



# The Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences

The Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences at Lakehead University is made up of the professors, researchers, students, and staff in the Schools of Nursing, Kinesiology, Social Work and the Departments of Psychology and Health Sciences. Together, we conduct leading-edge research on health and human behaviour. We build knowledge of the many determinants and factors in health and with full view of the interactions of health and behaviour within society and environment. Much of our research is community driven and responsive to the needs of our regions in Northwestern Ontario and Simcoe County. Within this dynamic environment of innovation and knowledge creation, we deliver exceptional programs drawing on proven expertise in evidence-based approaches. Our programs are nationally accredited and offer recognized and regulated professional designations.



# Or. Mirella Stroink, Dean, Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences

Welcome to the 2023-2024 Activity Report for the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences. In this report we feature the contributions of our Faculty, Staff, and Students in teaching excellence, community engagement, and research. Glancing through these pages reinforces my pride in our Faculty. Together, our talented faculty, staff, and students generated 94 peer reviewed articles, 19 book chapters, 1 book on supporting older persons in their aging journey, and even 2 art exhibitions. In addition, we presented at conferences across Canada and around the world. We also received over \$7 million in research funding from 22 different funding agencies. This funding not only supports the research infrastructure and students, but often directly supports community events and resources. While this report celebrates research and scholarly activity, we also highlight the ongoing activities and programs of our 5 Departments and Schools and recognize the exceptional teaching of our 2023-24 award winning faculty. Please enjoy this report and I invite you to follow up at any time.







Originally established in 1965, Lakehead University's School of Nursing continues to attract diverse students into our undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) programs. The 3-year Compressed BScN Program and 4-year BScN Program have a nationally accredited curriculum based on a foundation of relational practice, which blends both the art and the science of nursing. We offer comprehensive clinical and hands-on lab experiences in every year level of the program.

With a vibrant student association (Lakehead University Nursing Association-LUNA), nursing students work together toward their future goals as leaders in health care in Northwestern Ontario and beyond. The School also partners to offer the Indigenous Nurses Entry Program (INEP) with Lakehead's Indigenous Initiatives department and the All Nations Nursing Entry Program (ANNEP) with Seven Generations Education Institute. Since 2020, we have offered graduate education, with a Master's of Nursing (MN) Program that has Nurse Practitioner (NP) and Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) streams.

# **Dr. Elaine Wiersma**

**Chair of the Department of Health Sciences** 

# **Dr. lan Newhouse**, Director of the School of Kinesiology





The Department of Health Sciences is comprised of ten faculty members, including two Canada Research Chairs and two Research Centre Directors. Together, we mobilize knowledge to protect and promote health and reduce health inequities. We value diversity and prioritize integrity in everything we do. Through applied research, community engagement, and provision of diverse learning opportunities, we build capacity to understand and address the complexities of current and emerging health issues. Ours was the first Master of Public Health program in Canada!

We also offer Master and Doctoral programs in Health Sciences, as well as an undergraduate Minor in Aging and Health. Graduate-level specializations are available in Epidemiology; Gerontology; Indigenous and Northern Health; and Social-Ecological Systems, Sustainability and Health. We encourage and recognize the important contributions of our students in our work and communities.

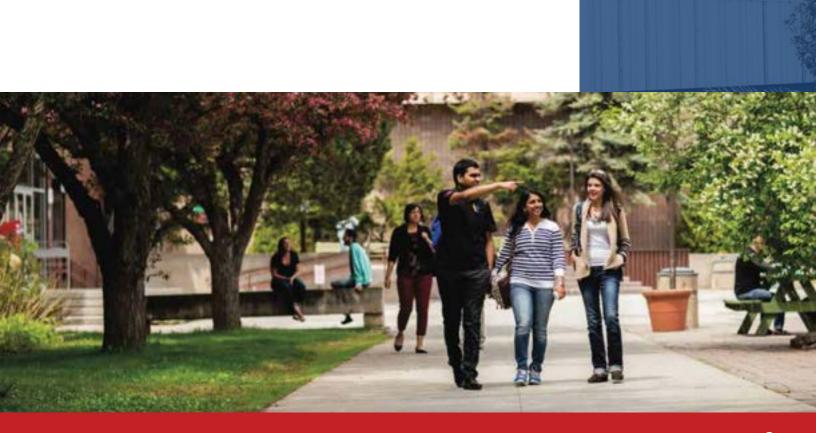
Our students have created a Lakehead chapter of the Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics and have recently formed their own Graduate Student Association.

