred Light, Benaadizig-yaat Gchitwaa Waaseyaa-teg, and Gajihdsda gwe:ni:yo:geh), and the Centre for Indigenous Educational Research computer lab, also on the 10th floor! These projects were in the works for the past few years and it was wonderful to see them come to life. The Land-centred space was the site of our first in-person Welcome Event in October—students, faculty, and community members alike gathered around the sacred fire within the projected images of the inside of a traditional style longhouse. It was an immersive land-centred experience which led to powerful discussion on visions for the Centre and for how we can continue to support one another. The room also held its first cohort of students throughout the winter semester, serving as the site for the Literacies of Land course. I hope that the DKP website has been of use for you in your teaching or learning journeys—if you have not yet had a chance to browse the site and its resources, I encourage you to do so by visiting

<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/deepeningknowledge/>. You can even submit resources if you have suggestions for Indigenous education activities that you know other educators would like to use. We explain how you can do this in the newsletter below. We are excited to continue making use of these spaces and resources in the 2023-24 year!

I am also happy to announce that the Centre partnered with the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto in the delivery of a series of workshops ranging in topics from treaties, to circle work, to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, to Indigenous perspectives on peer mentorship. Furthermore, it was wonderful to see the continuation of the Student Speaker Series and the Faculty Speaker Series as a space for BIPOC faculty and students to share their research. We are looking forward to planning more talks in the upcoming year, and invite anyone who is interested in getting involved to get in touch to see how we can work together! If you are a Black, Indigenous and/or Person of Color we would love to invite you to showcase your work in next year's speaker series beginning in Fall 2023. As well, please let us know if you would like to propose a session of any kind in which you or a group can collaborate on a topic or issue of relevance and concern to our communities (i.e. panel discussion, joint presentation, etc.). Finally, I am pleased that we could offer the CIER Award to two more students this year—thank you to all who applied and congratulations to the recipients!

Please do read on to find out more about each of these Centre activities. I am looking forward to meeting more of you and hearing about your work next year. Until then, wishing you and your loved ones a restful and rejuvenating summer. See you in September!

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Announcing the 2023 CIER Award Recipients!

We are very excited to share this year's recipients of the [OISE Centre for Indigenous Educational Research Award](#)! This award, to be granted annually, is now in its second year, and is intended to recognize students who identify as Black, Indigenous or as a Person of Colour (BIPOC) who demonstrate solid academic standing, involvement in educational research excellence, and service through positive and significant contributions to education, educational research, and community engagement. It also aims to break down some of the financial and administrative barriers that BIPOC students often face in engaging in educational research-related activities such as some of the costs associated with presenting at conferences, and adherence to cultural customs such as giving honouraria to Elders, offering of tobacco, and/or gifting protocols.

We received many applications and the selection process was difficult with excellent candidates. We are pleased that we could offer the award to two students this year. We thank all those who applied and look forward to receiving more applications next year!

Congratulations to Louis Busch and Shezadi Khushal for this achievement!

About the Recipients



Shezadi Khushal

[SHEZADI KHUSHAL](#) is a doctoral candidate in Educational, Leadership and Policy at OISE. Shezadi is currently the Chair of the Race and Ethnicity Caucus at the University of Toronto. Shezadi is also a Human Rights Officer in one of Ontario's largest school boards, and is committed to the principles of equity, inclusivity, justice and human rights. Read more about her story below:

"As Ontario's public education system has evolved within an historical context of colonialism, and which continues to remain present in school policies and practices, we must take ownership and accountability for injustices which continue to permeate educational spaces. This means an acknowledgment and recognition for broken treaty promises, land rights, racism, trauma, deficit thinking, Western-based curriculum, achievement gaps and mental health issues. Looking at Ontario school boards with human rights offices, my research employs a comparative analysis of the gap between policy and practice, examining how human rights policies are being implemented in Ontario schools. Research indicates that despite government-mandated policies to reduce racism and discrimination, schools boards are still falling short of meeting their expectations. My educational research objectives will benefit community and/or the field of educational research by shedding light on the alarming number of code-based violations, particularly on Black, Indigenous and other racialized students under the categories of race, ethnicity and intersectional social identities. This data can then be used to translate into policy or action plan for combatting racism, bias and discrimination. Future intentions of this study are to create a human rights education curriculum for implementation in elementary schools."



