Title: On Indigenous Food, Medicine, and Allyship: Working with Indigenous Knowledges and Knowledge Keepers Towards Healing

Abstract: Solutions to the effective treatment of Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and advanced *Candida albicans* infections have been sought with the assistance of Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Keepers collaborating with chemists and biochemists across western Canada. Agents of infectious disease are now being thwarted thanks to treatments stemming from Indigenous Medicinal Plant Healing Traditions, changing attitudes about medicinal chemistry and who truly understands how to effectively fight disease. To arrive at this point, way-finding with the help of many Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Traditional Healers was essential, and part of a decade-long unlearning and learning process for a conventional-trained synthetic organic chemist. Their journey, beginning with unconventional classrooms, Land-based Learning, Protocol and Ceremony, Truth and Reconciliation, re-evaluation of research conventions and goals (and plenty of hard-won lessons), will be shared. Efforts toward development of successfully Indigenized chemistry courses, interdisciplinarity, and increased systems thinking in lab and field helped shift paradigms to usher in better ways of conducting research and working in a good way with a growing number of Elders, Indigenous Scientists, and team members. We will ask if this is part of achieving "allyship" with Indigenous Peoples, or just the start of an ongoing process toward ethical research, teaching, and reciprocity through chemistry.