The School of Kinesiology has established itself as being an innovative and unique academic unit with a distinct dedication to applied scholarly endeavors. The School offers a number of undergraduate degree programs including: The Honours Bachelor of Kinesiology (HBK); HBK Co-operative education; and HBK/Bachelor of Education (PJ and IS) with 6-year and 5-year programs. Upon completion of an undergraduate Kinesiology degree, the School offers a thesis or course based Master of Science (MSc) degree in Kinesiology, a MSc degree in Kinesiology with Specialization in Gerontology, and a Graduate Diploma in Professional Kinesiology.

In addition, the School has established transfer pathways for a number of colleges. Lakehead University is proud of these programs and the way in which they are enhanced by student-professor relationships and personalized attention. The School is accredited by the Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators (CCUPEKA) and is supported by ten faculty members and four staff. The Kinesiology at Lakehead University (KALU) club is a student organization that plans academic and social events for students throughout the year.

# Dr. Rupert Klein, Chair of the Department of Psychology

The Department of Psychology offers arts and science undergraduate programs, graduate programs in Psychological Science (MSc and PhD), MA Clinical Psychology, and CPA-accredited PhD Psychology programs at the Thunder Bay campus and an HBA psychology program at the Orillia campus. We have 8 full-time faculty representing a diverse range of expertise and community associations, one of whom is a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Mental Health and Addictions. Early in their programs students can get involved in lab-based experiental learning opportunities and join the department club the Psychology Association of Lakehead Students (PALS) to hear about upcoming talks and receive mentoring from senior students. We also have a psychology program coordinator to assist students from all programs with course selection and advising.



# Dr. Les Fleischer, **Director of the School of Social Work**

The School of Social Work offers two different Honours Bachelor's degree (HBSW) programs and a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree program at both Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses. The four-year HBSW program is designed to combine a liberal arts education with a social work generalist professional practice lens. The One-Year HBSW program is designed for those students who have completed the requirements of an approved Bachelor's degree besides social work and have related practice experience. All programs are fully accredited by the Canadian Association of Social Work Education. The School has 15 full-time faculty members. (8 in Thunder Bay, 7 in Orillia) who are actively engaged in research and community work.



# AT-A-GLANCE



# **FHBS BY THE NUMBERS** LAKEHEAD TOTAL: 9049 TOTAL STUDENTS IN **FACULTY AND STAFF** FHBS IN 2023: IN FHBS: 1880 84 **GRADUATE:** UNDERGRADUATE: 341 1539 UNDERGRADUATES IN THUNDER BAY UNDERGRADUATES IN ORILLIA: 201 1338



**Amanda Ruck, School of Nursing** 

**Dr. Deborah Scharf, Department of Psychology** 

# NUMBER OF GRANTING AGENCIES:

Grants Awarded in 2023-2024: Dollars awarded in competitive external grants to the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences: \$7,371,116.97



# **GRANTING AGENCIES:**

**CIHR** 

**SSHRC** 

**NOAMA** 

**Association of Ontario Midwives** 

**Canada Foundation for Innovation** 

**Health Canada** 

**MITACS** 

**City of Thunder Bay** 

Ministry of Colleges and Universities

**Public Health Agency of Canada** 

**University of Northern British Columbia** 

**Graham Boeckh Foundation** 

**Ministry of Solicitor General** 

**Canadian Psychological Association** 

**Canada and Latin America Research and Exchange** 

**Opportunities** 

St. Elizabeth Health Care

**Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program** 

**Indigenous Services Canada** 

**Ontario Health** 

Kenora Chiefs Advisory Inc.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

**Employment and Social Development Canada** 



# Dr. Idevania Costa

Dr. Idevania Costa, an Associate Professor at Lakehead University's School of Nursing and the Associate Director of the Centre for Education and Research in Aging and Health (CERAH), is an internationally educated nurse from Brazil who continued her clinical practice in Canada and pursued a PhD at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. Dr. Costa has built an extensive academic and clinical career spanning over 25 years across Brazil and Canada, combining her expertise in clinical practice, teaching, and innovative research. Her research program, "Global Health Equity and Chronic Condition Empowerment," focuses on fostering international collaboration understand and address the complex impact of social determinants of health on vulnerable populations living with chronic conditions.

