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Laurier expert alert: International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

WATERLOO – The [United Nations International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#) is marked globally on Aug. 9, providing an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada as well as other countries. The 2022 theme is “The Role of Indigenous Women in the Preservation and Transmission of Traditional Knowledge.”

Wilfrid Laurier University has experts available to discuss related topics, including health and wellness, Indigenous-settler relations, environmental stewardship, and missing and murdered women and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals. [Learn more about how Laurier is celebrating its Indigenous community.](#)

The following list includes Laurier experts who are available to speak at this time but does not represent the full breadth of expertise that exists at our institution. For a more comprehensive inventory of our faculty researchers, please consult the [Experts at Laurier](#) database.

[Lianne Leddy](#) is an associate professor of History in the Faculty of Arts. Her research focuses on Indigenous-settler relations, particularly those framed by gender and environmental issues. Leddy is a member of Serpent River First Nation and recently published a book about the impacts of uranium mining in her homeland. She also examines the gendered experiences of colonialism and performance art as an expression of Indigenous feminist thought. Contact: lleddy@wlu.ca

[Percy Lezard](#) is an assistant professor of Indigenous Studies. They are an expert in Indigenous knowledge, two spirit pedagogies, community Indigenous health, missing and murdered women and 2SLGBTQ+, and gender-based violence in 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Lezard is outmasqilxw of the Penticton Indian Band in B.C. and centres Indigenous knowledge, teaching and research methodologies in their work. They are a survivor of the multi-generational impacts of the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop. [Read more about their work.](#) Contact: plezard@wlu.ca

[Susan Neylan](#) is an associate professor in the Department of History and an expert on the history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada. She is available to speak about the relationship between Indigenous people and the church in British Columbia in the 19th and 20th centuries, Aboriginal-Missionary relations and forms of Indigenous Christianity. Contact: sneylan@wlu.ca

[Gus Hill](#) is a professor in Laurier's Indigenous Field of Study program within the Faculty of Social Work. He is an expert in Indigenous health and wellness, Indigenous community building, and community-based Indigenous research. Hill's main research focus is improving the well-being of Indigenous Canadians, guided by Wholism and the commitment to place control of Indigenous knowledge firmly in the hands of Indigenous people and communities. He is the Lyle S. Hallman Chair in Child and Family Welfare. Contact: ghill@wlu.ca

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[Alex Latta](#) is an associate professor in the departments of Global Studies and Geography and Environmental Studies, as well as the director of Laurier's Cold Regions Research Centre. He is an expert on natural resource conservation and Indigenous rights. Latta is involved in multiple research projects in the Northwest Territories and Northern Ontario, with a focus on climate change adaptation and Indigenous-led environmental stewardship. He is also involved in many other research partnerships with First Nations in the Northwest Territories. Contact: alatta@wlu.ca

[Miguel Sioui](#) is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. He is an expert on Indigenous knowledges, Indigenous land-use and environmental management, particularly in eastern and northern Ontario, northern Quebec, the Northwest Territories and Yucatan, Mexico. Through his research, Sioui is building connections between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, researchers and governments in order to develop responsible, respectful and sustainable environmental management strategies. Sioui is of Huron-Wendat descent. Contact: msioui@wlu.ca

Darren Thomas is Laurier's associate vice-president of Indigenous Initiatives. As the most senior Indigenous leader at Laurier, Thomas provides strategic advice, support and expertise to academic and administrative units across the institution to achieve goals related to Indigeneity. As a researcher, he focuses on Indigenous rights, resource governance and self-determination. Thomas has worked in the educational, health care and child welfare sectors to support efforts to improve services as they work toward reconciliation and Indigenization. Contact: dthomas@wlu.ca

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