



HOUSE OF THE MOON

Logo Design by Kaylene Big Knife

House of the Moon

HOM is a response born out of a tragedy called the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Relatives crisis (MMIWGR), one of the most long-standing, dire and complex issues facing our Nations, people and the planet. **HOM put forth an Empowerment and Self-Defense Facilitator training program for Indigenous women in North America, a prevention and solutions based strategy to end the tragedy once and for all.**





HOUSE OF THE MOON

House of the Moon

SUMMARY REPORT

3 YEAR PILOT TRAINING PROGRAM

(NOVEMBER 2019 - NOVEMBER 2022)

Contact: Erin Mitchell

Email: Relative@HouseoftheMoon.org

Phone: U.S.# 1-443-939-4834



*It has been said that **in the midst of any crisis, lies a great opportunity.***

What is the crisis? *Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Relatives crisis (MMIWGR). The Department of Justice in the U.S., a National Inquiry in Canada and hundreds of reports in Mexico, have reported comparable data that thousands of Indigenous women and girls across the continent go missing or are murdered annually.*

What is the opportunity? *To collectively restore inherent dignity, strength and connection of Life-givers to the greatest level in all history, so that Indigenous peoples can lead us on the pathway forward, towards planetary, Spiritual, physical and psychological healing for ALL of Our Relations, now and forever.*



Founder's Message

When I first learned of the MMIWGR tragedy in the Spring of 2018, how it started at European contact and how since then, the effects of the wars waged on Indigenous peoples are still playing out in the present day, the Earth beneath my safe and comfortable existence shifted and my life changed forever. I am a citizen of the United States and as such, a beneficiary in countless ways from the historical and ongoing disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples. I am also the descendant of two 4th generation Indigenous grandmothers. All of this combined with my search to find the root cause of increasing social, political and cultural polarization, resulted in a calling for me to take personal responsibility in contributing to end this tragedy, that was born out of the founding of a Nation that has yet to reconcile its past wrongs.

I reached out and spoke to as many Indigenous women and men as possible from across the continent seeking to understand from their perspectives, what was happening, what was being done to address it and the direction we needed to head, in order to end the crisis. From my broken heart, hearing my great grandmother's voices in the Indigenous blood that runs through my veins and practically speaking, from my background in business, holistic health and women's empowerment, I proposed an idea for a Holistic Empowerment and Self-Defense Facilitator training program for Indigenous women in North America.

The curriculum could provide physical, mental, emotional and Spiritual empowerment and self-defense tools and practices rooted in Traditional Knowledge and would give graduates the ability to facilitate gatherings in their own communities in culturally relevant ways, spreading the pathways for empowerment and healing throughout Indian Country.

After receiving the green light from nearly everyone I spoke to in the community, including elders and leaders who had been leading movements to end MMIWGR for lifetimes, in collaboration with Indigenous leaders, educators and change-makers across Turtle Island, HOM launched the first Facilitator training program of its kind in October of 2020, right in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. For the last 5 years, I have volunteered my time, contributed financial resources, organized, moderated, fundraised and directed HOM for it to come to life.

Together, we learned and accomplished so much that I will share in this summary report. HOM belongs to the Indigenous community of North America and to everyone who cares and wants to participate in conscious reconciliation. We want to offer **HOM's model and pilot learnings to an Indigenous led organization, University or person with the capacity to carry this powerful and necessary work forward.**

"May the moonlight path over the lake lead us all to the House of the Moon".
And so it is...



Erin E. Mitchell

Erin is a social entrepreneur, with over 20 years of experience launching multiple successful businesses and initiatives to promote equity, sustainability and holistic healing of people and the planet. She earned a B.A. in History and Women's Studies from Villanova University, holds two masters degrees in Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine from Maryland University of Integrative Health, is a Registered Yoga Teacher and a Certified Cultivating Safe Spaces Facilitator.

Beyond paper qualifications, she is a human being who knows that true healing and our collective ability to thrive together on this beautiful Earth, now depends on our ability to tune into and listen to our hearts' highest vibration and calling.



About the Organization

HOM believes that to rise to the MMIWGR epic international emergency, we must continue to demand and work with governments, corporations and law enforcement to make radical changes. AND yet, NOT WAIT for them to make those changes before empowering ourselves to act now and preparing Indigenous women, girls and communities with tools and knowledge to stand ready and prevent these tragic losses, One Relative at a Time!

