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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Striving to Be Pono (Balanced, Equitable, and Hopeful): Conceptualizing an Indigenous Writing Process from a Native Hawaiian Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

Community-based and culturally grounded research, led by Indigenous scholars, is critical for the prevention and intervention of health risks such as substance use and misuse in Indigenous communities. However, Indigenous scholars encounter numerous adversities to success in academia. This manuscript describes an Indigenous Writing Retreat (IWR) guided by Native Hawaiian worldview and ontology held in Hawai'i in Spring 2022 to empower eleven Indigenous scholars and four mentors through cultivating their Form (intellectual knowledge) and Essence (expression of true intention and authentic feeling). Intentions of this gathering were as follows: (1) Ho'oulu a Ho'omōhalahala 'Ike: inspire growth/develop knowledge and insight; (2) Hō'ola i ka Nohona Kanaka: give life to cultural identity and native intelligence; (3) Ho'opono: cleanse and let go; and (4) Ho'ohana Pilina: relationship building with each other, land, and spirit. Intentions were achieved through six methods: (1) academic writing; (2) Indigenous Cultural Orientation and Protocol; (3) honor and pay respect for people and land; (4) cultural tools and ceremony; (5) create a "Safe Space"; and (6) community building. This story conveys the IWR impact on scholars, mentors, and community hosts, including kūpuna (Elders)/leaders/cultural practitioners via a survey, email exchanges, and "talk story" sessions with them. Four relational actions (recommendations) for future IWRs are presented using the acronym PONO: Preparation, Observation, Navigation, and Oneness. This IWR is offered as a gift to all Indigenous nations to inspire and guide relational exchanges and cultivate Indigenous leadership in substance use research, collective well-being, and resilience by centering Indigenous worldviews and methodologies.

Keywords Indigenous scholarship · Native Hawaiian worldview · Equity in academia · Health equity research

> E lawe i ka a'o mālama a e 'oi mau ka na'auao.
>
> He who takes his teachings and applies them increases his knowledge.
>
> (Pukui, 1997, p. 40)

The above 'ōlelo no'eau (Hawaiian proverb) emphasizes that when knowledge and insight are gained, there is

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a kuleana (responsibility) to apply, practice, and share the knowledge and insight with others (Pukui, 1997). As Indigenous scholars and allies, we believe that Native leadership in scientific research is critical to inform innovative, culturally aligned solutions to address persistent health inequities. One of the primary reasons these inequities persist is the underrepresentation of Native researchers who are positioned to create change through the unique interweaving of Indigenous and eurochristian ways of knowing (Forrest et al., 2022; Ivanich et al., 2022; Tinker, 2015, Tinker & Green, 2023). Our intentional use of the term "eurochristian" affirms the deep, broad sociopolitical impact of the *culture and worldviews* of colonists while avoiding perpetuating the harmful eurochristian troupe of race and color codes (Tinker, 2015; Tinker & Green, 2023). More importantly, in order to realize the full benefit of the expertise that Indigenous health scholarship brings to eurochristian health research systems, a shift from relying on the resilience of individual Indigenous health scholars to a structural acknowledgment of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies is needed. This includes building institutional structures and processes that are grounded in Indigenous knowledge to foster relational support between colleagues and mentors in the critical pursuit of innovation and scholarship to address Indigenous health equity.

This article describes a 4-day Intensive Writing Retreat (IWR), which took place in Spring 2022 on the Hawaiian island of Oʻahu. The IWR was centered within a Native Hawaiian perspective and was thoughtfully designed to provide protected time and a safe space to refine and develop the scholars' academic writing abilities and strengthen their cultural identities. This was achieved through focused writing activities and cultural affirming processes (i.e., cultural site visits, observing and participating in cultural protocols, and engaging with mentors, the land, Indigenous scholars, and community hosts, including two kūpuna (Elders) and one cultural expert). The intention of this structure facilitated the development of Form (intellectual knowledge) and Essence (expression of true intention and feeling) in support of the scholars' writing.

Eleven Indigenous scholars from different Tribal backgrounds in the USA who engage in substance use research participated. While the core group included eleven scholars and 4 mentors, approximately 10 family members were also included for the cultural site visits and social activities. Thus, there were a total of about 25 participants and 3 community hosts. It was a conscious decision of the planners, including both academic mentors and Hawaiʻi-based hosts, to set intentions that centered the heart of the scholar's work, integrating tools to assist with self-care, connection, healing, and cultural grounding for both scholars and mentors to help them work toward becoming pono (in balance with themselves, others, and their environment; see Appendix 1 for Glossary of Hawaiian terminology).[1] In this manner, scholars were able to better meet the overarching goals of the IWR, which were to set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART; Bjerke & Renger, 2017) writing goals, form accountability groups, engage in protected writing time, and strengthen National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant writing skills to foster a sense of resilience and build capacity for conducting substance use research. This manuscript illustrates the intentions, methods, and lasting impacts of the IWR in hopes that other communities may use these tools to uplift their own upcoming scholars and positively contribute to the thriving of their communities.

Positionality Statement

As authors, we represent a diverse group of Indigenous Peoples from across North America, Alaska, and Hawaiʻi. The following tribes and clans present at the 2022 IWR included Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma; Aleut (Unangax); Chippewa-Cree Tribe, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; Alaskan scholars from the Nome Eskimo Community and the Native Village of Unalakleet; Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian)[2] from Hawaiʻi and Oʻahu islands, respectively; Oneida Nation of Wisconsin; Metlakatla Indian Community (Tsimshian); and Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Eleven scholars were invited via their participation in the Native Children's Research Exchange (NCRE) program. Funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the NCRE scholars program offers opportunities for scholars to receive mentorship, openly exchange ideas and information, build collaborative relationships, cultivate their writing abilities, conduct meaningful research, and disseminate knowledge about Native children's development and substance use. Attendees included four advanced graduate students, three early career academic researchers (e.g., post-doctoral fellows), and five assistant professors. Three academic researchers also attended as mentors and included one Indigenous mentor from Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe and two non-Indigenous mentors (from North America and Hawaiʻi.). Finally, one non-Indigenous NIH program official also attended to lead a grant writing workshop. All four mentors have been actively

[1] Given that Hawaiian language has multiple meanings, various translations of Hawaiian terms have been intentionally offered to assist the reader in understanding the meaning and context of the term being used.

[2] The term Kānaka Maoli (real or true people) is a reference to Native Hawaiians who travelled from Polynesia and settled in Hawaiʻi (Silva, 2004). This term was specifically chosen to connect us to our Pacific Ocean relatives. For example, the term Maori references the Indigenous Peoples of Aotearoa (New Zealand).

engaged in research with Indigenous communities for more than 20 years.

Given that storytelling is a powerful Indigenous method to transmit knowledge and wisdom, this article is shared as a first-person narrative that is inclusive of multiple voices gathered via a survey for scholars and mentors and through either email inquiries or "talk story" sessions with key community hosts (which includes kūpuna -Elders, leaders, and cultural practitioners). "Talk story" is an Indigenous method of gathering information that is in alignment with Hawaiian culture (Archibald & Parent, 2019; Tengan, 2008). Names will be included to honor the wisdom of our community hosts and mentors and give credit to the scholars and mentors that provided gifts from their culture. However, to protect confidentiality and to express ourselves as a collective voice, specific scholar names have been omitted for narrative survey responses. Thus, we invite readers to conceptualize the IWR process as a strategic, system change solution to evolve and expand Native scientific leadership.

