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Institute for Water,
Environment and Health



11 FEBRUARY 2020

FREE ADMISSION & REFRESHMENTS

FREE PARKING

Ohneganos Ohnegahde:gyo- Water is Life

From the perspective of the traditional Haudenosaunee, we speak in terms of responsibilities with respect to water, not in terms of water rights. From time immemorial, we have held the view that the “law of the land” is not man-made law, but a greater natural law, the Great Law of Peacethe root words for “rain” in Mohawk means expensive, or precious or holy. Culturally, we would not abuse this resource (King, 2007).

Indigenous populations in Canada are particularly vulnerable to climate change and water security issues. First Nations communities' water supplies are in crisis over lack of access to water quality and quantity. Inadequate infrastructure increases the health burden in these communities. Water crisis is widely experienced in Indigenous communities due to the colonial policies which neglected implementing infrastructure on First Nations reserved lands, as compared to the rest of Canada. In 2007, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly and affirmed: *Recognizing that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment.* This requires a holistic integrated community led approach of water research, capacity building and support, which are needed for a range of water-related topics of governance, health and capacity development, including development of Indigenous sustainability. Dr. Dawn Martin Hill will provide an overview of the Global Water Futures projects that she leads; Co-creation of Indigenous water quality tools and Ohneganos: Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, Training & Co-Creation of Mixed Method Tools. Ohneganos is a Global Water Futures (GWF) funded project that works with two communities, Six Nations of the Grand River in Ontario, and Lubicon Lake Band of Little Buffalo in northern Alberta, addressing issues of water security, water sovereignty, and environmental health solutions on First Nations reserves. Educational and wellness tools developed in this project for indigenous youth will be discussed and demonstrated. Globally, local and Indigenous knowledge has been shown to strengthen socioecological community resilience within the multiple stressors of global environmental changes and encourages bilingual texts/resources to build communities' capacity to monitor future water and environmental challenges. Her specific research interests in traditional knowledge naturally highlights solutions in improving quality of life through attention to gender, governance and well-being related to water quality.

SPEAKER



Dawn Martin Hill, Mohawk, PhD in Cultural Anthropology and founder of the Indigenous Studies Program, McMaster University. She is Mohawk and resides at Six Nations with her family. She is a new member for Canada of the UNESCO Hydrology Committee. She has been publishing Indigenous knowledge research since 1992, her book, *Indigenous Knowledge & Power: the Lubicon Lake Nation* in 1997 documents the impact of oil and forestry extraction in northern Alberta. She has numerous peer reviewed publications. Her primary research over two decades is working with women and youth to develop Indigenous ways of knowing prevention strategies, holistic assessments of community wellness, traditional medicine and improving quality of life. Her current research includes access to clean water, traditional ecological knowledge and creating bilingual tools to increase capacity in water monitoring in her community of SN and Lubicon Cree, Alberta. She has worked diligently to conserve and protect Indigenous knowledge and language as founder of the Indigenous Elders and Youth Council and has longstanding partnerships with the Amazon Conservation Team, Kawenni:io immersion school, Six Nations Health Services and Lubicon Cree Nations.

7:00PM @ McMaster Innovation Park (Conference Room 1AB)

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