HOM did NOT WAIT. We rose to the MMIWGR challenge by offering the first of its kind, Holistic Empowerment and Self-Defense Facilitator training program for Indigenous women, providing LIFE-GIVERS with pathways for;

- *Healing and Growth out of Trauma*
- *Connection and Community out of Severance*
- *Knowledge and Tradition out of Desecration*
- *Strength and Leadership out of Dominance*

Introducing Our Founder's Council, Advisers, Faculty & Elder Support

HOUSE OF THE MOON

Empowerment & Self-Defense Facilitator Training Program
for Indigenous Women



Founders Council, Advisers Faculty and Elder Support



Chief Judy Wilson

HOM Founder's Council & Adviser
Former Union of BC Indian Chiefs Executive & Chief of Neskonlith Indian Band of the Shushwap Nation



Casey Camp-Horinek

HOM Founder's Council, Core Faculty & Elder Support
Environmental Ambassador, Elder & Hereditary Drumkeeper, Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma



Shelly Fyant

HOM Founder's Council
Former Chairwoman of Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes



Jami Pluff

HOM Founder's Council
Policy Analyst & Former Vice Chairwoman of Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes



Gay Kingman

HOM Founder's Council
Executive Director of Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association



Rain Bear Stands Last

HOM Founder's Council, Adviser & Volunteer Core Faculty
Executive Director of Global Indigenous Council



Melissa Moses

HOM Founder's Council, Adviser, Core Faculty & 2021 HOM Graduate
Union of BC Indian Chiefs Women's Representative, 2021 HOM Graduate



Erin Mitchell

HOM Founder's Council & Program Director
Executive Director of Nation Unsevered



Rynalea Whiteman Pena

HOM Founder's Council
Former President Northern Cheyenne Tribe 2019 - 2020



Tina Bierle

HOM Founder's Council & 2021 HOM Graduate
Former Program Manager Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council (RMTLC), 2012 - 2020, 2021 HOM Graduate



Lovina Louie

HOM Founder's Council, Adviser & Core Faculty
Board Member & Trainer, Native Wellness Institute, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene) Tribe, Nsexcin (Okanogan/Colville), Nimipu (Nez Perce)



Gladys Radek

HOM Founder's Council, Adviser & Elder Support
Co-Founder of Tears 4 Justice Gilksan Wel'suwe't'en



Amelia Washington

HOM Elder Support, Adviser & 2021 HOM Graduate
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs Elder's Representative Niaka'pamux



Elaine Alec

HOM Adviser & Core Faculty
Author, Political Advisor, Women's Advocate, Spiritual Thought Leader and Teacher Sylix Nation & Secwepemc Nation



Introducing Our Founder's Council, Advisers, Faculty & Elder Support

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Empowerment & Self-Defense Facilitator Training Program
for Indigenous Women



Founders Council, Advisers Faculty and Elder Support



Grace Alvarez Sesma
**HOM Founder's Council,
Adviser & Core Faculty**
Cultural Practitioner
& Educator



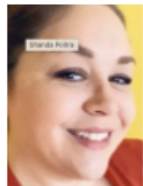
Georgina Lightning
HOM Adviser
Award Winning Actress & Film
Director



Patsy Phillips
HOM Adviser
Institute of American Indian Arts,
Museum of Contemporary
Native Arts Director
Cherokee



Randy'L Teton
HOM Adviser
Tribes Public Affairs Manager
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes



Shanda Poitra
HOM Core Faculty
Turtle Mountain Band of
Chippewa, Founder of Turtle
Mountain Self-Defense



Celina Montoya-Garcia
HOM Core Faculty
Pueblo Indigenous from
Ohkay Owingeh



Nephi Craig
HOM Core Faculty
White Mountain Apache and Dine



Minnie Kenoras Grinder
**HOM Adviser
& Elder Support**
Neskonlith Elder



Annita Mcphee
HOM Faculty
Indigenous Facilitator,
Motivational Speaker,
International Human Rights
Advocate
Tahltan/Tlingit Nations



Ben Nuvamsa
HOM Adviser
CEO & President of
Kiva Institute
Hopi



Marty Antone
HOM Adviser & Core Faculty
Oneida Tribe



Linda Black Elk
HOM Faculty
Korean/Mongolian/Catawba
Descendant



The Vision

We imagine a new world, where the Original Peoples of North America are restored to health, vibrancy and wholeness through the leadership, connection and empowerment of thousands of Indigenous women in North America; where diverse Indigenous communities continue to rise from a devastating past, this time, supported by the loving hands of all races, genders, ethnicities and cultures through acts of conscious reconciliation.