Research with Indigenous Populations and Indigenous Scholarship in the USA

Historically, health research with Indigenous communities has often been conducted by non-Indigenous researchers using eurochristian research methodologies with little or no understanding of the communities in which research was taking place (Brockie et al, 2022; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 1999, 2021). Consequently, much of this research has benefited the researcher and not Indigenous communities, further widening health inequities (Reid et al., 2019). Native Hawaiian, Native American, and Alaska Native Peoples are disproportionately burdened by substance use disorders (SUDs), as well as increased depression, anxiety, and suicide due to historical and cultural trauma and poverty, including attempted genocide and ongoing colonial structures (Baldwin et al., 2020; Daniels et Al., 2022; Walters et al., 2011). Despite this, Native communities have overcome adversity, both individually and collectively, by leaning on cultural and community resilience factors such as Indigenous knowledge, self-determination, and dismantling white supremacist ideologies (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018; Hiratsuka et al., 2017; McCleary & Smard, 2021). Increasingly, Indigenous knowledge, methodologies, and epistemologies have been recognized as essential to developing solutions to the critical health inequities experienced by Indigenous Peoples (Daniels et al, 2022; Elliot-Groves et al., 2020; Johnson-Jennings et al., 2023; Wilson, 2008).

Community engaged methodologies and approaches to health equity, health disparity research, and frameworks for substance use intervention have been highlighted for prioritization (Daniels et al., 2022; E. White et al., 2022a, 2022b; Whitesell et al., 2020), and specific methodologies have been adapted for implementation in Indigenous populations (Laveaux & Christopher, 2009; L. White, et al., 2022a, 2022b). Such efforts are championed by Tribal leadership (Balestrery et al., 2020; Kuhn et al., 2020) and are increasingly supported by the federal government, as evidenced by a recent White House memorandum legitimizing and calling for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in research, policy, and practice (Prabhakar & Mallory, 2022), as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007).

The creation of funding initiatives such as the Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health (IRINAH, housed within NIH; Crump et al., 2020) and mentorship and training programs such as the Native Children's Research Exchange (NCRE; Ivanich et al., 2022) Scholars program is further evidence of progress toward supporting Indigenous-centered research. The careful, patient, thoughtful, and compassionate work of Indigenous scholars to balance ancestral knowledge and community connections with diligent scientific training and practice has cultivated a new field of Indigenous health research which centers Indigenous worldviews, needs, and priorities while advancing rigorous scientific approaches to health equity (Kurtz, 2013; Walters et al., 2009, 2020). This momentum has the potential to contribute to a groundswell of Indigenous research scientists eager to lead the field of substance use research, but these scholars still face extensive adversity in academia.

Academic Barriers and the Need for an Indigenous Writing Retreat (IWR)

Ideological, professional, and systemic barriers work in tandem to present significant obstacles to success in academia for Indigenous scholars. Conflicting worldviews are a primary barrier. Indigenous epistemology and ontology are valuable knowledge systems, but are frequently dismissed or invalidated in academic spaces (Kovach, 2010; Smith, 1999, 2021; Todd, 2016; Wilson, 2008). This requires Indigenous scholars to simultaneously decenter eurochristian structures and fight for legitimate inclusion of Indigenous epistemological knowledge, in order to engage in research that honors Indigenous wisdom (Smith, 1999, 2021; Styres et al., 2010; Tuck & Yang, 2014; Yua et al., 2022). Indigenous scholars may also struggle with eurochristian-scientific concepts such as "neutrality" as they embody the same Indigenous worldviews and are members of the very communities they do research in. These members often hold honored positions with intrinsic kuleana (privilege and responsibility—as it is understood from a Native Hawaiian perspective) to uplift their community. Simultaneously, Indigenous researchers are personally and relationally impacted by many of the same inequities that their work

addresses, and by choosing to work in their communities, they risk re-traumatization.

At their academic institutions, they are often one of few, if not the only, Indigenous researchers, which can be an isolating experience (Walters & Simoni, 2009). Indeed, Indigenous scholars only represented 0.003% of all doctoral degrees conferred in 2020 (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.) and 0.003% of tenure-track faculty at degree granting post-secondary institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.), even though Indigenous Peoples represent at minimum 2.9% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021; Walls et al., 2019), and inaccurate measurement of race/ethnicity has historically underestimated Indigenous populations (Walls et al., 2019). In addition to common academic obligations such as seeking funding, achieving tenure, and publishing (e.g., "publish or perish"), Indigenous faculty report increased expectations to represent the "Indigenous perspective" on various issues and mentor Indigenous or marginalized students (Walters et al., 2019). Convergence of, and conflict among, these personal and professional responsibilities can exacerbate academic burnout, leading to stress, frustration, degraded motivation, exhaustion, and sometimes complete withdrawal from academia. It is critical that academia seek ways to interrupt this cycle, as lack of adequate representation of Indigenous scholars is a significant barrier to conducting meaningful health equity research in partnership with Indigenous communities.

One clear step forward is to bolster academic support for current Indigenous scholars that contribute to their writing and research via an IWR. In addition to common strategies for improving writing, such as goal-setting, self-care, and time management; Indigenous scholars need cultural grounding to boost energy and connection and build confidence. This manuscript describes the IWR framework and processes that promoted healing, connection, and growth expressed through firsthand accounts from scholars. The Indigenous Writing Retreat articulated herein also demonstrates the need for structural spaces wherein Indigenous scholars can cultivate strategies to bring forward Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching into their academic writing, research, and respective academic spaces. The illustrative example presented here is definitively rooted in the Native Hawaiian perspective for substance use researchers; however, this conceptualization of an IWR process may serve as a framework across Indigenous cultures, with implications that may extend to other Indigenous populations, minoritized communities, and related areas of expertise.

A Hawaiian Indigenous Writing Perspective

The case study presented here is one example of an IWR process developed for scholars that was held in Honolulu, Hawaiʻi on Oʻahu island in April 2022. Metaphorically, it was the intention of the planning committee to view the scholars as flowers and provide them with wai (life-giving water), including a nourishing environment to learn, heal, and grow both personally and professionally. Additionally, when a Hawaiian term is repeated, its emphasis is doubled. For example, the Hawaiian term waiwai refers to abundance of land and resources which is achieved through having a sufficient water source. However, the deeper meaning of waiwai is rooted in an understanding that if you have wai (life-giving water), then you will grow and evolve and strengthen your waiwai (worth and value as a person). In the context of the IWR, the wai refers to the feelings of love, acceptance, and belonging shared among all who participated and cultural grounding with the intention to foster both personal and collective empowerment.

Hawaiian Worldview

To fully understand the Native Hawaiian context, Hawaiian terminology is necessary, because language conveys the epistemological and ontological worldviews through which a cultural group conceptualizes and lives in their world (Schraw & Olafson, 2008). At the core of the Hawaiian worldview is the conscious effort to work toward lōkahi (unity and balance at the community level) and pono (balance at the individual level) (Antonio et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2014, 2021). Given the finite resources in Hawaiʻi, it is essential to maintain harmonious interdependent relationships between the people, spirituality, and the environment. Kānaka Maoli view themselves as stewards of the land and by taking care of the land, the land will, in turn, nurture them (Antonio et al., 2020; Oneha, 2001).

Because Kānaka Maoli place a high value on relationships, the Hawaiian way to interact is relational (give and receive) and not transactional (give and take). Kānaka Maoli view reciprocity as relational, and those who receive information are invited to identify what they will "carry with" them in their hearts and minds. Thus, the concepts of aku (giving) and mai (receiving) are important to understand *how* this IWR was organized. In this IWR, Hawaiian cultural values and teachings invited scholars to aʻo mai (receive knowledge; learn) and aʻo aku (give or share knowledge; teach) through listening and learning about Hawaiian stories and subsequently sharing their own stories and teachings. In contrast, the eurochristian perspective conceptualizes reciprocity as a transaction of giving and taking from an experience, such as identifying the "takeaway" message when a scholar attends a workshop.

