

## **SFU Press Releases Collection**

These archival copies have been generated from web press releases maintained and originally written by SFU Communications and Marketing. Where possible, an effort has been made to preserve the public comments left on the website as well as any included photos or other images. All textual content should be faithful to the original press releases; contact numbers have been removed but they have not otherwise been altered in any way. However, this collection of documents spans multiple generations of web authoring software and not all formatting will be exact.

## MEDIA RELEASE

# Dr. Jeff Reading Appointed Western Canada's First Chair in Heart Health Research for First Nations People

*Chair will lead research and education to develop a health program tailored to the needs of First Nations people*

January 21, 2016

[Tweet](#) [Facebook](#) [Pinterest](#) [Email](#) [Print](#)

**Contact:**

Trevor Kehoe, First Nations Health Authority, 604.831.4898, [trevor.kehoe@fnha.ca](mailto:trevor.kehoe@fnha.ca)

Sarah Burgess, St. Paul's Foundation, 604.653.6933, [sburgess@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto:sburgess@providencehealth.bc.ca)

Allen Tung, Simon Fraser University, 778.782.3608, [allent@sfu.ca](mailto:allent@sfu.ca)

**Photos:** <http://at.sfu.ca/nVibWF>

**Coast Salish Territory - Vancouver, B.C.** – First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Simon Fraser University (SFU) and the St. Paul's Foundation have introduced Dr. Jeff Reading, a leading national and international expert in Indigenous health, as the inaugural First Nations Health Authority Chair in Heart Health and Wellness at St. Paul's Hospital.

"We must learn from each other, and by supporting research into heart health for First Nations, we're breaking ground on a new era of personalized health care," said Health Minister Terry Lake. "This research will inform and guide how health care is provided for First Nations, promoting better health outcomes."

The \$2.5 million chair, the first of its kind in Western Canada, will place a holistic focus on First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples' cardiac health to drive research that can improve health outcomes.

"This chair at St. Paul's Hospital and SFU is a brilliant opportunity to establish timely access to strengths-based, preventative and wellness-focused treatment and care for First Nations communities," said Dr. Jeff Reading, First Nations Health Authority Chair in Heart Health and Wellness at St. Paul's Hospital and professor, SFU Faculty of Health Sciences.

Reading, who is a Mohawk from the Tyendinaga First Nation in Ontario, brings to the chair more than two decades of experience in enhancing knowledge in Indigenous health issues—both in Canada and globally. As chair, Reading's responsibilities include leading research to develop protective health promotion strategies that encompass cultural and spiritual considerations, understand risk factors related to the social determinants of health, and produce health knowledge for policies and programs.

"This appointment will greatly strengthen the capacities of the FNHA, SFU and St. Paul's Hospital to address the health and wellness concerns of First Nations peoples, and to conduct world-class education and research that is responsive to the needs of this population," said Andrew Petter, President and Vice-Chancellor, SFU. "By securing a chair holder of Dr. Reading's capabilities and stature, our three organizations are demonstrating our commitment to improving the lives of BC's First Nations through research, teaching and knowledge translation that is respectful of Indigenous culture."

More research specific to First Nations – particularly in the areas of hypertension, heart attack and stroke, and diabetes – needs to be done to understand protective measures and ensure timely care for First Nations people. Dr. Reading will also work to improve health system outcomes for First Nation peoples by developing preventive disease databases to increase research infrastructure and capacity in First Nations communities.

“We are excited to have selected Dr. Jeff Reading as the inaugural First Nations Health Authority Chair in Heart Health and Wellness at St. Paul’s. There is much work to do in understanding the causes and effects of the colonial experience past and present on First Nations heart health and wellness and we believe Dr. Reading is the perfect candidate to bring a distinct First Nations perspective to the clinical, academic and social determinants work in this area,” said Joe Gallagher, Chief Executive Officer, FNHA.

Dr. Reading will provide an active leadership voice locally, provincially, and nationally, advancing the understanding of strategies to develop a program of excellence in First Nations wellness and disease prevention. Colonization, loss of land base and the residual effects of residential schools have negatively impacted health outcomes and led to inequity within social determinants for First Nations people.

The chair position was co-developed by FHNA, St. Paul’s Hospital and SFU with shared funding to support the FNHA Chair for 10 years. As the FNHA’s chair, Dr. Reading’s work will be driven primarily from the First Nations perspective of Health and Wellness and supported through an academic mandate from SFU and clinical research support from St. Paul’s.