Dr. Costa's research advances care practices through an interdisciplinary, inclusive, and emancipatory approach. Central to her work is amplifying patient voices, exploring social determinants of health, and promoting health equity through trauma-informed, patient-centered She employs care. community-based action research participatory visual research methods (PVRM) which blend traditional storytelling with modern video and computer technology. This method serves not only as a tool for education and health promotion but also as a form of trauma-informed narrative therapy, ,

empowering individuals and their families to share their experiences of navigating life with chronic conditions and related complications, such as diabetic foot ulcers and venous leg ulcers.

Dr. Costa's extensive research and clinical experience led to the creation of the "Our Voices, Our Stories" initiative, a national knowledge exchange program funded by a SSHRC Connection Grant in 2022. This ongoing initiative highlights the power of digital storytelling (DST) to humanize trauma-informed wound care and promote inclusivity. Continuing her innovative and visionary work, Dr. Costa led a SSHRC Insight Development Grant-funded project (Spring, 2023) as principal investigator, exploring how digital storytelling can serve as an educational and reflective tool to promote inclusivity and trauma-informed practices in wound care. Dr. Costa's most recent grant, funded by a SSHRC Connection Grant (Fall, 2024), builds on the "Our Voices, Our Stories" initiative by introducing a webinar series. This series shares patient narratives and best practices to foster health equity and inclusivity, while promoting collaborative learning among healthcare professionals, researchers, and patients with chronic conditions and complex wounds.

# **Dr. Cathy Phillips**

I am an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work. All my research activities are driven by 3 related aims:

1) interrogating the socio-cultural determinants of health inequalities, 2) improving the physical and mental well-being of those effected by these inequalities, and 3) developing and sustaining collaborative partnerships between the university and community organisations to address the latter two aims.

In view of these aims, my research has crossed the lifespan. I have published peer-reviewed research about children, young people and seniors and investigated subjects such as abuse, trafficking, end stage kidney disease, asylum seeking, cancer and wound care, and technology and healthcare delivery. In each of these age groups and subjects, I work across the fields of postmodernism, philosophical feminism and cultural theories and engage with arts-based forms of cultural production, such as photography, to unsettle 'common' knowledge about these subjects and people. In addition to the application of arts-based approaches, my research draws from the principles community-based participatory research, building on the strengths, creativity and knowledges that exist within communities.

Last year I worked on 3 projects:

1/ an exploration of a historical public account of sexuality and the formulation of visual representation, unravelling the ways in which these framings are embedded in contemporary culture and professional practice.

2/ working with Drs Costa (PI) and Spadoni in the School of Nursing on the development of an arts-based analysis of people's experiences of hard-to-heal wounds. This work has been funded by SSHRC.

3/ a CBPR project on 'Aging Well' funded by the Federal Government, New Horizon for Seniors Program. In collaboration with Age Friendly Orillia and the University's Office of Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning, we will hold a conference in October 2024. We will welcome 340 seniors to the Campus to learn about topics, such as loneliness and to participate in movement workshops, such as urban poling. Alongside this, we will work with 32 agencies in Simcoe County to provide a service fair to seniors, which will be focused on building social capital.



### **EPID@Work**

EPID@Work stands for Enhancing the Prevention of Injury and Disability at Work. We are a research institute at Lakehead University located in Thunder Bay, ON. We conduct community-driven research in the areas of work-related injury and disability prevention with a particular focus on issues relevant to Northwestern Ontario.

https://www.lakeheadu.ca/centre/epid

# **Centre for Education and Research on Aging and Health (CERAH)**

CERAH's mission is to advance health and social care for an aging population and promote the health and well-being of people aging across the lifespan. CERAH, previously known as the Northern Educational Centre for Aging and Health (NECAH), has been delivering interprofessional education in Northwestern Ontario since 1993 in healthy aging, palliative care and geriatric mental health. CERAH researchers use both traditional and community-based participatory methodologies. Research is conducted by Centre staff, graduate students, and research affiliates from various universities and research institutes across Canada. This extensive research network provides a solid foundation for exciting interdisciplinary national projects. Current research interests include: family caregiving, the role of hospice volunteers with rural seniors, end-of-life care in long-term care homes, palliative care needs assessment in Northwestern Ontario, rural older women's health, aging with developmental disabilities, developing palliative care in First Nations communities, creating age-friendly hospitals and communities, and safe driving and seniors. CERAH also provides extensive education via conferences, workshops, and training in many areas of gerontology.

