

# KEEPERS QUARTERLY

Official Newsletter of the Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team (MK-MDT)

## Purpose of our MK-MDT Newsletter

- Highlight accomplishments
- Announcements & updates
- Celebrate team members
- Give motivation
- Provide support
- Connect to community

WELCOME TO OUR EIGHTH  
ISSUE OF KEEPERS QUARTERLY!



  
Medical School,  
Duluth Campus  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Driven to Discover®

# MEMORY KEEPERS



## VISION

Transformative research for brain health equity.



## MISSION

Our mission is to engage Indigenous and rural communities in culturally meaningful research to improve dementia and brain health outcomes for all.



## VALUES

- Strengths-based lens
- Two-eyed seeing
- Team science
- Community-based participatory research
- Six R's of research: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility, Relationships and Representation

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Kristen Jacklin, Wyatt Cheney, Mitchell Rigert, Mindy Dertinger, Mikaela Williams and Josyaah Budreau

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Engagement Events and Team Meetings

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# DIRECTOR & DATA ANALYSTS MESSAGE

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

Spring brings many changes, particularly in the weather. At Memory Keepers, this also means we have more community events to participate in (see our Community Engagements on page 3). I have had the opportunity to attend some of these events, and I truly value the connections I've made with individuals affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Additionally, we have secured more resources to support future community visiting and listening events—stay tuned!

Best,

Kristen Jacklin, PhD

**Executive Director, Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team**

## DATA ANALYST TEAM HIGHLIGHT AND MESSAGE



From Left to Right: Wyatt Cheney, Mitchell Rigert, Mindy Dertinger, Mikaela Williams, and Josyaah Budreau

Qualitative Data Analysts Wyatt Cheney, Mitchell Rigert, Mikaela Williams, Josyaah Budreau, and Mindy Dertinger (Unit Lead) support research efforts across projects at MK-MDT and serve as an essential resource for faculty and staff.

### A day in the life of a Qualitative Data Analyst at MK-MDT:

As data analysts, we strive to emphasize team science and collaboration throughout the analysis process. To achieve this, we often involve faculty, senior staff, project leads, community-based researchers, and advisory groups in discussions and decision-making processes. Our process involves coding qualitative interviews collected by community-based researchers, managing databases, discussing themes that emerge from the data, sharing findings with both academic and community-based partners, and incorporating diverse perspectives and ways of knowing throughout the process.



Weekly data analyst team meeting

Each analyst brings their unique perspectives and skills, which is why we value open dialogue and discussion as we analyze the data. We also contribute to research deliverables, such as presentations to the community, conferences, reports, and papers. We enjoy being able to engage and collaborate with others throughout MK-MDT and partnering communities in the work we do.

# RECENT NEWS AND EVENTS



## THE INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS DEMENTIA RESEARCH NETWORK (IIDRN) CONFERENCE

October 20-23, 2025

The 3rd annual conference will take place at the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa on October 20-23, 2025. Please consider joining us! We look forward to seeing everyone this year for #IIDRN25. Learn more about the conference at <https://www.iidrn.org/>.



## MK-MDT ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

March 2025-June 2025

**Alzheimer's Day on the Hill-** March 11

**National Title VI Conference-** March 10-13

**UMN Public Engagement Conference-** March 18

**Red Lake State of the Band Address-** March 28

**Minnesota Gerontological Society Conference-** April 23-24

**Eveleth Senior Expo-** April 30

**Detroit Lakes Celebrating Aging Expo-** May 14

**Ely Healthy Aging Expo-** May 15

**Brain Train (Leech Lake, MN)-** June 6

**Rural Health Conference-** June 9-10

**Fond du Lac Health Fair-** June 10

**Prairie Island Health Fair-** June 10

**Wisdom Steps-** June 11-12

**Lower Sioux Community Walk and Powwow-** June 13-14



# RECENT NEWS AND EVENTS

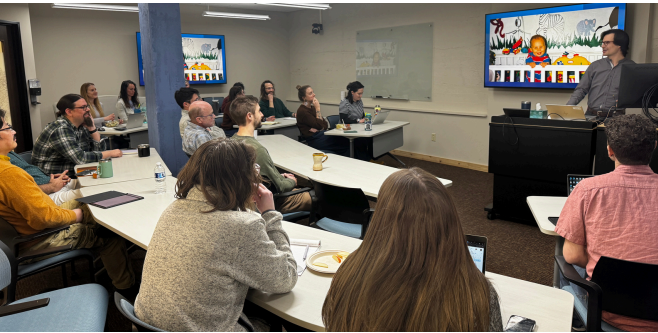
## MK-MDT TEAM MEETINGS

March 2025-June 2025

### Fireside Chat

March 20

“(Agri)cultural activism: Karen youth, rotational farming, and Indigeneity in Thailand” was presented by Data Analyst Mitchell Rigert.



### Staff Appreciation Dinner at the Duluth Aquarium

May 12

MK-MDT leadership put together a staff appreciation dinner amongst the animals at the Duluth Aquarium! Research efforts were celebrated, and the team enjoyed dinner.



### Poetry Practice

May 23

Dr. Antonio Guzman conducted a poetry practice session with facilitators Allie (Aningkamwishgan) Tibbetts and Jeanne LeGarde Warttman to identify potential areas for improvement. Some members of the Fond du Lac Community Advisory Group attended the session to gain a better understanding of the actual sessions scheduled to take place this summer. Please see page 6 for more about the Poetry Project.