Form and Essence

Embedded in the language are also cultural values and beliefs that are essential to understand the depth of the

IWR processes which focused not only on Form (*what* was important for scholars to learn) but also Essence (*how* our learning, healing, and growth were fostered and developed). The IWR incorporated the Kānaka Maoli viewpoint that the "mind" is located in the lolo (cognitive mind) and the naʻau (viscera). Kānaka Maoli "intuitively recognize the interdependence of our intellect and our emotional intelligence" (Kana ʻiaupuni et al., 2021, p. 12) and understand the relationship between the intestinal biome and mental health through a "gut-brain" axis (Clapp et al., 2017). Deep understanding, comprehension, perceptual wisdom, and eventual enlightenment are not attained through the cognitive mind alone. Direct experiences are processed through an internal intellectualization in the naʻau (seat of Hawaiian intellect, "gut feeling"; "guts"; Aluli-Meyer, 2003; Kaniʻaupuni et al., 2021; Paglinawan et al., 2020).

The naʻau (visceral mind) offers at least three identified processes utilized to work toward becoming pono (in balance): comprehension, expression/communication, and internal guidance (Martin, 2019; Martin, et al., 2021). According to Aunty Puanani Burgess (2013), Kānaka Maoli believe that "your naʻau, your gut, is the deepest place from which you think. It's the place where your mind, heart, intuition and experience come together. It is the place where your mana, your spiritual core lives. The Hawaiian word for thought is manaʻo." (p. 12). Thus, activities were planned to invite us to "tune in" to our naʻau to viscerally comprehend the teachings shared during the IWR by cultural practitioners and Elders, express the truth of who are in totality, and allow us to be guided by our internal guidance system.

Closely related to cognitive and visceral mind processing are the teachings from Uncle Richard and Aunty Lynette Paglinawan, well-respected Kānaka Maoli kūpuna (Hawaiian Elders), who highlight the importance of striving for balance and respecting the totality of Form and Essence. Dr. Aluli-Meyer (2003), a Native Hawaiian scholar, conceptualized ontology as a "synonym for the essence of what it means to be Hawaiian. It is tied to cosmology, belief structures, and practices that uphold specific values, ways of understanding the world, and ways of engaging…that make up form and essence" (p. 78). In order to be fully present and truthful in expressing who we are in totality, it is essential to simultaneously know and sense our Form and Essence (Paglinawan et al., 2020, p. 20). Aunty Lynette Paglinawan, a deeply revered cultural practitioner of Hoʻoponopono (Hawaiian spiritually grounded process to restore harmony and balance to strengthen the family system) with her honorary doctorate in Social Work, articulates the relationship between Form and Essence in the following manner:

> Form…is what you know intellectually, defined literally, and performed literally and with technical precision…Essence is expressing the true meaning, the intention, the feeling behind the thought and actions in an authentic way. It is the expression of an idea with genuine feeling about your truth. It is often equated with the word kaona (hidden deeper meaning as opposed to literal meaning). It is about behaviors and feelings that are congruent when conveying a thought (Paglinawan, 2015, p.13)

From an academic perspective, Form focuses on tasks, policies, procedures, and structure, relying upon cognitive processing to understand the tangible world around us. In complement, Essence focuses on our disposition and how we come across through relationships with individuals, families, communities, land, and beings seen and unseen. Essence relies upon being fully present and processing in the naʻau (visceral mind to authentically engage and connect with others). In academia, being Form oriented is often rewarded primarily through grants, publications, and awards, and many of the scholars have excelled in their scholarship abilities. However, "tuning in" to our naʻau during the IWR presented opportunities to strengthen our overall identity, particularly our cultural identity, and, after in-depth reflection, articulate strategies to incorporate our Essence into our scholarly work (e.g., research, publications, and community-based activities). Thus, the IWR supported scholars to find a balance between their Form and Essence so that they could express themselves fully and authentically as Indigenous health scholars.

Native Hawaiian Core Values/Concepts

Five core Kānaka Maoli values/concepts informed the activities for the IWR: aloha, pono, mana, kuleana, and ʻohana. Each value has multilayered meanings. From a Kānaka Maoli perspective, we begin with aloha (love, empathy, compassion) and work toward becoming pono (balance in mind, body, and spirit). Guided by our mana (Divine power; life force energy) and Indigenous beliefs and processes, we strive to act in a pono (balanced, fair, just, hopeful) manner and carry our kuleana (birthright, privilege, and responsibility) graciously and authentically. In doing so, we simultaneously uplifted and grounded ourselves and each other and formed an ʻohana (family) to foster a sense of community and belonging. Indigenous substance use researchers embody aloha, valuing all community members regardless of their journey.

Aloha is the greatest value of all within the Native Hawaiian culture.

> Aloha mai no aloha aku O ka hūhu ka e ola ʻole ai.
> When love is given, love should be returned; anger is the thing that gives no life.
> (Pukui, 1997, p. 15)

Aloha (acceptance, love, empathy, and compassion) refers to treating people with respect and unconditional, mutual positive regard. The "Aloha Spirit" involves coordination of mind and heart within each person and brings each person to the self. It requires each person to think and emote good feelings to others (Aloha Spirit Law, 2013).

The Hawaiian practice of aloha aku, aloha mai (giving and receiving love) involves giving freely without anything expected in return. However, when the aloha flows back naturally in return, the relationship between the giver and receiver deepens. Aunty Olana Ai, well-respected kumu hula (hula teacher) stated, "Aloha is the intelligence with which we meet life" (Aluli-Meyer, 2003, p. 4). From this belief, it is recognized that the true heart of Kānaka Maoli is rooted in the na'au, because na'au is the seat of Hawaiian intellect. From a Hawaiian perspective, the visceral mind has, at its core, a deep sense of aloha. Thus, as we learn and grow in our hearts and minds, we communicate and interact with aloha.

Pono is a central value in the Native Hawaiian culture aligned with justice and equity. The multilayered meanings of pono are centered on restoring balance, harmony, and cultivating hope through actions that are fair and just. Since all things have life, it is essential to be in a balanced relationship with oneself, the environment, spirituality, and each other (Antonio et al., 2020; McCubbin & Marsella, 2009). The three layers of pono build upon one another. First, an individual comes with good intentions into any situation. Second, as an individual engages with others from a pono mindset and related behaviors, he/she strives toward being fair, just, and equitable. As that individual strives for social justice, he/she discovers/reaches the third layer and deepest meaning of pono which is finding where hope lies for people. For Indigenous Peoples who have experienced historical and cultural trauma, hope is found in places where a sense of worth and value to a person and connection to their community is restored (P. Burgess, personal communication, January 17, 2023).[3] Native Hawaiians recognized that becoming pono is not easy to do; therefore, pono is not an outcome per se, but rather an iterative and ever-evolving process of "striving for" peaceful and harmonious relationships at all levels and within all aspects: physical, environmental, spiritual, and interpersonal, to promote overall well-being (Kame'elehiwa, 1992; Martin et al., 2021; Oneha, 2001). To this end, it was essential to create opportunities for all scholars to work toward becoming pono within themselves during the IWR through specific activities and reflective discussions. Pono applied in research, teaching, and service emphasizes the resilient strength of people and communities, which is inherently tied to one's mana.