Louis Busch

[LOUIS BUSCH \(ᑭᓐᑭᓐᑎᓐ ᑲᓄᓐ\)](#) is Bear Clan Member of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and is completing the second year of doctoral studies in the Adult Education and Community Development program under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Wemigwans. Louis is a qualifying psychotherapist, a behaviour analyst, and a community support specialist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto. Louis is interested in building upon research which examines the applicability of Indigenous approaches to wellness in mental health counselling.



Launch of the 10th floor Digitally Immersive Land-Centred Space, Computer Lab, & Deepening Knowledge Project Website

In June 2022, the CIER, in partnership with the Deepening Knowledge Project, opened several new immersive spaces on the tenth floor. There is a digitally immersive classroom known as Peoples Place of the Sacred Light, Benaadizigyaat Gchitwaa Waaseyaa-teg, and Gajihda gwe:ni:yo:geh. These spaces are informed by the land, relationships, Indigenous resurgence, and sovereignty. Peoples Place of the Sacred Light features 360-degree projections that transport students to the land, the Longhouse, or anywhere else that can support their learning. The computer lab features SPSS and NVivo data analysis software, Microsoft Office Suite, Acrobat Pro and software that allows students to convert the computer keyboards into several different local Indigenous languages and syllabics. The lab serves as the hub for four key projects: The Centre for Indigenous Educational Research; The Deepening Knowledge Project; Teaching, Indigenous research, and community engagement; and a New Indigenous Land-based Graduate Teacher Education Program that will combine traditional out-on-the land learning with a digitally immersive learning experience.



DKP Website:

The new Deepening Knowledge Project website is also now up and running as of Summer 2022! We encourage you to visit the site to consult its Indigenous authored content and resources for all school grades, and materials for educators that have been vetted by Indigenous faculty and staff on the team. You can search by resource and content types and by using keywords, or browse the Interactive Turtle Shell to see suggested resources.



You can also help us continue to populate the website! If you have a noteworthy Indigenous-authored resource that you would like to share with other educators, you can submit your suggestion to the Resource Submission page and our team will review it. We hope you enjoy exploring the site!

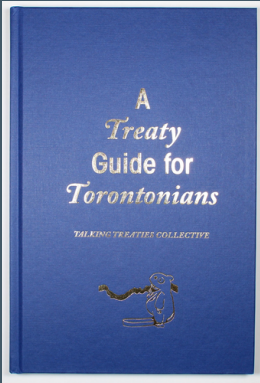
Access the DKP site at <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/deepeningknowledge/>

You can also read more about the launch [here](#).





Resource Spotlight



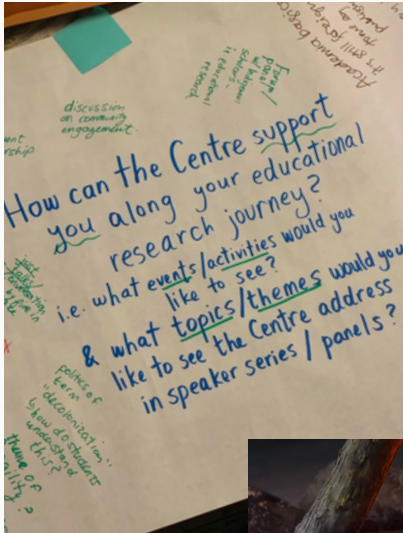
Part of Jumblies Theatre & Arts's multi-year Talking Treaties project, *A Treaty Guide for Torontonians* is an artful examination of the complex intercultural roots of treaty relationships in the place we now call Toronto. Scholarly and historical research is complemented by outdoor activities, theatrical pursuits and contemporary writing prompts that help readers explore the modern-day subjective and physical embodiment of treaty relations. This combination of art-based research and Toronto specific knowledge inspires an active approach to treaty awareness through embodied learning tools.

