

NORTHERN ONTARIO RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT IDEAS KNOWLEDGE

Research
Dialogue
Analysis
Reflection

N·O·R·D·I·K· INSTITUTE

Supporting Sustainable Communities



Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Learning Circle 2010

Annual Report 2009-2010



Algoma Farmers' Market
Buy Algoma. Buy Fresh.
www.buyalgoma.ca



Corridors for Life Field Research



Social Economy Conference 2010

Local, regional, national & international socio-economic development

NORDIK Board of Directors, 2008-09

Terry Ross - Chair
Connie Manitowabi
Elaine McDonagh
Dr. Arthur Perlini
Meghan Boston-McCracken
Debbie Shubat

Honorary Members

Dr. Jong You
Dr. Sandy Lockhart

NORDIK Q&A

What is NORDIK?

The NORDIK (Northern Ontario Research, Development, Ideas and Knowledge) research institute evolved from the CESD program. NORDIK is committed to further developing Northern Ontario's capacity by working closely with its community partners and providing mentoring to new researchers.

NORDIK Vision

The establishment and operation of a research institute for the purpose of promoting more vibrant, caring and sustainable communities through research, dialogue, analysis and reflection dedicated to the practice of holistic community development.

NORDIK Principles

- Collaborative community-university partnerships
- Builds community capacity to conduct its own research for sustainability
- Holistic - Economic, social, cultural, and legal/political development
- Inclusionary and participatory
- Strengths-based
- Sustainable
- Process is as important as outcomes

The CESD Program

The Community Economic and Social Development Program (CESD) is a four year interdisciplinary degree program at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, ON. CESD promotes the growth of more sustainable communities, economically, ecologically, socially, and culturally.

For more, visit :

www.nordikinstitute.com
www.algomau.ca/cesd

Director's Report

by Dr. Gayle Broad
Research Director of NORDIK



"Supporting Sustainable Communities"

Northern Ontario faces many social and economic challenges. As a community based research institute, NORDIK works closely with communities and community-based organizations, to address these challenges, and develop long-term sustainable solutions. We have entitled this year's report Supporting Sustainable Communities as a tribute to the efforts and achievements of this past year.

There are many aspects to building sustainable communities. One of the tools that is increasingly being used to determine sustainability, is called 'triple-bottomline-accounting', which means assessing the value of a given development or enterprise by calculating the social, economic and environmental impact, rather than evaluating it in solely economic terms. With this type of evaluation, communities are better able to determine the type of development that best suits their long-term vision, and accordingly anticipate the services and infrastructure required. NORDIK's holistic approach promotes this type of assessment of potential development activities, thereby supporting communities' efforts to become and/or maintain sustainability.

Sustainable communities need people with the skills and capacities to create innovative solutions to difficult problems, and NORDIK has had an opportunity to work with a number of communities on developing human resources. In particular, we provided research support to First Nations, youth, and persons with disabilities to engage, educate, train and develop their members so that they can reach their full potential.

NORDIK's work continued to expand in 2009-10, and we are grateful for the enthusiasm, dedication and commitment of students, interns, faculty and staff. As we move forward into the new year, we will be undertaking a major study on the impact of air quality on human health in partnership with Health Canada. This study will challenge NORDIK's skills and capacities, while making an important contribution at the national level, reflecting our Institute's growing reputation for high-quality research. We hope you enjoy reading about our most recent efforts, and look forward to your continued support into the future.

Research Staff and Students

Faculty

Dr. Linda Savory-Gordon (Bristol University)
Prof. Sheila Gruner (PhD Cand. University of Toronto)

Researchers

Jude Ortiz (PhD Cand. University of the West of England)
José Reyes (MBA, Cape Breton University)
Christine Sy (MA, Trent University)
Brandon Lawrence (BBA, Algoma University) NOHFC Intern
David Thompson (MBA Cand. Cape Breton University)
Bonnie Gaikhezheyongai (BA, Algoma University)
Sean Meades (BA, Dalhousie University) FedNor Intern
Natalie Waboose (BBA, Algoma University)
Al Fraser (PhD Cand. Laurentian University)
Rob Rawn (MSW Cand. Grand Valley State University) NOHFC Intern
Margaret Neveau (BA, Algoma University)

Students

Rebecca Stuebing (CESD Student)
Amie Harnish (CESD Student)
Jaime McKee (CESD Student)
Pat O'Flanagan (CESD Student)



Sean Meades, FedNor Intern



Amie Harnish, CESD Student

Research

Community-based research provides rich opportunities to dialogue, identify issues, and bring about action. This year NORDIK engaged in a public-private partnership around Species At Risk and continued to strengthen existing partners.

Sault Ste. Marie, Labour, and the Social Economy: A Case Study

Sault Ste. Marie has been the home of a strong labour movement since the 1940's. In 2009, the Sault Ste. Marie & District Labour Council celebrated its 50th anniversary of providing a collective voice to workers. With support from the Labour Council, this case study explored the nature and extent of labour's involvement in the social economy of Sault Ste. Marie. The study highlights contributions to the social economy in reducing poverty with the creation of credit unions, cooperatives, and alternative health care centres.