Mana is one's spiritual core located in the na'au. It is the storehouse of supernatural power that emotionally connects an individual to their ancestors, to the current timeframe, and to an unborn future (Burgess, 2013; Pukui et al., 1972a). It is a core Hawaiian concept that has deep roots linked to beliefs about spirituality and emotional well-being, which is an important consideration for Indigenous scholars as many of them have individually and collectively experienced cultural and historical trauma. In the Kānaka Maoli belief system, "power is derived from spiritual and natural forces and emotions are inextricably linked with pilina (relationships)" (Kana'iaupuni et al., 2021, p. 11). Although mana can be used to exert influence over others in a negative way, it can also boost one's confidence and inner strength in times of stress or uncertainty. By strengthening one's mana, "individuals can have spiritual support to discover insights, balance multiple obligations, and manage our behavior. In a reciprocal way, mana and spiritual and emotional well-being can increase—or decrease—each other" (Kana'iaupuni, 2021, p. 11). Throughout the IWR, we sought to amplify positive mana, anticipating scholars were confronted with contextually negative forces associated with substance use research. During the IWR, the following 'ōlelo no'eau influenced the reverence and respect scholars and mentors held for those that they were learning from throughout the week:

> *Ku i ka māna.*
> Like the one from whom he received what he learned. Said of a child who behaves like those who have reared him. Māna is food masticated by an elder and conveyed to the mouth of a small child. The haumana (pupil) receives knowledge from the mouth of his teacher. (Pukui, 1997, p. 202)

A related phrase repeatedly shared with and among the scholars was "Ku i kou mana" translated as "Stand in your spiritual power," emphasizing the importance of drawing upon their own mana (Divine power) passed down from their ancestors that resides in their na'au. Finally, scholars were invited to share our mana'o (thoughts and insights) gained from deeply reflecting in our na'au regarding the meanings (Essence) we gleaned from our participation in various activities (Form). This was done to make sense of what we were learning and be able to carry it gently in our hearts, minds, and spirits into the work we are involved in within our respective home communities.

Kuleana emphasizes the fact that all individuals hold a privilege, birthright, and responsibility (Pukui & Elbert, 1986). In traditional Hawaiian society, everyone was given a role to ensure the well-being of the overall community, and that role was assigned based on genealogy rather than wealth

[3] Aunty Puanani Burgess learned the deeper layers of meaning for pono from Aunty Pilahi Paki, Hawaiian cultural knowledge bearer. The fifth meaning of pono is also identified as hope by Pukui and Elbert, 1986.

or gender (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2021). Thus, specific activities were organized for scholars to focus on amplifying their mana, including their unique gifts (talents and abilities), so they can identify their kuleana and be inspired to develop their knowledge and expertise for the collective good and well-being of all communities they serve through research and scholarship.

ʻOhana is the Kānaka Maoli term for family which is important for many Indigenous cultures. Significant efforts were made to create an inclusive environment and sense of belonging and a recognition that we are all part of a larger family. Focusing on forming an ʻohana during the IWR cultivated connections among scholars to overcome being part of an isolated cohort in Indigenous substance use research. The following ʻōlelo noʻeau informed *how* the scholars and mentors interacted with community hosts and each other.

> *ʻIke aku, ʻike mai*
> *Kōkua aku, kokua mai; pela iho la ka nohona ʻohana.*
> Recognize and be recognized, help and be helped, such is family life.
> Family life requires an exchange of mutual help and recognition.
> (Pukui, 1997, p. 130)

The term ʻike has several meanings, but in this context, it refers to efforts for scholars to be truly seen for the totality of who we are and where we come from and to celebrate our resilience to overcome challenges. Furthermore, through kokua aku, kokua mai (helping one another) and spending quality time connecting with one another, we formed pilina (relationship connections and bonds) both personally and professionally that has continued to have a lasting imprint on all who participated in the IWR.

IWR 2022: Intentions and Methods

The primary intention of the Hawaiʻi IWR was to provide protected time for a collective group of scholars to focus on specific writing goals and support each other's progress toward those goals. Additional intentions were added to elevate the value and merit of Indigenous knowledge and wisdom in developing Native scientific leadership in scholarship. All intentions evolved through the co-creation of the writing retreat agenda among mentors and Native Hawaiian scholar hosts. The four intentions were (1) *Hoʻoulu a Mōhalahala ʻIke*: inspire growth and develop knowledge and insight; (2) *Hōʻola i ka Nohona Kanaka*: give life to cultural identity and native intelligence; (3) *Hoʻopono*: cleanse and let go; align mind, body, spirit alignment; and (4) *Hoʻohana Pilina*: relationship building with the human, environmental, and spiritual/ancestral realms. Six methods were used to achieve the four intentions of the IWR: (1) engage in academic writing and skill development; (2) participate in Indigenous cultural orientation and protocol; (3) honor and pay respect to the Indigenous people and their land; (4) incorporate cultural tools and ceremony; (5) create a "Safe" space for scholars; and (6) community building. Table 1 describes intentions, methods, Native Hawaiian core values/concepts, and application.

Description of Intentions and Methods

The IWR intentions were co-created to assist scholars to develop their professional skills/confidence; strengthen their identity, particularly their cultural identity; and build a sense of belonging among a community of Indigenous scholars, mentors, and community hosts (kūpuna, leaders, and cultural practitioners). The planning committee was flexible in adjusting the agenda to allow for a fluid and organic learning process (see Appendix 2 for sample agenda). While the following section describes each intention and the methods primarily linked to those intentions, methods are dynamic and fluid and can fulfill multiple intentions.

Intention 1: Hoʻoulu a Mōhalahala ʻIke—Inspire Growth, Develop Knowledge and Insight

The first intention of the IWR, Hoʻoulu a Mōhalahala ʻIke, is centered on supporting scholars to thrive and incorporates Method A (engage in academic writing and skill development) and Method B (participate in cultural orientation to strengthen cultural identity; see Table 1). This intention offered scholars tools and guidance to carry their kuleana (birthright, privilege, and responsibility) with confidence. However, from a Hawaiian perspective, professional development is more than just the Form (develop SMART goals, have protected time for writing and grant writing). The Essence of this intention is articulated in the kaona (deeper meaning), which involves assisting scholars to thrive through an inspired evolution of blossoming beyond fear and worry to restore balance and harmony and build confidence. This was achieved through affirming our cultural identities and acquiring knowledge and insight. Thus, when Indigenous scholars Hoʻoulu (become inspired to grow) through culturally grounded activities, they mōhalahala (blossom from what is learned), strengthen their Essence, and acquire ʻike (knowledge through lived experience). Subsequently, through in-depth reflection, they also gain ʻike (insight), which strengthens their Form. This deeper meaning represents a *foundational* difference in how the IWR was organized and implemented in comparison to a typical academic writing retreat. Both retreat planners and scholars recognized that Indigenous scholars needed holistic preparation to engage in our academic work and community

Table 1 Matrix of intentions, methods, and applied Native Hawaiian values/concepts at the IWR