https://www.lakeheadu.ca/research-and-innovation/facilities-centres/cerah

# **Centre for Health Care Ethics (CHCE)**

The Centre for Health Care Ethics (CHCE) has a mission to foster high quality ethical health care through research, education, and capacity building. It is our vision and purpose to fully support people in Northwestern Ontario to make ethical decisions in health care. For over 20 years, the CHCE has provided forums for interdisciplinary dialogue and exchange of evidence-informed information between educators, students, members of various health care professions, researchers, administrators/senior leadership, and members of the public. The Centre's activities are supported by its membership of ethics champions from academic and clinical organizations in Thunder Bay and the Northwestern Ontario region. The CHCE serves as a hub for information, education, and collaboration. We are proud to host a shared bioethicist and actively engage with local, regional, provincial, national, and international ethics communities. As a proud bioethics unit with UNESCO's International Network of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics (Haifa), the CHCE contributes to conversations in ethics across the globe.

https://www.lakeheadu.ca/research-and-innovation/facilities-centres/health-ethics

# **Centre for Research on Safe Driving**

Our mandate is to contribute to the reduction of traffic-related crashes through the understanding of the fundamental processes that support safe driving and through the development of interventions to optimize safe driving. The Centre's specific goals are as follows:

Foster interdisciplinary collaboration towards safe driving.

Provide a nurturing environment for students to support the development of the next generation of researchers (junior faculty, graduate and undergraduate students).

Contribute to the body of knowledge regarding safe driving.

Support initiatives to reduce traffic-related crashes.

Develop a reputation for high-quality research at the provincial, national, and international levels.

https://www.lakeheadu.ca/centre/crsd

# **Centre for Rural and Northern Health Related Research (CRaNHR)**

Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR) which was formerly known as the Northern Health Human Resource Research Unit (NHHRRU), was founded in 1992 by Lakehead and Laurentian Universities to examine health human resource issues in the north. Initially funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, CRaNHR was one of the ten health-system linked research units across the province. When provincial operational funding for system-linked research units ended in 2013, CRaNHR Lakehead became an autonomous and independently-funded research centre no longer affiliated with Laurentian. Following this transition, we actively expanded our program of academic research in partnership with rural, northern and Indigenous communities and colleagues doing complementary research across the country.

https://www.lakeheadu.ca/research-and-innovation/facilities-centres/rural-northern-health

# **Centre of Education and Research on Positive Youth Development**

The Centre of Education and Research on Positive Youth Development at Lakehead University is focused on generating, disseminating and applying knowledge about children and adolescents and their well-being. Our research specializes in the areas of mental health, addictions, education, and youth justice. We strive to improve access to useful information for those who need it most, particularly individuals and organizations in northern and rural communities.

Our Centre is involved in strength-based research in educational environments, mental health settings, addiction treatment centres, and youth justice facilities. We strive to develop collaborative relationships with schools and agencies in order to facilitate improvements in the emotional, social, behavioural and academic functioning of students, children and youth.

https://www.lakeheadu.ca/centre/cerpyd



# **Dr. James Kryklywy**

James Kryklywy is an affective neuroscientist studying the integration of emotional salience – the 'good' and 'bad' of our world – and sensory experience. He joins Lakehead after completing a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of British Columbia.

James' research has highlighted the unique role that each individual sensory modality plays in detecting meaning from our environments. It implements a multi-pronged approach to assessing these appraisals, including behavioural measures of attention and perception, physiological monitoring of autonomic arousal, human neuroimaging (fMRI), and immersive virtual reality (VR). Recent work has focused on understanding both the interplay of emotional auditory and visual signaling on perceptual accuracy, and how affiliative social touch in instantiated in the brains systems for affect and sensation. In addition to answering his empirical questions, James' work looks to increase the availability of open access research tools. This has resulted in the development of a statistical packages for fMRI analyses, a toolkit for virtual auditory environments, and an affective stimulus set of VR objects.