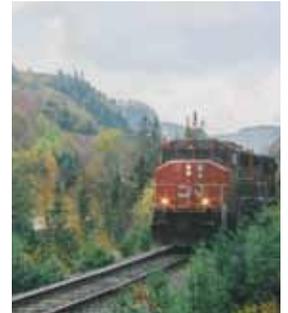
Corridors for Life

Corridors for Life was developed by Great Lakes Power as a means to encourage environmental stewardship and ensure safe and reliable delivery of electricity along power line corridors in the Algoma region. Studies on Species at Risk (SAR) living within the corridor indicated that maintenance practices were having a negative effect on the health and condition of species. This project was initiated to investigate SAR along the corridors, and make recommendations to improve their habitat. The project has partnered with Thessalon First Nations to grow low-lying plants along the corridor, suitable for SAR.



CAPT Trains

With NORDIK, The Coalition for Algoma Passengers Trains (CAPT) hired a research intern (funded by NOHFC) to research the feasibility of passenger rail service between Sudbury and North Bay. In the past year, CAPT hosted a multitude of events, including a Town Hall Meeting: "Track to the Future"; a pre-budget consultation with MP Tony Martin; and the annual "Group of Seven" train tour. This past year, CAPT upgraded their website at www.captrains.ca Visit for upcoming events, train related news, and blog.



Penokean Hills Farms: NORDIK has continued to build the capacity of this group of cattle farmers with marketing healthy, local beef. This past year, NORDIK provided business development to both Penokean Hills Farms and the local abattoir, Northern Quality Meats.

Completed Research 08-09

- Corridors for Life: Final Report. (S.J. Meades, M. Krajchi, L. Derickx, J. Burkitt, J. Rose, and L. Smith)
- Business Plan for Northern Quality Meats (Brandon Lawrence, David Thompson)
- Labour market study: A community-based research report. (Christine Sy, Gayle Broad, Natalie Waboose, and Heather Schmidt)
- Mississauga Education Department Report. (Harvey Briggs and Margaret Neveau)
- North Shore Tribal Council Anishinaabemowin Initiatives: Survey Findings (Gayle Broad and Steffanie Date)
- Paquataskamik Project (Sheila Gruner, Chris Manitowabi, Joanne Robertson, and community researchers)
- Penokean Hills Farms: Business Analysis (Brandon Lawrence and Gayle Broad)
- Report on the Algoma Rail Summit (Sean Meades, Linda Savory-Gordon, and Al Errington)
- Sault Ste. Marie, Labour, and the Social Economy (David Thompson, Amie Harnish, Al Fraser, and Gayle Broad)

Building Resilience through the Arts

On Oct 30, 2009 NORDIK Institute, in partnership with Community Resilience Sault Ste. Marie (CRSSM) and Community Arts Ontario (CAO), presented The Northern Ontario Regional Arts Network Development Conference: *Building Resilience through the Arts*. The forum concluded NORDIK's coordination of CAO's Breathing Northwinds project.

The event was live-streamed from Algoma University and focused on increasing resilience through awareness, participation, education, employment and networking opportunities in the arts. It began with a presentation on transitioning communities to locally-based sustainable development followed by culture's contribution to building healthy communities and ended with examples of Northern Ontario's success stories including guest speakers

from Elliot Lake and Sioux Lookout.

The event drew approximately 40 people to AU with participants from various sectors (economic, social, cultural) and inquiries from the University of Guelph and Australia. The forum was followed by NORDIK's AGM.



Dialogue

Presentations

Planning by Design

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Planning Dept. and NORDIK Institute hosted a webinar on healthy and sustainable planning in coordination with Ontario Professional Planners Institute. This workshop is also presented in a handbook available through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing website: www.mah.gov.on.ca



Presentations and Workshops

Algoma Food Network: Edible Algoma Town Hall Meeting

Gayle Broad: CED Conference; Resilience on Manitoulin; Economic and Community Development Best Practices.

Coalition for Algoma Passenger Trains: Train Summit; Group of Seven Train Event; Track to the Future; and Pre-budget Consultations.

Sheila Gruner: Living in the Presence of our Ancestors (Conference); Ft. Albany River Trip

Jude Ortiz: Temagami Gathering; Cultural Policy Workshop; Career Fair for the Arts; Building Resilience Through the Arts

Conference on the Social Economy

Over the past four years, NORDIK Institute and the Community Economic Social Development Program at Algoma University have been engaged in an exciting research collaboration with the Universities of Saskatchewan and Winnipeg, entitled: **Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies and Sustainable Communities.** On April 27, 28, and 29, 2010, a conference was hosted in Sault Ste. Marie which explored the policy implications of that research. The title of the conference was “**Government That Works for People: Policy Development and the Social Economy**” and was the final conference for the **Linking, Learning and Leveraging** project.