The HOM Training program is about reclaiming wholeness, diversity and sovereignty, collectively putting an end to the victimization of women, children and communities. We are founded on the belief that *We Are Stronger Together* and women are Life-givers in all ways. So let us give Life-Givers empowered pathways to Healing, Connection, Traditional knowledge and Strength, and Indigenous women will birth the new dawn for Indian Country, our Earth and our world.



"I love the "just do it" in this movement and it was detailed like it had been planned over years. The ability to look at what we did in year one and how we can improve was powerful. I built friendships that will last a lifetime!"

Mission Part I

In order to end the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Relatives (MMIWGR) emergency and the devastating ripple effects of all that surrounds the tragedy, we must immediately respond with practical solutions, support and strategic planning, with the intention to strengthen and empower Indigenous women across North America as leaders.

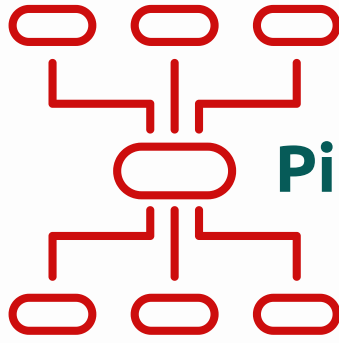
Our mission is to train at least two Indigenous women or more from over 1,600 diverse Tribes, First Nations and Indigenous communities in North America to become HOM Holistic Empowerment and Self-Defense Facilitators. Graduates from the program can then facilitate gatherings on their own Reservations, Reserves and Urban communities in culturally relevant ways throughout the year so Tribal people, no matter where they are geographically located, have a place to go for healing, learning and empowerment.



Mission Part II

- Graduates stay connected through monthly virtual Zoom meetings for sharing, connection and continued education
- HOM adds training modules for youth, men, Two Spirit, and certificates for non-Indigenous allies working in collaboration for a unified effort to ending MMIWGR
- HOM holds annual conferences where graduates, presenters and elders can reconnect and have a space to continue to grow the HOM circle, learn, receive updates, healing rituals and ceremony
- Propose that people appointed to government MMIWGR Units are trained in the HOM curriculum for a unified effort

"There was a sense of community that was very powerful, activating not only our own power internally as an individual, but also collectively and then that amplifies to our communities."



Pilot Program Layout

Pilot 1

*Launched Fall, 2020
Completed Spring, 2021*

Pilot 2

*Launched Spring, 2022
Completed Winter, 2022*

Funds Raised

\$47,240

\$115,943

Timeline

*From Pilot 1 to
Pilot 2 we...*

*Doubled
Funding!*

and

*Doubled
Participation!*

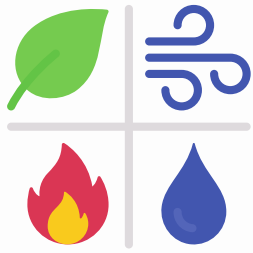
*Content delivered
by Indigenous
leaders, elders and
educators from
North America*

- *12 Weeks All Virtual*
- *12 2 hour Presentations*
- *12 2 hour Processing Circles*
- *4 Day Virtual Retreat / Training Intensive*
- *Trainees required to facilitate 4 community gatherings*
- *7 women joined*

- *16 Weeks All Virtual except for in-person retreat*
- *16 2 hour Presentations*
- *16 2 hour Processing Circles*
- *4 Day In-Person Retreat*
- *Trainees required to facilitate 6 community gatherings*
- *14 women joined*

A Sample of Curriculum Content

- *Cultivating Safe Spaces for Self and Community, Trauma & Resiliency Training*
- *The Origins and History of MMIWGR*
- *Lateral Violence: How it Undermines Our Greatest Strength*
- *Physical and Verbal Self-Defense: Level 1 & 2*
- *Healthy Relationships, Boundaries and Communication*
- *Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Security*



Program Elements

- A Respected Elder was present for each training presentation and processing circle to support women in their process of healing and learning from Traditional ways and teachings
- Content Rollout Developed with Intention to bring forth;
 - First and Foremost; trust amongst the participants and cohort
 - Second; a safe space and pathways for personal and collective healing
 - Third; information and teachings to increase awareness, confidence and knowledge
 - Fourth; leadership training and support in order for trainees to prepare themselves to go out in their communities and facilitate gatherings on their own
- Every gathering opened and closed with prayer, song or centering meditation/poetry, usually by Elder Amelia one of our Elder Support faculty.
- Every 2 hour presentation with learning content was followed in the next session by a 2 hour processing and talking circle. This allowed space for women to digest and reflect on content while listening, offering insights and supporting each other in the process.
- Presentations were recorded in order to reference back to or watch at a later time if participants needed to miss a presentation session. Processing circles were kept private and not recorded, allowing women the necessary safe space to speak openly from their hearts.
- After women completed the curriculum portion of the training, they were required to facilitate 4-6 gatherings in their own communities in order to receive the 200 Hour Graduate Certificate of Completion.