Intention	Methods	Native Hawaiian core value/concepts	Application/activities
1. *Ho'oulu a mōhalahala 'ike* Cause to thrive, inspire growth, develop knowledge and insight	(A) Engage in academic writing and skill development to build confidence	*Kuleana* (birthright, privilege, and responsibility)	· Writing accountability hui (groups) · Develop SMART writing goals · Protected writing time · Grant writing workshops
2. *Hō'ola i ka Nohona Kanaka* Give life to cultural identity and native intelligence	(B) Participate in an Indigenous cultural orientation to learn about the Indigenous culture where retreat was situated and protocols to strengthen cultural identity	*Aloha aku, Aloha mai* (giving and receiving acceptance, love, empathy, and compassion)	· Participate in cultural protocols · Watch films about Hawaii's history · Historical scavenger hunt in Waikiki to learn about Native Hawaiian royalty · Listen to wisdom of Elders and cultural practitioners · Culturally-based service learning at Aunty Māhealani's farm (Maunalaha)
	(C) Honor and pay respect to Indigenous people and their land	*Aloha aku, Aloha mai* *Kokua aku, kokua mai* (giving and receiving help)	· Visit to *Kapaemahu* (healing stones) · Participate in cultural protocols · Service learning at Maunalaha · Cultural gifts as offering: salmon (Alaska), *Kulolo* (Hawai'i), cedar (Shawnee)
3. *Ho'opono* Cleanse and let go: mind, body, spirit alignment	(D) Incorporate cultural tools and ceremony for healing and centering	*Aloha* and *Pono* *Mana* (divine/power, life force energy)	· "*Pono* baskets" gifted to attendees · *Pi kai*—salt cleansing ceremony · Ceremonial cultural gifts from scholars/mentors: sage, cedar
	(E) Create a "safe space" for scholars to be their fully authentic selves, work toward balance in mind, body, and spirit, and amplify their spiritual core to nurture positive cultural identity	*Pu'uhonua* (place of refuge and sanctuary) *Pono and Mana* *Ku i kou mana* (stand in your spiritual power)	· Identify and release burdens · "Bowl of Light" exercise · "Speak from the Heart" (in-depth reflections)
4. *Ho'ohana Pilina* Relationship building with human, environmental, and spiritual/ancestral realms	(F) Community building to form a sense of belonging which fosters individual and collective empowerment	Forming *'ohana* (family) *'Ike aku, 'ike mai* *Kōkua aku, kokua mai; pela iho la ka nohona 'ohana*	· Share cultural stories, chants, songs · Share meals · Meet with writing *hui* (groups) · Meet and greet with invited guests (researchers, community leaders, and health organizations) · Engaging in local social activities (e.g., catamaran, gathering at Pu'u Ualaka'a-hill of the rolling sweet potato)

responsibilities, express our authentic truth from within, and write from a place of fearlessness and confidence.

To achieve this intention, we were assigned to writing accountability hui (groups) with a specific Hawaiian name because Hawaiians believe that when something is named, then the energy of that name is brought to life. In this instance, our intention was that the hui names provided guidance as to how to navigate one's interactions with their peers. Each assigned name was rooted in one's spirit and spirituality as Hawaiian spiritualism is a foundational element in the Hawaiian worldview. Mentors also encouraged us to develop SMART writing goals and each day included protected time for writing and meeting with our accountability hui. During protected writing times, mentors were also available to consult with scholars on their various writing projects. Finally, scholars strengthened their grant writing skills through participation in an NIH grant writing course. Three of the scholars summarized their inspired growth and insight in the following manner:

> As a Native Hawaiian who held a dual role as host and NCRE scholar, I live my Hawaiian values as I have been taught and approach my kuleana (privilege, birthright, responsibility) by leading with the spiritual Essence of who I am. But I struggled with believing that I am "good enough", particularly as a writer, which is necessary to succeed in academia. Thus, creating SMART writing goals and learning the many aspects of grant writing, including tips for writing specific aims and what NIH grant reviewers are looking for built my confidence in believing that I, as an Indigenous scholar, am "good enough." Grounded in my indigeneity, I can emerge from a bud to a full bloom flower. Through this IWR, I released my fear/self-doubt/insecurities and found a harmonious balance between Form (technical writing in this instance) and Essence (how I "show up" in a scholarly space and engage with my community and colleagues).—Scholar
>
> In my grant applications, and especially my article writing and presentations, I have been practicing my expression of Essence in balance with the Form of my professional and academic training. It is a vulnerable and scary practice in an academic environment that often does not honor this effort. Indeed, I think I was previously taught in my academic training to undervalue my own skills and abilities of Essence, an idea that feels shocking and disturbing to me now, as I have come to notice that my practice of Essence is, in many ways, an expression and reflection of intergenerational knowledge. I now believe that the courage to bring my own unique skills and expressions of Essence is a vital contribution to our collective work as Indigenous health researchers striving for wellness and flourishing in our communities.—Scholar
>
> I was able to complete my first Co-investigator R01 application shortly after the retreat. More importantly, I developed a community partnership with [name of Tribal organization] in my home community and submitted a collaborative CBPR grant in partnership with their mental health department.—Scholar

Intention 2: Hōʻola i ka Nohona Kanaka—Give Life to Cultural Identity and Native Intelligence

Hōʻola i ka Nohona Kanaka is the second intention of the IWR and incorporates Methods B (participating in Indigenous cultural orientation and protocol) and Method C (honoring and paying respect to Indigenous Peoples and their land; see Table 1). From a Hawaiian perspective, Hoʻola refers to giving life and Nohona Kanaka refers to the ways of being and doing of the kanaka or Hawaiian. Through providing an Indigenous cultural orientation, including protocol, and opportunities to honor and pay respect to the Indigenous Peoples and their land in Hawaiʻi, scholars were invited to reflect and share stories of their own Peoples and lands. In doing so, we were able to revitalize our cultural identity and further cultivate pride in the native intelligence of our respective Peoples. Scholars were given a cultural orientation to the Native Hawaiian culture by Kuʻuipo Kumukahi, a well-respected kūpuna (Elder) and cultural practitioner, and Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, cultural practitioner and advocate for Native Hawaiian culture and language. The orientation included cultural protocols of a welcoming oli (chant) and exchanging fragrant flower leis as ways to awaken our senses and invoke the spirit of aloha in which the leis were given. This Kānaka Maoli practice is an example of aloha aku, aloha mai (giving and receiving of love, empathy, and compassion), which helped to deepen the relationship between givers and receivers. According to Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu:

> [Fragrant leis] help to activate the senses and the spirit, and embed those moments into the minds, the heart and the spirit of those whom are present. So my recommendation to give a lei to be received by them that had fragrance was to help to strengthen that, and to… invoke this understanding. you know, Because you want them to remember you want them to hold on to hold on to that moment, because it might have been filled with many a learning…. the whole idea was, to anchor it in them now… every time they smell that smell they're going to say, "Oh, I remember when…" you know that was the objective and hopefully it was achieved.—Community Host

We also watched videos about the cultural and historical trauma and resiliency of Hawai'i and Kapaemahu Pōhaku (Healing Stones) located in Waikiki, O'ahu, and listened to the wisdom of our community hosts. The IWR hosts felt it was imperative to begin our IWR journey by connecting to 'āina-based (land-based) healing energy in Hawai'i that would also be available to scholars throughout the retreat. Thus, during our visit to Kapaemahu Pōhaku (healing stones), we were invited to make a personal connection with the stones and develop a sense of place (how someone perceives and experiences a place or environment) in Waikiki by forming a circle around the stones and paying respect to the stones (e.g., moment of silence, talk to them, and/or sing to the stones). This site was chosen as the first connection with the local environment for scholars because of its healing significance. Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu reflected on her experience of engaging with us and sharing her knowledge about Kapaemahu as her way of planting seeds in the hearts and minds of all of us:

> I'm only too happy that, you know, if there are connections, or if there is some sort of realization, some sort of epiphany moment that came, or if it served to simply plant a seed, and then later on, down the line they say "Ah I realized this is what we were doing at the stones," or "This is what that encounter was meant to do," you know. A visit to Kapaemahu [healing stones] …[was intended] to help, guide and inform and plant seeds and help contribute to, you know. just [thinking pause], their own growing list of life's special moments, you know, life's important moments.—Community Host

The seeds that were planted throughout the IWR left a profound impact on everyone who participated and is eloquently summarized by one of the scholars:

> The 2022 IWR was truly a gift. I have cultivated these seeds of understanding that were planted during the retreat and have already seen tremendous growth in my life both personally and professionally. I am not a health researcher who happens to be Indigenous. I am an Indigenous health scholar, and that means bringing both Essence and Form to the work.—Scholar

To further solidify our sense of place, two Kānaka Maoli scholars (who are referred to throughout this text as scholar hosts) led a scavenger hunt/walking tour to four Waikiki hotels to learn about Hawaiian royalty. The scholars shared stories at each hotel and asked us to search for clues connected to Hawaiian culture and their cultural significance such as feather capes at Princess Kai'ulani Hotel, and the pahu drum at the Royal Hawaiian hotel which was once the residences of several Hawaiian royalty. The sentiment of the scholars related to the impact of the cultural orientation is noted in the following survey response:

> Connecting with the Elders, culture bearers, and 'āina as we were received with Oli Aloha [Welcoming Chant] and introduced to the Kapaemahu Pōhaku at the beginning of the IWR helped to ground me as a guest of the People and 'āina. This ceremony helped prepare my Form and Essence for the intended work of the gathering. I was able to ho'opono and balance all aspects of my being (mental, physical, spiritual) to my dissertation writing.—Scholar

We visited Aunty Māhealani Ka'awa, a deeply respected cultural practitioner and kūpuna (Elder), and her son Kalā Ka'awa (fluent Native Hawaiian language speaker and cultural practitioner) at their farm in Makiki Valley, known as Maunalaha. This experience gave us an opportunity to observe and participate in cultural protocol with them upon entry to their family land. Through observing the cultural protocols of chanting to the spiritual ancestors of this special place, introducing ourselves in our Native languages, and engaging in cultural offerings from scholars to our community hosts, we were able to connect with the spiritual energy of Maunalaha.

The cultural gift of smoked salmon was offered by one of the scholars who shared her cultural meaning and rationale for her gift she prepared for her Pacific Ocean relatives:

> Salmon was gifted to the Hawaiian Elders and culture bearers, as a gesture of appreciation for being invited and welcomed onto the 'āina. Salmon was shared with members of our writing retreat to honor our time and growth together. Salmon tastes best when shared in a gathering. In our tradition, we share the best of what we have with our relatives, in reverence and honor of the salmon (in this case). Salmon represents the cycle of life for many Alaska Native Peoples. By sharing the gift of salmon with our Pacific Ocean relatives, the prayer for our earth and land was expanded.—Scholar

Another scholar brought a gift of cedar chips for our community hosts which are used as a tool to clear the pathway to learning. Scholar hosts also offered a "pono basket" similar to the ones gifted to scholars (described in greater detail in Intention 3). This type of gift exchange is another example of aloha aku, aloha mai (giving and receiving of love) in which our community hosts shared their knowledge and wisdom without expecting anything in return. But when they received the gifts from scholars, the mutual connection was deepened. Following our introduction, Aunty Māhealani and Kalā shared stories of resilience through adversity and trauma that occurred on the land and People which prompted deep reflections for us regarding our own historical and cultural trauma and resiliency. We also engaged in the Hawaiian practice of kokua aku,

kokua mai (giving and receiving help) by clearing the area of debris and planting trees. To provide us with a greater visceral understanding of an ahupuaʻa (land division from mountain to ocean), we had lunch at the Puʻu Ualakaʻa (hill of the rolling sweet potato) while viewing the entire ahupuaʻa of Makiki from a lookout point and see the adjacent ahupuaʻa of Waikiki.

Sitting in a circle, we engaged in an in-depth debriefing of our individual and collective experiences and their respective meanings through a "Speak from the Heart" exercise using a heart pillow to help us tune in to, not only our cognitive mind but also our naʻau (visceral mind) and share what we will carry with us in our hearts and minds from this experience. At the closing of the circle, we offered an Oli Mahalo (chant of gratitude) as well as learned a song (Strong Woman Song) shared by one of the Native American scholars as part of a cultural exchange of gratitude. This experience assisted in our ability to connect to spirit, the land, and each other. As one scholar shared, "During the protocols and the visit to Aunty Māhealani's farm, I immediately felt an emotional connection to the land and the stories shared with us." The emotional connection that was created was both healing and empowering for Aunty Māhealani and us. Our contact with our community hosts have continued through emails, where one of the mentors affirmed that "..there is much healing that emanates from what she (host) has cultivated and opened up…" Likewise, our community hosts have shared the memorable imprint of this visit and have invited us back to Maunalaha to see the progress of the trees we planted during our visit. Aunty Māhealani also discussed the impact the cultural visit had for her own empowerment.

> [The IWR Scholar visit] validated my mission or the movement for me to move forward. And seeing these young ones... here they are standing in their language and they're sharing their culture, and I feel so empowered. I am 75% Hawaiian and when I was young, it was not popular to be Hawaiian. I was so in awe and a lot of them were young and such total belief in what they were doing for their People and it helped me own it. I get to just be Hawaiian. So it helped me to make my decision to do this forever work.... After meeting the scholars I knew for sure it was time for me to be in this valley and tell the story.—Community Host

Intention 3: Hoʻopono—Cleanse and Let Go; Align Mind, Body, and Spirit

Hoʻopono literally means to "make things right" or to correct what was out of balance so that one can act in a respectable and proper manner (Pukui & Elbert, 1986). By aligning in mind, body, and spirit, Kānaka Maoli believe you can nurture the development of a positive cultural identity and overall self-image (Paglinawan et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2021). Thus, the third intention incorporated Method D (use of cultural tools and ceremony for healing the spirit and centering) and Method E (create a "safe space" for us to be our fully authentic selves; see Table 1). By courageously identifying what was holding us back from productive writing and working toward releasing those negative attachments, we worked toward becoming pono (aligned and hopeful). As part of our preparation for the writing retreat, we were each given a "pono basket" prepared by Hawaiʻi scholar hosts and mentor. Each basket was filled with several items including cultural tools (e.g., salt for cleansing), Hawaiian essential oils, tea, honey from Hawaiʻi island, and all the chants with translations that were used throughout the week.

One of the scholar hosts shared the three layers of pono as it was taught to her by Aunty Puanani Burgess, highly revered Native Hawaiian cultural knowledge bearer, community builder, and Zen priest, who has spent many years refining her Building a Beloved Community curriculum. This curriculum includes a series of transformative ceremonies to amplify your mana (your spiritual core) through deeply reflecting in your naʻau (Burgess, 2013). To further assist the preparation of scholars and mentors to engage in the writing retreat, one of the Indigenous mentors, Dr. Michelle Sarche, who is a member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Ojibwe and Associate Professor at the University of Colorado, School of Public Health, offered the gift of sage. From her cultural frame, sage is used to cleanse/purify one's spirit; to lift one's prayers to the creator. Thus, afterward she invited us to identify any burdens we were carrying around with us that were impeding our writing at the start of the IWR, she offered the following reasons for gifting us with sage:

> The writing retreat was the first time many of us traveled following almost two years of pandemic restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings. We had all been through a lot – many losses, much stress, worry, and uncertainty. I felt it would be helpful to cleanse our spirits in the wake of these difficult times, to help us let go of whatever burdens we carried in with us, to find an opening for connecting/reconnecting with one another, and for clarity as we entered the writing process.—Mentor

In order to engage in Hoʻopono, one of our scholar hosts created a puʻuhonua (place of refuge and sanctuary) which is rooted in the Kānaka Maoli belief that everyone deserves to be accepted as they are and be given time and space to heal. Once this "safe space" was created, she facilitated an insight-building exercise based on a cultural metaphor from the Kaiakea family on the island of Molokaʻi which is known as the Bowl of Light metaphor (for metaphor explanation, see Lee, 2006, p. 18–19). This metaphor explains that every child is born as a perfect

bowl of light. However, over time, due to negative emotions, rocks enter the bowl and block the light from being seen. The Hawaiian remedy is to huli (turn over) the bowl and release the rocks so that the light can be restored. Similar to other Indigenous groups, metaphors and stories are often used to communicate information that can promote deeper understandings of the discussion topic. In the context of the IWR, the topic was identifying burdens and letting them go.