The publication illustrates the importance of visual and symbolic languages, mnemonic practices, and personal relationship to the documentation presented, complemented by lush illustration; exciting the readers' curiosity, engaging their senses and imagination, and encouraging them to rethink historic, current, and future treaty relationships.

<https://artmetropole.com/shop/14892>

Companion website: talkingtreaties.ca

CIER Welcome Event



In October, the CIER team welcomed faculty, staff, students & community to our new spaces on the tenth floor. Guests were invited to explore the new digitally-immersive space and our state of the art computer lab. We enjoyed some delicious catering of Bannock and bearpaws from Tea N' Bannock, and attendees sat around the fire together in the Land-centred space to discuss their visions for the future of the Centre and how it can be of support. Thanks to all who joined us!



Workshops with the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

From October until April, the CIER was pleased to partner with Native Canadian Centre of Toronto in the delivery of a series of workshops for the Healing our Community group and the general public. We would like to share a heartfelt thank you to Jennifer Hammond, the NCCT Community Health Navigator, and to all the folks at NCCT who diligently prepared the spaces, tech equipment, and snacks for each workshop. A short description of each workshop is provided below.

Workshop 1: Circle Work

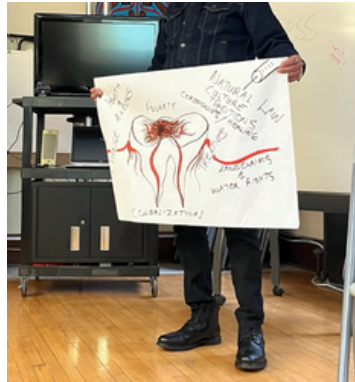
In this hybrid workshop, PhD Candidate and Assistant Professor Ryan Neepin facilitated discussion and reflections on names, identities, and relationships at the NCCT Auditorium.





Workshop 2: Trick or Treaty?

In this workshop, participants heard a presentation on treaties and colonization, watched the documentary by Alanis Obomsawin, *Trick or Treaty?* and reflected on the film through discussion and creative mind-mapping exercises.

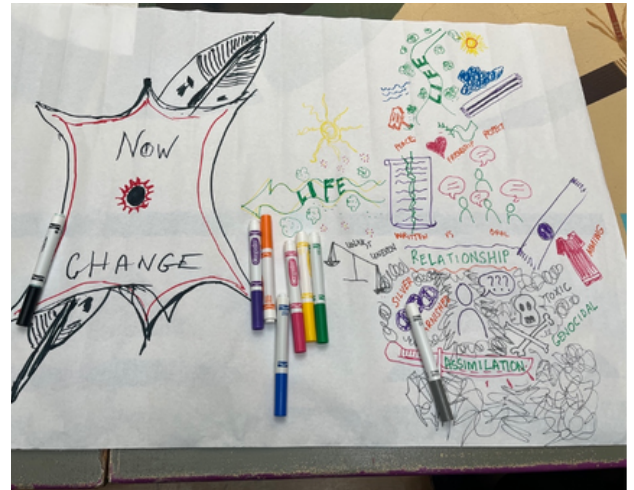


Workshop 3: Treaties & Colonization - Giant Floor Map

We filled the NCCT auditorium with the Giant Floor Map for an interactive activity on learning about the different treaties, and sharing connections to place. Participants were invited to walk across the borderless map of Canada to find their own communities and reflect on the land.

