



2019/20

ANNUAL REPORT

# ISMSS

Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services

Housed in the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education, the **Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS)** provides direct services and leads ground breaking research that affects policy development, intervention, education and community outreach for 2SLGBTQ+ people.

Bringing together research, teaching, wellness services, and community outreach under one umbrella enables us to combine our studies and services in ways that create opportunities for innovative intellectual work and sustained educational and community outreach.

Our advocacy and research not only helps youth at large, but also guides professional development and education for teachers, social workers, family physicians, psychologists, guidance counsellors and other caring professionals, enabling them to be better resources and advocates for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and their families.



## MISSION

iSMSS works to create a society where all queer and trans people are free of discrimination. Through our education programs, research, policy development, advocacy, and community services, we strive to:

- Empower the LGBTQ2S+ community to thrive
- Build leaders, particularly among youth
- Build public awareness and allyship
- Advance sexual and gender diversity studies to the forefront
- Create hope

We are unique in that we utilize research to inform our services, and our services drive the direction of our research.

## RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Working with the Canada Research Chair in Sexual and Gender Minority Studies, iSMSS studies:

- Comprehensive health, educational, and cultural concerns of 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults in intersections with race, class, Indigeneity, and other relational differences.
- Addressing 2SLGBTQ+ issues in educational and social policymaking, law, and legislation in Canada and its provinces and territories.
- Parameters of caring professional development and practice for teachers, nurses, police officers, social workers, counselling psychologists, and other professionals working with vulnerable 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults.
- Researching resilience as a construct, process, and outcome in helping 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults to deal with adversity and trauma.
- Advancing greater synchronicity among interdisciplinary research, policy, and practice in working with 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults in Canada.
- Using research to inform the ongoing development of an evidence-based C3 model for working with 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults, which is focused on comprehensive health education and outreach, community intervention and supports, and compassionate policing.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

iSMSS offers a variety of innovative programs and services, including:

- **Family Resilience Project:** It utilizes a holistic model to provide mental health support to 2SLGBTQ+ youth and their families and caregivers by offering free therapy with registered psychologists as well as integrated supports and services. In 2019, FRP served 38 clients and their family members. In 2020, we moved from one full-time psychologist to a model of contracting hourly services from three psychologists and two QTBIPOC focused counselling services.

- **Camp fyrefly:** A national leadership and wellness camp for 2SLGBTQ+ youth that focuses on their individual needs, socialization, health, and wellness as well as ways to help youth grow into resilience. Over 350 campers, youth leaders and volunteers participated in four camps across three provinces.
- **fyrefly in Schools (FINS):** An anti-homo/bi/transphobia peer-to-peer education program for all students, teachers and staff in K-12 schools. We also offer this professional development to not-for-profits and businesses. In the past year, 179 FINS workshops have been held with a total of 5,331 participants. An additional three English Second Language (ESL) focused workshops were held with 155 participants.
- **Where the Rivers Meet (WTRM):** A project that grew out of the need to address systemic discrimination and create specialized programming catering to the lived realities of Two-Spirit, and LGBTQ+ Indigenous youth. It focuses on developing and providing leadership workshops designed to combat homophobia and transphobia in K-12 schools. We just received funding to expand this program to Calgary. Since November 2019, 38 WTRM presentations have been conducted with approximately 550 total participants.
- **Comprehensive Health Education Wellness Project (CHEW):** Development and delivery of research-informed, age-appropriate, non-judgmental comprehensive health education for 2SLGBTQ+ youth who are in care, homeless and/or sex-work involved. CHEW currently has over 170 registered youth and serves and see average of 15-20 per day.
- **University of Alberta Pride Week:** Engaging campus communities, and coming together to build supportive, caring, and respectful campus environments for 2SLGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty.
- **Pride Tape:** In partnership with Calder Bateman, we are showing support to/from teammates, coaches, parents and pros to 2SLGBTQ+ players. Showing every player that they belong in the game.
- **You can Play:** Ensures safety and inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ folks who participate or wish to participate in sport; including: athletes, coaches, and fans.
- **nohomophobes.com:** A website that actively tracks how often homophobic language is used in social media on a daily basis. This is an educational tool, used to raise rareness about the prevalence of homophobia



# PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Highlights of some major activities from the past year include:

- **Mayor's Pride Brunch:** With over 400 community leaders, supporters and friends of flyrefly, we celebrated camp successes and raised funds to help cover the costs of Alberta's North and South camps.
- **MetGala of the North:** We held our first annual gala that replicates the theme of the original MET Gala and raises funds for iSMSS programming.
- **OUTpost:** We opened a day shelter to provide CHEW services in downtown Edmonton.
- **Strategic Planning:** In 2018, iSMSS added an Executive Director position. We recognized how much the institute was growing and in need for re-evaluation and long-term planning. In 2019, we completed a strategic plan and refocused our mission, priorities, and mandate.
- **iSMSS Scholarships:** We offer several undergraduate and graduate scholarships for UofA students focused on 2SLGBTQ+ research, leadership activities and community service.
- **Research:** Dr. André Grace and his research team continue to conduct research in the following areas:
  - Queer studies
  - Inclusive education
  - Critical lifelong learning
  - Welfare-and-work issues for 2SLGBT+ Teachers

Dr. Andre Grace is currently researching the impact of caring, compassionate professionals on 2SLGBTQ+ youth. We are currently partnering to conduct research into trans femme health outcomes in Alberta. Additionally, we are partnering with Trent University to do a comparative study of outcomes of physical versus virtual youth camps.



# OUR PEOPLE

**Dr. Glynnis Lieb (she/her)**  
Executive Director  
[lieb@ualberta.ca](mailto:lieb@ualberta.ca)

**Aman Powar-Grewal (she/her)**  
Manager of Programs and Services  
[aman.powar-grewal@ualberta.ca](mailto:aman.powar-grewal@ualberta.ca)

**Susan Dut (she/her)**  
Communications & Events Coordinator  
[sdut@ualberta.ca](mailto:sdut@ualberta.ca)

**Kelli Luber (she/her)**  
Program Assistant  
[kelli.luber@ualberta.ca](mailto:kelli.luber@ualberta.ca)

**Evan Westfal (he/him)**  
FYfly in Schools Education Coordinator  
[ewestfal@ualberta.ca](mailto:ewestfal@ualberta.ca)

**Ezra Hockett (they/them)**  
FYrefly in Schools Education Facilitator  
[zhockett@ualberta.ca](mailto:zhockett@ualberta.ca)

**Alex Marshall (she/her)**  
Rural FYrefly in Schools Educator  
[jam20@ualberta.ca](mailto:jam20@ualberta.ca)

**Gabriel Castelloux Calderon (they/them)**  
WTRM Coordinator  
[gcastill@ualberta.ca](mailto:gcastill@ualberta.ca)

**Corey Bighorn (he/him)**  
National Camp FYrefly Coordinator  
[bighorn@ualberta.ca](mailto:bighorn@ualberta.ca)

**Corey Wyness (he/him)**  
CHEW Project Coordinator  
[cwyness@ualberta.ca](mailto:cwyness@ualberta.ca)

**Rohan Dave (he/him)**  
Peer Support Worker  
[rafiki.dave@gmail.com](mailto:rafiki.dave@gmail.com)

**Boyd Whiskeyjack (he/she/they)**  
Indigenous Peer Support Worker  
[boyd@edmonton2s.com](mailto:boyd@edmonton2s.com)

**Emily Pynoo (she/her)**  
CHEW Communication  
[pynoo@ualberta.ca](mailto:pynoo@ualberta.ca)

**Melissa Peters (she/her)**  
CHEW Addictions Specialist  
[mpeters0207@gmail.com](mailto:mpeters0207@gmail.com)

**Dr. André Grace (he/him)**  
Research Associate  
Professor, Department of  
Educational Psychology  
[andre.Grace@ualberta.ca](mailto:andre.Grace@ualberta.ca)

**Michael Phair (he/him)**  
Adjunct Professor  
[michael.Phair@ualberta.ca](mailto:michael.Phair@ualberta.ca)

**Dr. Alvin Schrader (he/him)**  
Adjunct Professor  
Professor Emeritus, School of  
Library & Information Sciences  
[alvin.Schrader@ualberta.ca](mailto:alvin.Schrader@ualberta.ca)

## FIND OUT MORE

Visit [iSMSS.ualberta.ca](https://ismss.ualberta.ca) for detailed information about our research, programs and services

✉ [ismss@ualberta.ca](mailto:ismss@ualberta.ca)

☎ (780) 492-0772

📘 @iSMSS

🐦 @iSMSS\_UAlberta

📷 @ismss\_ualberta