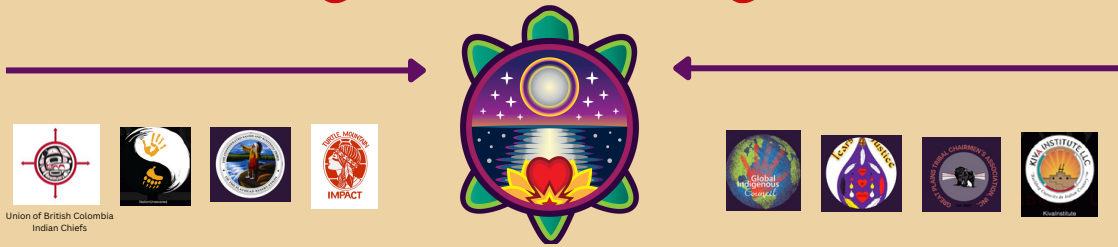
200 Hour Certificate of Completion

After completing the HOM Facilitator training, women earn a graduate certificate of completion.

Empowering Ourselves

Strengthening Our Relations

Reclaiming Our Communities



HOUSE OF THE MOON

HOLISTIC EMPOWERMENT AND SELF-DEFENSE FACILITATOR TRAINING CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

PRESENTED TO

Melissa Moses
Nlakapamuz, Syilx and Stlatl̓imx

for successfully completing House of the Moon's Holistic Empowerment and Self-Defense Facilitator Training Program. The HOM training provides graduates with foundational principles of the 4 directions, holistic model of empowerment and self-defense; including spiritual, mental, emotional and physical tools and practices rooted in Traditional, ecological knowledge. The program has provided a framework and guidelines to facilitate HOM gatherings in your own community in culturally relevant ways, broadening and sharing your own cultural knowledge and what you learned from HOM with others, growing our collective strength and connection.

CHIEF JUDY
WILSON
FOUNDER'S COUNCIL



ERIN E. MITCHELL
FOUNDER'S COUNCIL &
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Pilot 1 Summary ([Program Link](#))

More Wins

- Nearly 400 Community members were reached by the 7 trainees from facilitating their own gatherings as part of their training.
- 1 Graduate translated HOM Curriculum into Elementary age appropriate content for School District 58 in British Columbia.
- 100% Graduation rate
- Over 90% of funds raised were reinvested back into the community (Indigenous elders, presenters, artists and trainees).

Highlights

- 100% funds raised came from outside the Indigenous community by Erin through her personal network in order to test the model.
- We took 11 months between Pilot 1 and Pilot 2 launch in order to interview participants, faculty, council and advisers for feedback on Pilot 1. We are proud to say that we worked with the HOM community to redesign Pilot 2 with improvements and modifications based on community feedback and observations.
- Graduates from Pilot 1 stated that it would have been better if they "knew in advance what they were getting into, the level of commitment and level of difficulty". As such we implemented a decolonized onboarding process that included meet and greet meetings, Q&A's with potential candidates, online Questionnaire, and a formal invitation to candidates that included commitment level requirements, timelines of training etc.
- 100% of HOM 'lessons learned' and feedback from Pilot 1, were implemented prior to launching Pilot 2 training.
- As we were testing the model, trainees from Pilot 1 were paid honorariums for taking the training.

More Wins

- HOM organized its very first in-person destination retreat to Yellowstone National Park, returning 21 Indigenous people back to original sacred ceremony lands of nearly 50+ Tribes in North America. Yellowstone National Park was declared to be "Indian Free" by the U.S. Government in 1880.

[\(Yellowstone Program Link\)](#)

- Women whose next of kin, their own sisters and daughters who are victims of the MMIWGR tragedy, participated in the HOM training program.
- With participation doubling from Pilot 1, an even greater number of relationships and connections were fostered and created between trainees and the HOM faculty, council and advisers.
- We had multiple internationally renowned Indigenous faculty for Pilot 2, such as Nephi Craig from the movie <https://gather.film> who presented on '*Food Sovereignty and Food Security*'.