Each scholar and mentor were asked to select a rock that represented the burden that we identified on the first day and invited us to take time to feel all the feelings associated with their burden in our naʻau as she chanted softly. Afterward, we were invited to share our burdens to the extent that we were comfortable to do so and, if we were ready, to gently place the rock in a bowl of water to symbolize being cleansed of that burden. She also engaged in 1:1 meetings with scholars and engaged in a Pi kai (salt cleansing) ceremony to clear our spirits. She also participated as Aunty Puanani Burgess has taught her that she can never ask participants to do something that she is not willing to do herself. Listed below are quotes from survey responses that highlight the “safe space” that was created and impact of participating in the Bowl of Light exercise:

> The retreat felt like a safe space to share our hopes and fears as Indigenous scholars while also practicing and honoring Hawaiian protocols.—Scholar
> The IWR taught me how to take care of my spirit and reconnect to my multicultural roots…and the Bowl of Light Exercise gave me the strength to face some of the emotional/spiritual blockages that I have built up during my time in academia (e.g., feeling as though I am not doing “enough”) and heal from those blockages.—Scholar
> I had been using Westernized coping skills to take care of myself with little success, but this IWR taught me deeper, more meaningful ways to nurture not only my physical and emotional self, but also my spiritual self.—Scholar
> Participating in the Bowl of Light ceremony with my colleagues allowed me to release my burden, let go of the “false self” I had been believing was incompetent or lacking or unworthy, and be affirmed in my true self by those around me. I finally felt worthy to do this research and carry this work forward with my community after attending this IWR.—Scholar
> Hearing the Scholars reflect on our time during our closing circle - with the Bowl of Light exercise - was very moving. One Scholar shared that they came thousands of miles away to deepen their understanding and connection to their own Tribal community and ways of knowing and being - underscoring, to me, the importance of this Indigenous space that transcends our particular Tribal community boundaries.—Mentor

The exercise was also intended to support all participants to integrate our Form and Essence. Scholars reflected deeply on how our understanding regarding how to engage with others and our environment was transformed. One scholar eloquently captured the Essence of the group.

> During and shortly after the IWR, I became aware of and attuned with the balance of Form and Essence in others and myself. Prior to the 2022 IWR, I was used to engaging in mostly Form in my research work, and mostly Essence in my spiritual and relational experiences as an Indigenous woman. I think I carried a tacit belief that these ways of engaging were dichotomous, and so I moved between these realms according to my context…After participation in 2022 IWR, I came to understand this dynamic in Indigenous health research spaces as one where Form and Essence are both valued and required. I realized that in Indigenous research spaces, the skills of Essence that I had partitioned off for family, community, and spiritual activities and spaces, and the skills of Form that I have developed and employed mostly in academic settings can come together, and I can operate from a fuller range of my abilities and identity.—Scholar

This quote clearly echoes responses from scholars and encapsulates the value of infusing both Form and Essence into Indigenous health research spaces and personal and spiritual activities and spaces. By creating opportunities for all of us to heal in a “safe space,” we achieved Intention 3. We restored holistic balance within ourselves and now more fully radiate our individual and collective light into our families, communities, and academic spaces. Thus, both Intentions two and three were part of the preparation to engage in Intention one.

Intention 4: Hoʻohana Pilina—Relationship Building

Hoʻohana Pilina (relationship building) is the fourth intention and infused Methods B (participating in Indigenous cultural orientation and protocol) and E (community building) to form a sense of belonging which fostered individual and collective empowerment (see Table 1). Healing occurred as a result of forming relationship connections and bonds via shared experiences such as discussing our various writing and research interests and projects, spending quality time together at Aunty Māhealani’s farm with our families, enjoying meals and social activities, and engaging in in-depth conversations throughout the week. We felt welcomed, seen, and heard during our time together, and sharing Indigenous songs was deeply moving

and strengthened the bonds among us. These powerful experiences left a lasting imprint in our hearts and over the course of the week, we became our own ʻohana. We also formed a broader community of Indigenous Peoples and allies all working toward a common goal of uplifting Indigenous Peoples in our respective communities through having lunch and doing a tour with Dr. Keawe Kaholokula and Dr. Susana Helm from the University of Hawaiʻi at Manoa, Department of Native Hawaiian Health and Department of Psychiatry, John A. Burns School of Medicine.

To expand our network even further, we held a "Meet and Greet" with both Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian researchers and community members focused on serving Native Hawaiians. Our scholar hosts and one of our community partners opened the event by singing the Queen's doxology in Hawaiian and one of our Alaska Native scholars again offered the gift of salmon and fresh coconut, which represented a blending of cultures—Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian. Scholar hosts also shared the gift of kulolo (a Hawaiian dessert made of taro corms and coconut milk) as a gesture of appreciation for those who traveled from near and far to attend the event. Symbolically, kulolo represents the ancestral connection Hawaiian People have with the ʻāina as taro or kalo is considered their elder sibling. But in this rare, dessert form, it is also sweet so there is a connotation that we offer the best of what we have with sweetness and aloha (unconditional positive regard), which tastes better when shared at a gathering with our Pacific Island relatives and invited guests. Sharing the gifts of our respective cultures gave us the opportunity to offer a collective prayer for the restoration of our ʻāina (that which feeds us) and the salmon—which is ultimately also a prayer to uplift our respective Peoples.

On the final day of the retreat, our community hosts engaged in a closing protocol with inspiring words and a closing chant. To express our gratitude and honor our community hosts, we gave them gifts of salmon and kulolo as a gesture of appreciation and to honor our community hosts for gifting us with their time and wisdom. Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu expressed her impact in receiving these precious gifts and reflected the Indigenous value of reciprocity in cultural gift exchanges:

> Oh, that was, that was a very nice, you know thing, to receive. Salmon comes to us from the time where our ancestors traveled. you know, and they brought that back. And it got added to the list of things that Hawaiian People enjoy… ʻcause we don't have salmon in Hawaiʻi, right? But it comes when our People start engaging in traveling, especially for whaling…They went to live abroad, and then they, you know, they might come home with kulolo for family.—Community Host

Each scholar and mentor also received a lei kukui (kukui nut garland) from our scholar hosts. The kukui nut represents light as the oils were used to light torches to see in the darkness. Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu recommended these leis be given to us as the end of our IWR.

> Symbolism with the kukui nut lei is a symbol of enlightenment, you know, and some people will say, "Well, I don't want… the shiny, pretty ones," because some people say they are plastic. And for me, plastic or not, the symbolism remains the same. If I, Hina, gave … a lei kukui, and I explained that in traditional times kukui was used to light the way, the pathway for people, kukui also invokes light and therefore enlightenment, which is knowledge, which is power. And you know, knowledge is what we're supposed to seek in daily life. So, is it not reasonable to say that by mere invocation of this that I'm acknowledging that I still understand the traditional ways and concepts of our people?—Community Host

Many of us continue to wear the lei kukui to invoke the spirit of aloha and recall the teachings that were so graciously shared with us which has inspired us to continue engaging in our relational actions in our respective communities and academic activities. The following quote articulates how the IWR can support Indigenous scholars who often experience grief and loss. Symbolism of the kukui nut lei was invoked to strengthen the scholars' mana (spiritual core) to complete her dissertation proposal and facilitate talking circles.