Workshop 4: Millennial Scoop and MMIWG

The fourth workshop in February 2023, facilitated by Dr. Amanda Buffalo, was an opportunity to discuss the realities and impacts of the Millennial Scoop and MMIWG. She shared her own experiences working in the Yukon with MMIWG initiatives and invited questions and discussion from participants.



What is Mentorship?

family
community
friendships
kind and compassionate
village stories
connection
support
guidance
unity
belonging helping
relationships
coming together
who I want to be
gija
direction
compassion

Workshop 5: Indigenous Perspectives on Peer Mentorship Panel

In this fifth and final workshop, panelists and doctoral students, Leah Hogan, Maya Simon, and Jonathon Araujo Redbird spoke about their experiences with peer mentorship and guided participants in reflecting on how peer mentorship already plays or can play a role in their own lives.



Faculty Speaker Series

The Centre was very pleased to host the Faculty Speaker Series throughout the winter term. This was a valuable opportunity to learn more about the research and work of esteemed BIPOC faculty members. We were very happy to host Dr. Qui Alexander and Dr. Clelia Rodriguez. We also look forward to hosting more faculty members during the next 2023-24 academic year! Read on to find out more about each faculty speaker session.

Holding Change as a Pedagogy of Abolitionist Praxis with Dr. Qui Alexander

On February 10th, Dr. Qui Alexander (Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality and Trans Studies in Curriculum and Pedagogy in the department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning) explored the concept of holding change (brown, 2021) to understand how the phenomenon "pedagogies of abolition" manifests. Drawing on a post-intentional phenomenological (Vagle, 2018) study exploring the teaching/learning of an abolitionist praxis, this talk used holding change to analyze the experiences of a group of Black trans organizers. Through exploring how "pedagogies of abolition" manifests in the lives of the participants, this talk illuminated the teachable moments of an abolitionist praxis. Through considering the relationship between abolitionist study and struggle; troubling traditional modes of study (Meyerhoff, 2019); and engaging emergent strategy (brown, 2017) as a pedagogical practice, this talk affirmed that Black trans life is inherently pedagogical, teaching new ways of knowing and being in the world. You can view the recording of Dr. Alexander's talk [here](#).



Their current research explores pedagogies of abolitionist praxis in the lived experience of Black trans folks. Prof. Alexander's research and teaching interests include Black trans studies, abolition and transformative justice, Black feminist thought, Black radical tradition, queer Black feminist praxis, critical pedagogies, and queer/trans youth of colour. Their academic work is complemented by extensive community organizing experience, building advocacy, programming, health education and community for LGBTQ2S+ individuals through service roles at the University of Minnesota, Haverford College, Attic Youth Center and the Mazzoni Center in Philadelphia.

Lifelines: Let Me Tell You About Deadlines with Dr. Clelia Rodriguez



On March 7th, Dr. Clelia Rodriguez led a rich discussion based on these ideas:
Secret 1: Deadlines are killing us.
Secret 2: The word in Latin for abstract is abstrahere - to remove forcibly.
Secret 3: Lines means death.
Secret 4: Lifelines is pedagogical political work.

Find out more about Dr. Rodriguez through her bio here:

I am a global scholar, speaker, author, mom and auntie, born and raised in the ancestral lands of the Nawat, the Chorti-Maya and the Lenka Peoples, what is presently El Salvador. I am committed to the Seven Teaching Principles of the Anishinabek Peoples because they are in affinity with those of my Ancestors: Love, Humility, Respect, Truth, Wisdom, and Bravery and Honesty. I teach politically



centering Black, Indigenous and often marginalized voices from the Global South into what I integrate as part of the materials I share in the courses I teach. I decolonize (not through Western notions of decolonizing) through the teachings of my grandfather and his Ancestors – lessons that I am proud to share within the OISE community through SEEDS for Change. I did my MA and PhD from the University of Toronto and ever since then the world became my classroom, literally. I've had the fortune, support, and blessings from a community that has allowed me to teach and work in Cuba, Mexico, Bolivia, Chile, Spain, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Nepal, Jordan, Palestine, Kenya, Canada and El Salvador. I am now in Tkaronto doing everything from mentoring, writing, teaching, engaging in intergenerational healing, webbing like my Ancestors taught me, cooking and doing 'happy hour' sessions with people I really like. I'm currently brewing a co-edited book with Dr. Josephine Gabi titled *Who Are You Without Colonialism: Pedagogies of Liberation and Radical Imagi(N)ation*.