Highlights

- Of the \$115,943 raised to run Pilot 2, 45% of funding was allocated to include the Yellowstone Retreat, 28% was allocated to our all Indigenous faculty for presentations and curriculum content delivery, 8% in fiscal sponsorship fees and 19% in expenses such as technology, administrative, welcome gifts for trainees etc.
- Over 92% of funds were raised by Erin.
- HOM added an additional training module on '*Leadership and Preparation*' for trainees to be able to better conduct and prepare for facilitating their own community gatherings.
- Training took place over 6 months instead of 4 months in order to accommodate more breaks, the in-person travel to Yellowstone, and the improved content to support women in their safety, competency and success as facilitators in the community.
- Of the funds raised; 41% came from grants for Indigenous community initiatives, 3% came from HOM community members affiliation donations, 56% came from sponsors and private donors.
- Trainees were not given honorariums in Pilot 2, rather they were sponsored by private donors or grants. 1 trainee paid a tuition with her own grant funds.

House of the Moon Retreat - Yellowstone National Park June 1-6th, 2022



"I appreciate all the hard work and love that went into this.

This experience was so transformative. It's hard to put words to how much it has helped me heal."



Sampling of Retreat Program Presentations

- *Indigenous Foodways, Health & Posterity*
- *Re-Membering Grandmother Moon; Women's Return to Wholeness Healing Ceremony*
- *Healing through Story*
- *Journeying through the matrix of Indigenous Sacred Sites in Yellowstone*
- *Buffalo Nations, with 60 million slaughtered, the place where the last 13 original Buffalo of the Americas remained*



More to celebrate from our efforts...



HOM launched and executed the first pilot program of its kind in less than 3 years, reaching thousands and with the potential to reach tens of thousands in less than 5 years if carried forward.



HOM's program was supported and acknowledged by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chief's (UBCIC) for answering 7 of Canada's MMIWG's National Inquiry's Calls for Justice and upholds 2 articles of the United Nation's Declaration affirming the rights of Indigenous women and children to guarantee their full protection against all forms of violence and discrimination.



The ripple effects of our efforts are far and wide.

Because of the HOM Retreat program and connections that were developed during the training, one trainee took 14 school age children from Pine Ridge Reservation to Yellowstone National Park. There they engaged with the Buffalo Field Campaign to learn about the Native buffalo herd and how they strengthen and help preserve the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem.



We are very proud that 22 Indigenous women from 18+ different Tribes and First Nations in North America took part in the HOM program and 8 women so far have earned their HOM Graduate Certificate of Completion.



Forever connected Tribal women, elders and educators across long imposed borders between Canada, the United States and Mexico, unifying, strengthening and healing from MMIWGR.



Raised consciousness and awareness of thousands of non-Indigenous people about the crisis.

Observations and areas to address for future success...



HOM is currently looking for a "HOME". The next iteration of HOM will not go forward unless we have a University, Indigenous leader or other organization pick up the model and carry it forward.



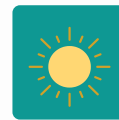
We intentionally ran Pilot 2 without trainee honorariums in the budget as with Pilot 1, in part to fund the retreat in Yellowstone. It was important to observe the impact of in-person connection that we didn't have in Pilot 1. However, attendance/graduation rates in Pilot 2 may have been higher if trainees were given honorariums as with the first cohort.



Multiple Council, Faculty, Advisers and Trainees made commitments that were never followed through on, leaving HOM with a fundamental lack of capacity for planning and carrying the work forward in a good way. In some cases it left us vulnerable to cancelled grants, funders who may decline future sponsorships and ultimately, over budget.



Attendance and graduation rates declined in Pilot 2, from Pilot 1. In the rollout of the curriculum, HOM provided tools for trauma responses, PTSD and intentionally ordered content so that each segment was a stepping stone for the next. When trainees missed sessions, the support and preparation HOM intended to provide, for both difficult discussions and for facilitating their own gatherings, was difficult to impart.



Communication was a consistent challenge as messages can get lost in translation with large groups. A possible solution could be to work individually with trainees, and provide 1:1 mentors to ensure that necessary communication is imparted both ways, while mitigating misunderstandings and providing that real individualized experience for optimal success.



While Covid 19 led us to offer the training virtually on Zoom with obvious benefits to this model, what we won't know entirely is the direct or indirect impact of the pandemic on health or child/family care circumstances for participants. One NY Times report stated that the only demographic where the vaccine had the inverse effect, being more people received it and the death rates still increased, was in the Native American community.

CONCLUSION



HOM achieved an incredible amount in a relatively short period of time without significant financial backing. Imagine the positive and far reaching impact a program like this could have in Indian Country and in our world if the model is met with full capacity of paid staff, adequate funding, partnerships, leverage, marketing and leadership?

