

# StFXrelease

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## StFX Researchers, Community Partners Win Three-Year CURA Research Grant

**ANTIGONISH, NS** --- A group of St. Francis Xavier University researchers and several Mi'kmaq and non-native marine harvesting community organizations have won three years of financial support for their work from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (SSHRC) Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) pilot project. StFX's CURA has been awarded a three-year grant worth \$599,300.

Through this CURA, Mi'kmaq and non-native fish harvesters organizations are partnered with St.FX's research capacity and know-how as well as with the research and educational expertise affiliated with StFX's Centre for Community-Based Management (CCBM) and Interdisciplinary Studies in Aquatic Resources (ISAR). A core purpose of the partnership is to develop applied research capacity within and research relations between community organizations and the university.

Key goals are to further develop and enhance Mi'kmaq and non-native fisher organization and membership collaborations. The CURA will mobilize research know-how, capacity and literacy as its contribution to building the critical skill sets required for non-native and First Nation organizations to assume more direct and effective roles in managing their marine resource ecosystems. This is particularly important in light of the recent Marshall decision handed down by the Supreme Court. It is also important given the fact that fishing organizations are gradually assuming a more direct role in the governance of marine ecosystems and resource harvesting.

The non-native and Mi'kmaq groups will work with their StFX partners and researchers to enhance expertise in areas such as documenting fishers' ecological knowledge, recording family and community histories in fishing, mapping local marine habitats, developing business and organization skills, and many other initiatives. The CURA will also provide applied research internships for as many as five StFX and Mi'kmaq social sciences and business students per year.

StFX's CURA was part of \$13.6 million in new grants the program will fund over three years, John Manley, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for SSHRC, announced Dec. 1, 1999. The funding goes to 22 joint research ventures between universities and community partners for the social, cultural, or economic development of communities.

SSHRC is Canada's major national institution providing support for social science and humanities

research and research initiatives. Support is won as a result of national competitions that incorporate extensive independent expert evaluations of research proposals and research teams. Over 75 research partnerships, from an original pool of 178 letters of interest, were invited to submit full CURA proposals. Of the 22 proposals funded, the StFX CURA ranked 2nd overall in importance and quality.

StFX's CURA will be directed by Dr. Anthony Davis, a professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and co-directed by Dr. John Kearney, the co-ordinator of StFX's Centre for Community-Based Management. Partners include the Bay of Fundy Fixed Gear Council, Centre for Community-Based Management (StFX), Gulf Nova Scotia Bonafide Fishermen's Association, Guysborough County Inshore Fishermen's Association, Interdisciplinary Studies in Aquatic Resources (StFX), Marine Resource Centre, and Mi'Kmaq Fish and Wildlife Commission.

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