

May 11, 2021

Re: Nomination of Nancy Clark for REACH Award -Excellence in Research Partnerships

To: REACH Research Awards Selection Committee

It is with extreme pleasure that we nominate Dr. Nancy Clark for the REACH award in the category of *Excellence in Research Partnerships*.

Dr. Clark's extensive and outstanding community-engaged collaborations with not-for-profit settlement agencies in BC, across Canada and internationally make her an excellent candidate for the REACH award of *Excellence in Research Partnerships*. Immigrant, refugee, ethno-cultural and racialized groups in Canada are among the vulnerable populations whose wellbeing is at the heart of her scholarship, which includes extensive outreach, engagement and societal impact. Dr. Clark resides and thrives in promoting the well-being of this community.

Dr. Clark's outstanding scholarship as an early career academic is evidenced in her academic record to date. Dr. Clark has been involved in many funded research projects and has a clear research program. In addition, Dr. Clark has published 16 peer reviewed articles and 3 book chapters, 7 of which have been published in the last four years since joining the University of Victoria. Because of Dr. Clark's inspiration related to participatory action in working to promote social justice and equity with communities, Dr. Clark was invited to work with others to develop a novel theoretical participatory approach to evaluation of community health promotion which has been recently published in a disciplinary text: *Nurses Leading Change: A Relational Emancipatory Framework for Health and Social Action*. It should be noted that community engaged scholarship is demanding of time and Dr. Clark's work demonstrates a strong commitment to community engaged scholarship; indeed, advancing community-engaged scholarship is one of the key outcomes of her work.

Dr. Clark's program of research focuses on social and structural inequities experienced by under-served population groups. Specifically, her research seeks to improve the mental health and wellbeing of immigrant and refugee communities. With her deep understanding of critical theoretical perspectives, namely, intersectionality, she explores how race/ethnicity; gender/sex; and other categories of social difference are structured to shape newcomer mental health. In particular, Dr. Clark is a leading scholar in intersectionality-based paradigms and since arriving at UVic has been invited on several national and international research partnership grants as a result of her analytic expertise in intersectionality. This includes a recent invitation to develop the theoretical framework for an International Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council partnership grant led by prominent researcher Dr. Vantanparast: *'Towards International Refugee Food Security Solutions (RFSS)'*. Nationally, Dr. Clark's expertise in intersectionality and health equity has also been sought by Dr. Kevin Pottie to develop an equity framework for *'Understanding the Equity of Access to Virtual Care Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Populations During the COVID-19 Pandemic'* with CIHR. These invitations and wide

ranging research invitations exemplify the fact that Dr. Clark is becoming a well-known scholar outside the University of Victoria. Dr. Clark is also a sought-after speaker and receives regular requests to present – especially on the topic of intersectionality, mental health, inequities, and community-engaged scholarship.

One example of Dr. Clark's community-engaged research is her far-reaching work with refugee Syrian women in BC, including a deliberative dialogue session held at SFU '*Supporting emotional well-being and access to health care of Syrian mothers: A collaboration amongst community*' (MSFHR, Community Partnership grant) and '*Using Community Action Research to Support Syrian Refugee Mothers in the Resettlement Period*' a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council funded project. From this work, Dr. Clark developed a novel peer-led training course for Syrian mothers on principles of community-engaged research in Canada. This training workshop also provided Syrian women with leadership skills and built literacy for navigating employment and health systems. Dr. Clark will be applying her peer-led training course in a recently submitted Insight Development Grant, *Exploring Syrian Men's Mental Health and Participation in Labour Employment: A Community Participatory Arts-Based Project*. To each of her projects, Dr. Clark brings a core value of including people with lived experience as central members of the research team, ensuring that the work reflects their voices and priorities. In fact, one of Dr. Clark's current projects is the development of a framework for safely including racialized individuals who have experienced mental health challenges on research teams. The results of this research will benefit all mental health researchers to ethically and effectively engage patient partners.

Community engaged scholarship is a core value and part of UVic's strategic research initiatives of which Dr. Clark's research program is exemplary and adds to the leadership of our University's strengths. In addition, Dr. Clark's leadership and focus on the mental health of racialized community groups in BC further contributes and strengthens UVic's strategy for a broader health sciences vision and brings together leading scholars at our university. Importantly, Dr. Clark's engagement with communities adds a critical and social justice lens to building healthy public policy and getting students engaged with their communities toward social action. Dr. Clark is affiliated with the Migration research Centre at UBC and has recently presented on global health promotion policies related to migrant health at our PhD research series at the School of Nursing. Dr. Clark's commitment to advancing the research priorities at UVic is also evident by her most recent invitation to the Research Advisory Network at the Faculty of Human and Social Development (HSD). Dr. Clark's values of equity and social justice are also evident in her role on the Academic Advisory Committee on Equity and Diversity and Human Rights at UVic.

Dr. Clark's advocacy, community engagement, and social action underpin her research and scholarship beyond the academic community. She is co-founder and co-chair of the Victoria Migrant Mental Health Network, an interdisciplinary UVic initiative with Victoria-based mental health professionals from a variety of partner organizations. This initiative has built capacity for resource sharing and evidence-based practices for health care providers, counsellors and settlement agencies in the Greater Victoria region.

Dr. Clark also chairs the health sector table in the City of Victoria, working closely with the InterCultural Association of Greater Victoria to meet health and social needs of newcomers and build an inclusive environment for resettlement in Canada. She chairs the mental health interest group for Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing in Canada and is an active member of the BC Health Coalition and the Community Alliance of Racialized Ethnocultural Services (CARES) for Equitable Health. Through these memberships, Dr. Clark contributes to local and provincial government policies leading to better care for diverse communities in our province.



In addition to her community-engaged research with several community organizations, Dr. Clark mentors several graduate students by involving them in her community-engaged research and builds their confidence and research capacity by encouraging them to publish with her in different important journals.

Dr. Clark has recently advocated on equity and health issues for immigrants and refugees in BC through various podcasts and media presentations. Her scholarship also includes presentations at 9 International conferences, 9 National conferences, and 16 provincial conferences to date. Dr. Clark was recently recognized by the Nurses Nurse Practitioners Association of BC (formerly the BC College of Nurses and Midwives) for Excellence in Nursing in the category of Advancing Nursing Knowledge and Research. Recently, Dr. Clark was nominated by the President of the University of Victoria (Dr. Hall) for a provincial award for her community-engaged work. Although she was not the overall chosen candidate, she was recognized by the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) for her outstanding contributions.

We are confident that Dr. Clark will continue to make significant contributions to advancing the creation of equitable and integrated mental healthcare services of immigrant and refugee communities in British Columbia.

Regards,



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