Multiple States in the U.S. now have MMIW task forces, a political response that is a step in addressing the issue, but has produced very few tangible results. A crisis requires coordinated action. One of our unique strengths is that HOM always strived to be proactive to the issue and not reactive. So many initiatives that have been established at different levels of government, from federal to state and local, have mostly been reactive and there is very little if anything, that focuses on prevention. **House of the Moon is a serious prevention and education program that provides women and communities with pathways to take action on an issue that demoralizes and cripples communities and frankly, all of us.**

It's not something we can wait on. As the Honorable Justice Murray Sinclair, who worked on Canada's Truth and Reconciliation commission stated, "*...every single Canadian, American, and Mexican has a role to play toward healing and justice of the First Peoples of the Americas. Words of apology alone are insufficient, concrete actions on both symbolic and material fronts are required.*" HOM's response is a way for this call to be answered.

If you are part of an organization, University or institution, if you are an Indigenous leader or change maker and you are interested in additional information or in taking up this initiative and carrying it forward, please contact me by email or phone: relative@HouseoftheMoon.org U.S.#1-443-939-4834.

All My Relations,

Erin E. Mitchell





HOUSE OF THE MOON

Impact Statements

Over 30 Indigenous Council, Advisers, Faculty and Participants were invited to submit impact statements for the Summary Report. **Below are excerpts from five submissions that we received.**

HOM Founding Council - Judy Wilson

"Sometimes in reflecting about myself I see it's a miracle I am still here on this earth. Many other friends and family members are not, they are statistics of MMIWG2S, violence, abuses or mental health. From childhood to adulthood I have experienced and witnessed violence against our Indigenous women and girls in my family, community and nation. I have been personally assaulted and sexually abused throughout my lifetime. My youngest sister was murdered at the age of 21, and she had a three-year old son. Regrettably my lived experience was common place to many other families. Our saving grace is our 86 year old Mother. She is a pioneer woman and Secwépemc, she was raised on the land in a remote area of our nation. Although my father attended the Kamloops Indian Residential School at age 5 years to age 16 years, my Mother attended a Little Red School house in the Caribou country. She learnt many survival skills and knowledge as well as our Secwépemc ways of hunting, fishing, harvesting and medicines. That is how she survived and she taught her children how to survive. When our youngest sister was murdered, it changed our entire family, and my father sobered up at age 60. My Mother got involved in a lot of MMIWG2S groups, rallies and events. As a family we all participated. Our story about what happened to my sister was shared with the federal MMIWG National Inquiry. We actually made recommendations to help other families with our testimony. Even though there was countless Justice Walks for MMIWG2S across Canada, which we all were a part of, and the memorials, it wasn't enough.

And one day three years ago I was sitting with others from across Turtle Island, many who shared the same frustrations, and House of the Moon was formed by women and advocates across the four hemispheres. It was a profound break through, we didn't need wait for government, Tribal Leaders, or organizations to figure it out for us or to fund us, we had our own sovereignty and power to come together for our own solutions. HOM's focus was empowerment and self defense of Indigenous women North & South of the medicine line.

HOM impacted me on a personal level and as a leader. There is no organizations that does what HOM does. It's unique and powerfully motivating in mind, body and spirit. HOM is grounded in our Indigenous ways or knowing and ceremonies. And in working in the area of MMIWG2S healing for self and others, is critical. Much of the materials shared by each presenter is accessible to council, advisers and faculty.

Coordinating a large group is challenging and getting across the finishing line to completion. Many of the cohorts are extremely busy with families and communities.

HOM's mission for holistic empowerment and self-defense facilitator training must always be the core part of the program. However as a comprehensive program it is difficult to retain cohorts for the entire duration of the program. Consideration for other program offerings or levels for shorter versions such as week long or weekend boot camps or activities for those who cannot attend the full length program due to time constraints is needed."



HOUSE OF THE MOON

Impact Statements

Kayla Ridgley - HOM Trainee

"HOM changed my life and how I view my life and experiences. It changed how I do my work as a community member and program manager. I view most obstacles through different lenses that I have learned from HOM. Thank you all so much for this opportunity. It was an honor to be a part of this. I would love to take it again so I can complete my presentations. I also wanted to speak about the training in Yellowstone, how some wanted to bring families. I do want to say I think it is important and okay that children couldn't be apart of the Retreat this time around. There are times I feel there is strength to bond as an adult or share true feelings, we may not if our kids are around. On the other hand, I know how much similar trainings could impact my child and help them on their journey. It could almost be a stepping stone for them to be a warrior in this movement.

