Inuvialuit Regional Corporation

ProjectJewel

HELPING ABORIGINAL PEOPLE RE-DISCOVER THEIR VALUE.

CIHR IRSC

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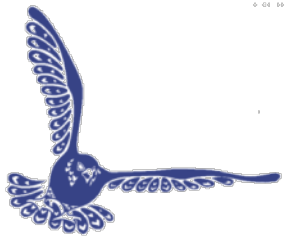
uOttawa

Introductions

- Audrey Giles, PhD, Full Professor, University of Ottawa
- Meghan Etter, MSW, Counselling Services Manager, IRC
- Mary Ollier, BScKin, MA candidate, University of Ottawa
- Huge team!



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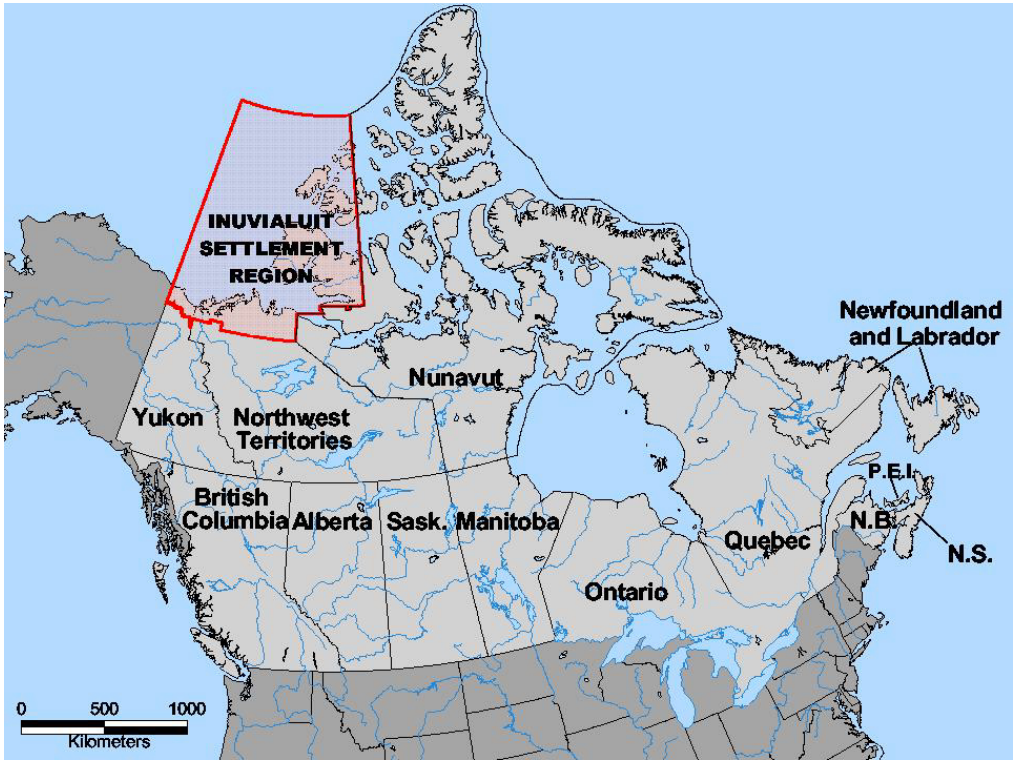
Location, Location, Location

- Inuvialuit Settlement Region
- ~6,000 residents
- ~3,300 Inuit
- 6 communities



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History of Project Jewel

- Land is a place of healing
- Typically send residents away for addiction treatment
- Change approach: On-the-land (OTL)
- Pilot in 2013: women
- Extended: couples, men, youth and elders
- Broader issues: poverty, violence, trauma

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What Does it Look Like?

- On-the-land programmiong
- Client-centred programming
- 3 – 10 days
- Residents of Beaufort-Delta Region

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- **‘Nomadic’ program**
  - Reindeer Station
  - Delta Bush Camps (rented from local harvesters)
  - Baby Island (whaling camp)
  - Gwich’in Campgroun
  - ISR Communities

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Combination of Traditional and Western Programming

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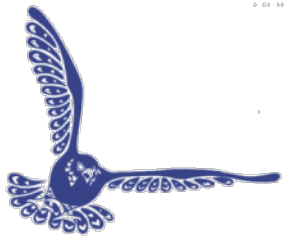
Guided by Elders' knowledge and teachings

After-Care Planning and Follow-Up Camps

Benefits of OTL Programming

- What we **know**:
  - Connection to land and culture is crucial
  - Sense of cultural identity helps with self-esteem, self-worth, overall wellness
  - On-the-land programs improve well-being



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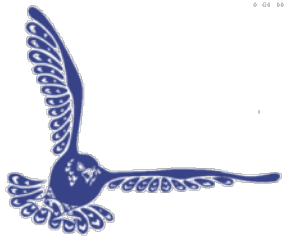
Why Formal Evaluation?

- Understanding of **how** and **why** OTL programs work
- Improve program
- Ensure we are meeting client needs
- Capture individual stories and success
- Strengthen funding proposals



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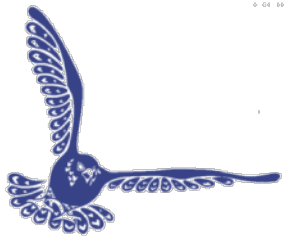
OTL Evaluation Fails

- Often dictated by the funder
  - Not culturally relevant or culturally safe
  - Risk not gathering accurate data
  - Lack of participant involvement
  - Often driven by #’s or quantitative data
  - Does not capture essence of the program
  - Misses the story of the individual



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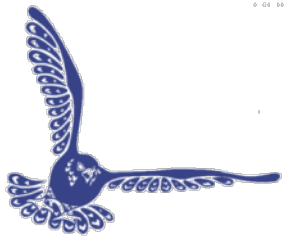
Our Approach

- Hand-select outside source for evaluation
- Ensure this is for **our** (program and client) benefit, not the researcher
- Locally-informed
- Proper protocol to respect culture



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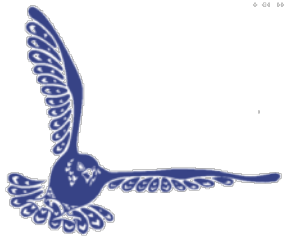
What do we want to know?

- Basic Questions
  - **How** does Project Jewel work?
  - How can it be **improved**?
  - How can we evaluate it in a way that is **culturally safe and relevant**?



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Process

- CIHR Catalyst Grant: advisory team = research team
- Trauma-informed & culturally safe: Asking the right questions at the right times in the right ways in the right places
- Gathering data on the land (2-3 camps)
- Current & past participants, stakeholders
  - Semi-structured interviews
  - Photovoice
  - Sharing circles
  - Which work best? Why? Repeat. Refine.
  - Ownership, control, access, possession

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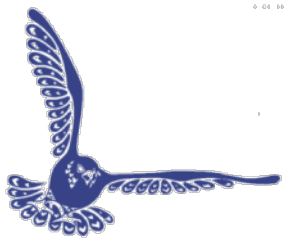

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