This research is supported by a dedicated group of graduate students and undergraduate volunteers. For additional information on the people and projects that make up this research program, see iceresearch.ca



# **Dr. Anthony Murkar**

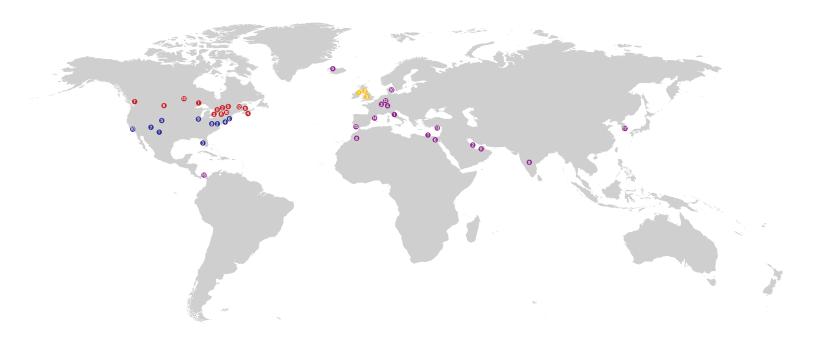
Anthony Murkar is an Assistant Professor in the department of Psychology at Lakehead's Southern Ontario campus in Orillia. His work focuses on psychopharmacology and is particularly centered on the use of medicinal plants and other natural health products as novel interventions for mental health conditions. In 2023-2024, he published work on changes in cannabis intake during the COVID-19 pandemic and its relationship with levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Dr. Murkar was also part of a team of researchers conducting work on trends in medical cannabis authorizations for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a result of the high prevalence of cannabis use among Canadian combat veterans with PTSD, cross-sectional studies were conducted leveraging data from the Life After Service Study (2019) and Health Administrative Databases to better understand clinical and demographic correlates of rising cannabis use among Canadian veterans. This work, funded through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), will contribute to a better understanding of trends in cannabis intake. Finally, Dr. Murkar and colleagues were awarded the SciRIN SciCLEAR Award for work presented at the Health Canada Science Forum linking mental health literacy and roadblocks to accessing primary care with lower levels of positive mental health among Canadians in a nationally representative survey study.

# Sacha Dubois Lecturer, School of Nursing

Sacha Dubois is a lecturer in the School of Nursing. Before joining Lakehead full-time, Sacha was a research statistician applying specialized knowledge of both research methodology and advanced statistical principles to research, evaluation, and educational initiatives. Broadly speaking, Sacha's research falls into two main areas: Injury Prevention; and Wellness and Mental Health. His research has included such topics as road safety, immunization and infection control, and efficacy and adverse events of drug therapies. Sacha has also collaborated on research projects that consider novel approaches to address depression and anxiety along identifying, destigmatizing, and addressing mental health care needs. A life-long learner, Sacha is currently pursuing a PhD in Educational Studies with a focus on learner anxiety and its transformative opportunities.









- 1 Thunder Bay, Ontario
- 2 Ottawa, Ontario
- 3 Toronto, Ontario
- 4 Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 5 Montreal, Quebec
- 6 Calgary, Alberta
- 7 Vancouver, British Columbia
- 8 Kingston, Ontario
- 9 Moncton, Nova Scotia
- 10 Cornwall, Ontario
- 11 Scarborough, Ontario
- 12 Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 13 Winnipeg, Manitoba

# US:

- 1 Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 2 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 3 Tampa, Florida
- 4 New York City
- 5 Salt Lake City, Utah
- 6 Syracuse, NY
- 7 Las Vegas, Nevada
- 8 Rockville, Maryland
- 9 Urbana-Champaign, Illinois
- 10 Long Beach, California

### UK:

- 1 Belfast, Ireland
- 2 London, England
- 3 York, England

# **Beyond**

- 1- Florence, Italy
- 2 Doha, Qatar
- 3 Prague, Czech Republic
- 4 -Basel, Swizerland
- 5 Reykjavik Iceland
- 6 Cairo, Egypt
- 7 Alexandria, Egypt
- 8 Marrakesh, Morocco
- 9 Bengaluru India
- 10 Aarhua, Denmark
- 11 -Dubai, UAE
- 12 Ulm, Germany
- 13 Paphos, Cyprus
- 14 Barcelona, Spain
- 15 Faro Algarve, Portugal
- 16 Panama City, Panama
- 17 Seoul, South Korea



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