### Elder Advisory Council Meeting at MK-MDT and the Boat Club

June 4-5

The Elder Advisory Council convened for a two-day meeting to discuss project updates and provide feedback. It was wrapped up by a dinner at the Boat Club with views of Lake Superior.



# ONGOING PROJECTS

The MK-MDT is focused on cognitive degeneration and brain health for Indigenous and rural communities. Our current projects include:



## **The American Indigenous Cognitive Assessment (AMICA)**

The AMICA project is a five-year (2022-2027) grant awarded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with funding through the National Institute on Aging (NIA). The AMICA project aims to develop a culturally appropriate dementia evaluation toolkit with American Indian communities.



## **Indigenous Cultural Understandings of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias - Research and Engagement (ICARE)**

The ICARE project is a five year (2021-2026) grant awarded by the NIH with funding through the NIA.

This research is the second phase of ICARE. It will address dementia disparities by examining how culture and community-specific context shape Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) illness experiences in Indigenous populations.



## **The International Indigenous Dementia Research Network (IIDRN)**

IIDRN is a five-year conference grant (2023-2028) funded through NIA. The goal is to showcase the profiles of researchers, students, Indigenous community members, and policymakers from around the world who share a commitment to research on ADRD and healthy aging among Indigenous peoples.

The aims of this network are:

1. To bring together researchers with an interest in ADRD in Indigenous peoples and to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience with research in this area; and
2. Create a forum to exchange knowledge about ADRD among researchers, government and policy personnel, Indigenous experts, and community members.



## **Community Engaged Rural Dementia and Alzheimer's Research (CERDAR)**

CERDAR addresses the growing challenge of dementia and dementia care needs in rural northern Minnesota, using community-based approaches to research and leveraging the unique strengths of rural communities. CERDAR includes 5 projects focused on cultural factors influencing care, dementia prevention strategies, caregiver support, and rural people's participation in dementia prevention research and clinical trials. Our team also recently submitted a large grant proposal to the NIA, which would support 3 additional projects in the coming years.

See our [website](https://www.memorykeepersmdt.com/) for more information on each project:

**<https://www.memorykeepersmdt.com/>**

# ONGOING PROJECTS



## **The Impact of Colonization in Indigenous Cardiovascular Health in Minnesota: Developing a Conceptual Framework - C2DREAM**

**Dr. Antonio Paniagua Guzman**, Senior Research Associate at MK-MDT, has been awarded \$50,000 over two years by the Center for Chronic Disease Reduction and Equity Promotion Across Minnesota (C2DREAM). This grant will be used to develop and implement his project entitled, "The Impact of Colonization in Indigenous Cardiovascular Health in Minnesota: Developing a Conceptual Framework" in collaboration with Nah-gah-chi-wa-nong/Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.



## **Therapeutic Poetry Program for Indigenous People Living with Dementia - Alzheimer's Association**

**Dr. Antonio Paniagua Guzman** has been awarded \$183,000 over three years by the Alzheimer's Association for his project entitled, "Therapeutic Poetry Program for Indigenous People Living with Dementia." Dr. Paniagua Guzman (PI) and his study team will seek to work in collaboration with Nah-gah-chi-wa-nong/Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to develop and implement the first sustainable, replicable, and culturally safe poetry-based therapy program for Indigenous people living with dementia, the first of its kind in the United States.



## **Minnesota Geospatial Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factor Surveillance System Pilot Study - C2DREAM**

**Dr. Genelle Lamont**, Assistant Professor at MK-MDT, has been awarded a one year grant that will develop a geospatial cardiovascular disease risk factor surveillance system in Minnesota that can identify and track the disparities, trends, risk factors and social determinants of health of cardiovascular disease and related chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and hyperlipidemia).



## **The Minnesota Tribal Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Surveillance System Project - Alzheimer's Association**

**Dr. Genelle Lamont** has been awarded \$200,000 for her project titled, "Minnesota Tribal Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Surveillance System" by the Alzheimer's Association. This study aims to develop the first state-based, Tribally owned and operated system for tracking the incidence, prevalence, and mortality of ADRD by and for American Indians. The overall goal is to build a comprehensive data system and public health surveillance model that supports culturally appropriate care, policy planning, and resource allocation for ADRD in Tribal communities.



## INTERESTED IN SPONSORING?

Email: [memorykeepers@d.umn.edu](mailto:memorykeepers@d.umn.edu)

Phone: (218) 726-6801

## WANT TO BE A PART OF OUR TEAM?

Look out for job openings here:

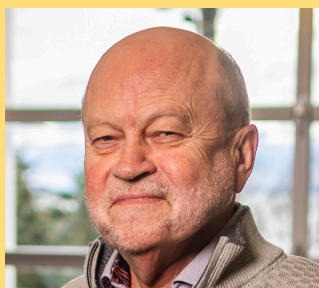
<https://memorykeepersmdt.com/careers/>

<https://med.umn.edu/memory>

### LEADERSHIP TEAM



DR. KRISTEN JACKLIN



DR. WAYNE WARRY



DR. GENELLE LAMONT



DR. MELISSA BLIND



DR. CLIFF WHETUNG

### CONTACT US



#### BLUESKY SOCIAL:

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#### LINKEDIN:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/memory-keepers-medical-discovery-team>

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