I enjoyed the way we learned. I like the 2-hour presentation and the 2 hours follow-up a couple of days later. I liked the mission and vision of the program.

Once having missed the Yellowstone retreat, I felt disconnected from the group, but it didn't help that since then, I had back-to-back battles with covid and other illnesses. I wished there was a way to connect more, like having a FB group or slack channel to encourage relationships outside of class. This would also help with meeting and developing a relationship with the alumni. I wondered what has the alumni done once they finished.

I didn't like the 4 week break. It was nice, but it could be helpful to start in January and end by June. I do think it should move forward. I feel HOM does and can make a difference on Turtle Island. Another option could be to make this a conference or academy. It could be hard. Keeping it online definitely keeps it accessible for those with different abilities. This is such an amazing program with so many amazing capabilities. I look forward to seeing how this program progresses."



HOUSE OF THE MOON

Impact Statements

LoVina Louie - HOM Adviser and Core Faculty

"I was very touched by the commitment and dedication of the program director with this beautiful movement. The founding board members had a vision to take action, the power in just doing and not just talking was amazing! I feel like so many Tribes get stuck in red tape, politics etc. and absolutely nothing is ever accomplished. This movement was grassroots and funding sources were very unique. I love the "just do it" in this movement and it was detailed like it had been planned over years. The ability to look at what we did in year one and how we can improve was powerful. I built friendships that will last a lifetime! The framework was holistic (mental, physical, spiritual and emotional) and followed such a beautiful outline I was personally impressed with the structure.

It was very well organized, timelines, vision, technical training, culture, tradition, and language was infused throughout the fellowships. The expertise of trainers that were brought in were knowledgeable and as far as I know professional. Erin was able to do the fund raising, planning, organizing, directing, possibly web design, she basically wore the hat of 10 staff. I am grateful for her commitment to this movement. Yellowstone was one of the most powerful retreats having the ability to provide space for healing, ceremony and love with each other in such a centered space where many beginnings happened for many of our Tribes. After leaving there, I believe the ancestors cleaned away the hurt and pain and allowed renewal and cleansing for all of creation, a shift happened that I can't put into words. I am grateful to all who participated in the Yellowstone retreat. Elder Amelia was amazing throughout the zoom trainings.

Although this is sacred work, it is difficult for trainees to give time, energy and work without getting some type of payment for their commitment. I know this is sad but if we want to have a commitment, we may either have to select participants that can be paid by their organization or provide a form of compensation.

Many of our people have historical and intergenerational trauma. The lasting impact of this trauma impacts and creates barriers to our ability to do healing work, when we ourselves have not done our work. Allowing or selecting participants who are on their healing journey would be beneficial.

I believe it should move forward by possibly attaching to an organization that has a history of working with Indigenous people. It would be helpful to possibly set time aside to have a strategic planning meeting to brainstorm how to move forward."



HOUSE OF THE MOON

Impact Statements

Rain - HOM Founding Council, Adviser and Volunteer Core Faculty

"The fact that the vision and the immense commitment was realized in HOM rising from the heart to an actual program that Tribal people had the opportunity to subscribe to and participate in was a remarkable achievement and a "win." HOM's initiatives were good; some were very ambitious, given its stage of development, but if there is an existential threat or crisis, what is the alternative?"

It is true to say that everybody who lent their name and positions to support the concept of HOM are all professionals engaged with their own careers and communities at various levels, and few have spare time. However, I think everybody can recognize that, in most instances, the expectation was that Erin would handle everything, with or without support. That covered the spectrum from the administration of the program to funding HOM events.

In terms of the delivery mechanism, COVID made running HOM even more challenging, and then the work environment changed so that Zoom meetings and remote vocational engagement became the norm. For a program like HOM that is rooted in holistic and Earth-centered principles, Zoom is restrictive. As other online Zoom delivery courses arose, the standard became that programs of shorter duration were generally offered, delivered over three day periods or weekends, or a few days per month. When that became a point of reference, and potential trainees realized the duration of HOM, it appeared to create a disconnect.

Most associated and engaged with HOM understand that only a tiny fraction of Tribes and First Nations in North America have heard of HOM. Most have no clue that HOM even exists. Tribes and First Nations have subscribed to "task forces" and various "committees" to address MMIP/MMIWG2S, perhaps unaware that there is an actual, hands on, practical training program and curriculum that, if supported and subscribed to, could make a realistic and tangible impact on the crisis. Due to a lack of funding and administrative support, these Tribes and First Nations remain oblivious to HOM, which in and of itself is somewhat tragic, when there is little doubt that HOM has the potential to save lives. For HOM to achieve its potential, it requires quality candidates with an aptitude for the work and a solid application and enrollment process.