Media stories, conference presentations, hosting conferences and - this year - assisting in the production of video short-stories, have all been ways that NORDIK has stimulated dialogue at local, regional and national levels.

Youth Tell their Stories: Supporting Diverse Communities

Queer Voices of the North Film Festival is Northern Ontario's only film festival focusing on the topics, themes, and narratives relevant or related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, genderqueer, ogokweniwok, ogokwewok, transsexual, and other two-spirit or queer people.

In March, 2010, NORDIK partnered with Queer Voices during their 5th anniversary in the delivery of a digital story-telling workshop that offered LGBT2SQ youth from across the Algoma District the opportunity to develop a short video based on their own personal narratives. The workshop, funded through the Ontario Arts Council, the City of Sault Ste. Marie, and coordinated by NORDIK, was led by Emmy Pantin and

Jennifer LaFontaine from the Centre for Digital Storytelling.

Storytellers committed to a 3-day workshop hosted at Algoma University, where they were brought through the process of identifying personal stories, building them into succinct narratives, recording them into a video format, and then editing their final product. The videos were screened at Sault Ste. Marie's Galaxy Cinemas as part of the Queer Voices of the

North Film Festival to an audience of over 50 people.



Participants of the 3-day workshop, creating their own digital stories

The digital stories can be seen on the Centre for Digital Storytelling website: <http://www.storycentre.wordpress.com>

Analysis & Reflection

Research is done within a context of analysis and reflection: What have we learned from this work? How can we apply it in different situations? How does this change both what we do and how we do it?

Reflecting on land-use in the far North

“Paquataskamik” is a Cree word that describes the ‘natural environment’ and draws attention to the ‘whole’ of traditional territory.

The Paquataskamik Project has been busy over the past year. The local community advisory group invited NORDIK to work with them on various activities. A project coordinator was hired at the community level on a part-time basis, which turned into a full time position in early March. A senior CESD student took on a position at NORDIK to advance a variety of supportive research-oriented activities, including the production of a Cree-language map based on information-gathered during last year’s excursion, as well as creative materials for public outreach

and for a CESD off-site course delivered in the community. The off-site course included an in-field component in March 2010 that saw a group of 12 people travel by skidoo along the Kapiskau River to a winter camp and traditional hunting area, where Elder stories were gathered by community youth and adults and polar bear tracks were spotted. A DVD was produced last fall involving some of the audio and visual worked produced in the community by community members, and a film of last year’s raft excursion along the Albany River is nearing completion (set for release in January 2011). The Paquataskamik Project is a community-based project in Ft. Albany First Nation. It’s main focus is bringing together youth, adults and elders to dialogue about land, water and traditional territory. NORDIK’s research lead for this project is Prof. Sheila Gruner.

Educating for Community Health

Debbie Shubat, professor of Nursing at Sault College joined NORDIK during her sabbatical from Sept 2008 to June 2009. Her research focused on exploring the link between health and community development with a focus on transformative learning.

This project explored, through an educational action research process with a ten member inquiry group, collective knowledge about community health, community development and Aboriginal ways of knowing through the lens of transformative learning.

The process generated a series of recommendations for changes in the theoretical and practice aspects of the nursing curriculum, including development of non-traditional placements and inte-

gration of a variety of reflective practice models. These changes, intended to help shift the lens from acute care to upstream thinking about the social determinants of health, are essential to prepare students for future practice in community health nursing.



Debbie Shubat

Reclaiming the Anishinaabemowin Language

Steffanie Date and Gayle Broad

In 2009-10, the North Shore Tribal Council conducted a survey on Anishinaabemowin language education of all seven member First Nations. Efforts to maintain the Anishinaabemowin language, among the seven First Nations have been undertaken over the last two decades. This study was to determine the effectiveness of the various strategies such as language immersion education for all school ages and language classes for adults. Researchers found a strong desire to reclaim the endangered language among the younger generation through immersion and within the school system.



Researcher Margaret Neveau

Evaluation of the Mississauga First Nation Education Dept.

Margaret Neveau and Harvey Briggs

NORDIK responded to a research proposal in 2009 that focused on evaluating and strengthening education programs and services delivered by Mississauga First Nations. The evaluation covered the First Nation’s internal education department, including staff who worked with a high school and elementary school in Blind River. To collect the data, NORDIK researchers identified the research needs and conducted surveys, interviews, and hosted a community forum with community members.

Visit us Online



www.NORDIKInstitute.com

Thanks to our Funders

- Algoma University
- Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation
- Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada (Linking, Learning, Leveraging)
- FedNOR
- Centre for the Study of Co-operatives (University of Saskatchewan)
- The Canadian CED Network (CCEDNET)

ALGOMA
university

 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada



 **Ontario**
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund

FedNor 

 **Linking, Learning, Leveraging:**
SOCIAL ENTERPRISES
KNOWLEDGEABLE ECONOMIES
& SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

**NORDIK Institute
Algoma University
1520 Queen St. E.
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
P6A2G4**

***Thank you to Our Funders and Our
Community and University Partners***

info@nordikinstitute.com