“The collaborative nature of this position will have a far-reaching impact. As we work towards mitigating the conditions that give rise to such health challenges, we will be also be creating future generations of First Nations people who are physically and emotionally healthy,” said Dianne Doyle, President and CEO, Providence Health Care (operator of St. Paul’s Hospital).

By conducting provincial and national outreach, the Chair will strengthen relationships and develop a network of researchers that is responsive to First Nations’ community needs, promoting health within their own communities, and to support and advance the goals of First Nations’ wellness and disease prevention and policy at the FNHA, St. Paul’s and SFU.

#### **LEARN MORE:**

- [Historic Chair to Lead Heart Health Research for First Nations Peoples](#)

#### **ABOUT THE FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY:**

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is the first province-wide health authority of its kind in Canada. In 2013, the FNHA assumed the programs, services, and responsibilities formerly handled by Health Canada’s First Nations Inuit Health Branch – Pacific Region. Our vision is to transform the health and well-being of BC’s First Nations and Aboriginal people by dramatically changing healthcare for the better. Visit us online: [www.fnha.ca/about](http://www.fnha.ca/about).

#### **ABOUT ST. PAUL’S FOUNDATION:**

St. Paul’s Foundation raises funds to support inspired care, research, and teaching at St. Paul’s Hospital, a treasured provincial health resource for all British Columbians. Our hospital specializes in the care of people with heart and lung disease, HIV/AIDS, mental illness, renal disease and people living in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. We integrate the best clinical care with real-world research and education, and provided care to more than 400,000 patients from across BC last year. For more information, or to donate, visit [www.helpstpauls.com](http://www.helpstpauls.com).

#### **ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:**

As Canada’s engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada’s leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia’s three largest cities—Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey—SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 135,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

#### **BACKGROUNDER – DR. JEFF READING:**

Dr. Jeff Reading is an indigenous researcher of Mohawk ancestry with more than two decades of experience in enhancing knowledge in Indigenous health issues—both in Canada and globally.

He comes to Simon Fraser University from the University of Toronto where he, as a professor on leave from the University of Victoria, recently concluded a one-year term as interim director of the university's newly created Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health.

Prior to joining the University of Toronto, Reading was a professor in the University of Victoria's Faculty of Human and Social Development and the founding director of the university's Centre for Aboriginal Health Research.

Dr. Reading's broad research interests in public health has brought attention to issues such as the social determinants of health, environmental issues including provision of safe potable water, health promotion and disease prevention, heart health, diabetes, tobacco misuse and accessibility to health care among Aboriginal Canadians.

Between 2000 and 2008, Dr. Reading was the inaugural scientific director of the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. In the role, he led a movement calling for a national advanced research agenda in the area of Aboriginal peoples' health and led the CIHR's crosscutting initiative in rural and northern health research.

From August 2012 to July 2013, Dr. Reading took a one-year leave of absence from the University of Victoria to join the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute, based in Alice Springs and Melbourne Australia, to lead the institute in the emerging field of global Indigenous health.

Over his career, Dr. Reading has played a pivotal role in the introduction of Canadian ethics guidelines for Aboriginal health research, and has made key contributions to the Canadian Academy of Health Science's report and solutions that aim to have a particular impact on Indigenous Peoples' health globally.

Among his numerous distinctions, Dr. Reading received the C.P. Shah Alumni Award of Excellence in Public Health from the Public Health Alumni Association of the Dalla Lana School of Public Health in 2015; a National Aboriginal Achievement Award from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (now known as Indspire) in 2008; and was elected as a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences in 2005.

Dr. Reading obtained his master's of science and PhD at the University of Toronto—both in community health.

- [For the Media](#)
- [For Faculty and Staff](#)
- [About SFU](#)
- [SFU News](#)

[Admission](#)  
[Programs](#)  
[Learning](#)  
[Research](#)  
[Community](#)  
[About](#)

[Maps + directions](#)  
[Library](#)  
[Academic Calendar](#)  
[Road Report](#)  
[Give to SFU](#)  
[Emergency Information](#)

**CONNECT WITH US**

[Facebook](#)  
[Instagram](#)  
[Twitter](#)  
[YouTube](#)

**CONTACT US**

Simon Fraser University  
8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, B.C.  
Canada V5A 1S6