Like all and any Tribal initiatives, it requires participation from others, and embracing an individual sense of responsibility so that the communal venture will continually move forward in a functional way.

No program comparable to HOM has ever been a complete, fully operational, and established staple in any sphere after only three years.

For the near term, perhaps HOM would be better served delivering its curriculum in a shorter timeframe with a streamlined content. This would both aid in finding a more affordable price point for potential trainees and be more in line with current overall expectations for virtual educational courses. It would also provide for HOM programs to be run quarterly as opposed to once a year."



HOUSE OF THE MOON

Impact Statements

Cueponca Moreno Sandoval - HOM 2022 Graduate

"With House of the Moon, I gained a direct focus on healing from intergenerational traumas, from the very moment that I filled out the application questions. It was a healing community with a focus on dismantling the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous people. What was unique is the central focus on training Indigenous women from Turtle Island, from Canada, U.S. and from Mexico. To connect with people from all of these places, and to feel like I was a part of something that is absolutely unique, special and needed, I was part of a current that was strengthened each time we met and processed together. You don't get that in a book or in a seminar or in a publishing opportunity. It only happens with a lot of intention and with the people that HOM attracts. We need a village, we need to rebuild our communities. And what HOM did for me was activate some of that communal sense even though it was virtual and none of us lived near each other. There was a sense of community that was very powerful, activating not only our own power internally as an individual, but also collectively and then that amplifies to our communities.

I gained an increased sense of confidence and increased sense of belonging and healing of intergenerational traumas. It also gave me more confidence and training on how to set boundaries. It was easier for me to take abuse or disrespectful behavior before being a part of HOM. And as peers in the cohort, we take care of each other. The self-defense training was very helpful part of that too.

Knowing that we were going to Yellowstone together was a big motivator for me and probably for many of us. The intentionality behind everything HOM did was what I loved the most. The organizing, the processing circles, it just really speaks to the prayers that have backed up this organization. From the very beginning HOM's purpose is to cultivate that power within us. Versus putting out all kinds of fires that are deadly, even though it's all necessary. I think this organization's model was great in that it was woman centered, and all the various topics that were covered. I think it was pretty ambitious, but I think it was handled well.

I believe the focus should be not just women centered, but family centered. That means to have less meetings because many of us are parents, we're taking care of elders, and the meetings pull us away from the things that we needed to do. To do this kind of self care and processing with one another, and listening to the presentations was incredibly important, but at the same time, it was a strain. It was twice a week and for me, as a single mom, it was very difficult to arrange to be fully present. So I cannot imagine people dealing with family issues. And so, I feel like HOM needs to take that into account. As much as this is medicine, how can we figure out how to take it a few times, versus twice a week for 16+ weeks? I think it would be best to move in the direction of less is more for these cohort models, because of the strain that women who are already attracted this kind of work are feeling in their day to day lives. And that's a hard thing to consider. But I think because of the way that things unfolded, that may have been a better situation for a cohort.

With the attendance requirements, I got this feeling like I was in a class. I understand where this is coming from, because it is a certification program. And there are specific requirements and commitments that we need to complete in order to earn the certificate. Moving forward and indigenizing the process of a certification program, I wonder if less is more. I wonder if House of the moon, whose focus is to empower women, would be best to have the members create their own goals at the very beginning of the program and then self assessing along the way. It's to activate the power, the confidence and the self esteem, the sense of community and belonging so that it doesn't come from a place of being hard on ourselves."

To the All Indigenous HOM Founding Council, Advisers, Faculty and every participant who took part in the training over the last 3 years;

*House of the Moon became, because each of you were a part of it. You each nourished it with your energy and commitments. It was your willingness, courage and experiences that gave HOM life. I hope you are proud of all we were able to accomplish. **Stronger Together!***

I also want to acknowledge in brief, the following Relatives for the very hard work, time and commitment they gave in unique and powerful ways to HOM, that made this training program possible. Thank you for your trust and encouragement along the way. Your strength, courage and devotion to your loved ones, the community and this movement, and most especially yours and your ancestors' stories of resilience are the very heartbeat of House of the Moon.

Rain - for being the first person I learned about MMIWG from which ultimately led to HOM, volunteering as Core Faculty in Pilots 1, 2 and the Yellowstone Retreat, for your extensive knowledge of history, the MMIP body politic and insights you gave to planning and program development, your perspectives and support have been invaluable and I am forever grateful.

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*From the heart of HOM,
thank you.*

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