It's easier to find me in IG than via email, [@clelia.o.rodriiguez](https://www.instagram.com/clelia.o.rodriiguez). My written work has found nests through different platforms. You can check out some of them here: <https://www.seedsforchange.ca/textiles>

Student Speaker Series

This year we were fortunate to hear from four different students as they presented their work during the third year of the student speaker series! Some additional events were postponed until next year so stay tuned for more events next year. If you would like to nominate yourself or another student to present, please email us at cier.oise@utoronto.ca—we would love to hear from you! Read on to find out more about this year's speakers. You can view all recorded talks on the CIER OISE Student Speaker Series YouTube Channel, [here](#).



Peace and Harmony through uBuntu in a Globalized World — Joel Mukwedeya

Joel Mukwedeya is an All But Dissertation (ABD) candidate in the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Justice Education at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. His Doctoral Thesis contends that of all the many adverse outcomes colonialism has exacted on colonized peoples everywhere is erosion and, in some cases, erasure of Indigenous languages, cultures, and knowledge systems. In this talk, discussing [his recent chapter](#), Mukwedeya examines the Southern African cultural worldview uBuntu, which nurtures the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity.

Watch the recording [here](#).

Decolonizing Western Scientific Epistemes: Implications for Mathematics Education — Troy Shepherd

Troy Shepherd is an All But Dissertation (ABD) candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Justice Education at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. His Doctoral Thesis outlines the destruction caused by colonizers on colonized peoples epistemes and constructs a new hybridized way of thinking that can be applied to mathematics and universalized throughout education. In this talk, he discusses how through spiritual ways of knowing, 'number' is redefined to include interconnectedness thus constructing a new way of thinking aimed at creating epistemological equity between Western scientific epistemes and epistemes of colonized peoples.

Watch the recording [here](#).





Con Hilo y Aguja: Colombian women’s use of needlework and the (re)making of zones of extraction - Diana Barrero

Diana M. Barrero Jaramillo (she/her) is a Latina feminist researcher, educator, and community organizer. Currently, Diana is working on her doctoral dissertation, where she examines women’s activism in Colombia drawing on critical (e.g., feminist, anti-racist, and decolonial) perspectives. In this talk, she draws from her work to focus on one initiative in Colombia that engages textile-based narratives in a context of political-legal conflicts over resource-rich territories. She highlighted how women’s visual ontologies reflect racialized, gendered, and spatialized dynamics of seeing and living that exist alongside, and contest, the expansion of extractive capitalism. You can find some of Diana’s work here: <https://dianabarrero.com/>

Watch the recording [here](#).

Thinking with 'Climate Coloniality' in the Classroom: Learning from Racialized Educators' Climate Justice Pedagogies — Preeti Nayak

Preeti Nayak (she/her) is a PhD candidate in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. She is currently finishing her doctoral dissertation on the topic of racialized educators’ climate justice pedagogies, research which has been funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship. In this talk, she drew from her study to explore how teachers’ racialized subjectivities and processes of self-making interact with their pedagogical commitments and local enactments of climate justice education, showing how their pedagogies are often responsive to the barriers and environmental learning conditions faced by Black, Indigenous and racialized youth.



Watch the recording [here](#).

Thanks everyone for your ongoing support for the Centre!

We hope you have a restful summer, and look forward to seeing you in September.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or proposals for events or activities, as always, please do not hesitate to contact us at cier.oise@utoronto.ca. We can't wait to hear from you!