> The activities at the IWR influenced my motivation to keep up with my rigorous research/study schedule. In the spring of 2022, I was coping with the loss of my father and was feeling overwhelmed in general with the amount of Form required of me to meet my goal of completing my doctoral program within five years. When I returned home, I wore the blonde kukui nut lei gifted to me. I noticed an increase in stamina and a decrease in self-doubt and general worry regarding literature review and writing. I wore the kukui nut lei every time I read or wrote for my dissertation proposal. Form and Essence have become more fluid as I work and as I progress in my dissertation. The more Essence I bring to the coordination (Form) of the talking circles (which includes conversations with my ancestors), the more I am comforted.—Scholar

So, now that the multilayered stories and perspectives have been shared, we end this story of Form and Essence by sharing with our readers that the light that was ignited in

this IWR continues to live on through all of us as scholars. We have profound gratitude for the way each one of us has blossomed into the fullness of who we are individually and collectively and lasting impacts we carry with us, including the valuable writing skills gained, the revitalization of our cultural identities, the healing that has taken place, and the bonding that has formed from this IWR. This collective experience exemplified the exercise of sovereignty, connection with Essence, and helped scholars access and embrace the mutable potential of Form.

IWR Lasting Impacts on Scholars, Mentors, and Community Hosts

Our analysis of scholar survey responses, email communications from community hosts and scholars, and "talk story" sessions with Ku'uipo Kumukahi, Aunty Māhealani Ka'awa, and Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu revealed several lasting impacts on scholars, mentors, and community hosts/leaders/ cultural practitioners, described below.

Impact on Scholars

Through this IWR, scholars were empowered, grounded in their indigeneity, and identified how to apply these insights into their respective work within their communities and academic institutions. Our findings underscore the importance of scholarship practices that hold us accountable not only to ourselves but to our respective home communities, lands, and ancestors. Through this dynamic, interactive, and reflective IWR process, we experienced growth that subsequently led to feelings of belonging and personal and cultural empowerment that inspired writing related to our passions and areas of emerging expertise, which are reflected in the following two scholar quotes:

> The most impactful feeling I will always carry with me from the IWR is the feeling of confidence in who I am as a person and confidence that my story is worth sharing- that I belong in academia and I belong in places where I can help tell the story of my community. I felt so supported, encouraged, and lifted up by my colleagues that I started to believe in myself just like they believed in me.—Scholar

> Immediately following the IWR, I engaged in my academic writing for all five hours of my plane ride home. The writing flowed out of me whereas before the IWR it was blocked and I was at a place of exhaustion with academia. In the months following, I engaged in starting my first two first-authored journal manuscripts, as well as made significant progress toward my dissertation. The IWR has also deepened my relationships with colleagues that I am sure will be in my life and be collaborators and advisors and mentors throughout my academic and professional career. Because Indigenous Peoples tend to be very isolated from one another, I have not experienced any other way to deepen relationships with my community other than at events like the IWR that bring many Indigenous scholars together from across the country.—Scholar

Impact on Mentors

Our two primary mentors of the IWR expressed deep gratitude and appreciation for the retreat process. Dr. Nancy Whitesell shared, "The impact for me, as a non-Indigenous person working in Indigenous spaces, was gaining deeper insight into the ways my own identity shapes the way I approach my work." Dr. Michelle Sarche reflected on the profound impact the IWR held for her as an Indigenous mentor:

> The retreat left me with a profound feeling of connection with other Indigenous Peoples and communities. I experienced firsthand - and therefore now better, and more deeply and meaningfully understand - how much we share as Indigenous Peoples in terms of our traumatic and unjust histories of colonization and also more importantly, the rich land- and spirituality-based beliefs and practices and ways of knowing and being that are a source of health, wellness, and flourishing. I felt that we were in Hawai'i in a good way - welcomed and loved by the Indigenous Peoples and communities we met. Our time and experiences continue to inspire me to honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the research space, and to be brave in speaking up about their central role in the work that we do to serve Indigenous children, families, and communities through our research. Mahalo to all of our Hawaiian hosts - ever grateful for this experience of a lifetime.—Mentor

Impact on Community

Community hosts expressed profound gratitude for the opportunities to make meaningful connections with us and impart their knowledge. In particular, Ku'uipo Kumukahi was very honored to be involved and invited to participate in the IWR and expressed feelings of ha'aha'a (humility). She expressed that "There are not too many cultural spaces in Waikiki." The fact that we began our journey at Ho'okela (Cultural Arts Center in the heart of Waikiki) promoted a "sense of honor and place and connection

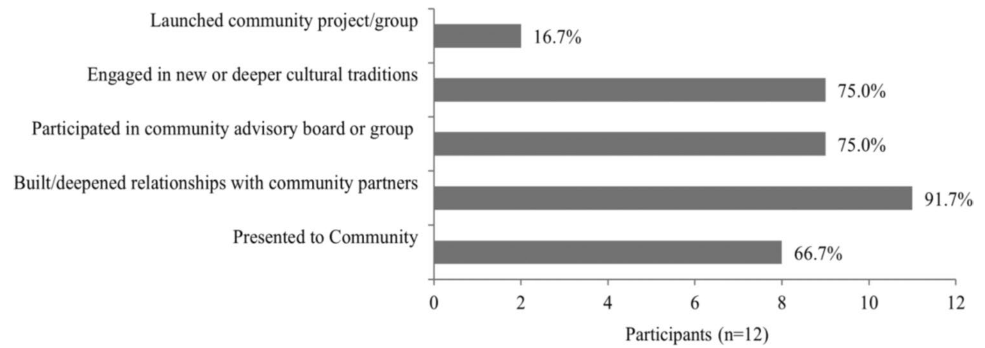

Fig. 1 Relational actions in the ten months since the IWR

[which] surpasses the Western mentality of hierarchy and division." She further reiterated the relational benefit of being in a non-academic space.

> It doesn't happen that scholars want to do their work in a Hawaiian space, surrounded by ali'i [Hawaiian royalty] artifacts, immersed in the Hawaiian culture and in the Hawaiian cultural center in a tourist district. Scholars who have the same heart-set [as Hawaiians], despite being from a different culture- to lift the lāhui [Hawaiian nation] in that Hawaiian cultural space seems to enhance both familial and familiar ties and the mana [Divine power] among everyone because it's not in a typical academic setting.

Aunty Māhealani relayed that she felt uplifted, empowered, and inspired by the reciprocal exchange of positive mana (life force energy) through the connections she was able to make with the Indigenous scholars and mentors. The healing connection with us on the land of her ancestors was confirmation of her kuleana (birthright, privilege, and responsibility), and she realized that the journey to reclaim the land and our identity is a collective one that impacts all Indigenous Peoples around the world.

> I'm 7th generation Native Hawaiian, and through all the traumatic changes and interruptions that came into our Valley our families still exist here. However, in this 21st century we're unrecognized. So I feel my *kuleana* is to tell our story…It's going to be a trudging journey. But having these Scholars walk onto our *'āina* [land] and hearing their stories, made my walk a little more firm. Like I'm not the only one in this- this is happening to all of the Natives all over, nationwide. Worldwide.—Community Host

In addition to being the curator of the Makiki Valley historical lo'i (kalo farm) sites in this area, this particular cultural practitioner, kūpuna (Elder), and community partner/leader, Aunty Māhealani, is now the proud CEO of 'Āina Wellness Academy Incorporated aka AWA (nonprofit organization) and AWA LLC (for profit organization). She shared that "We are committed to preserve, protect, and perpetuate Hawai'i's natural resources and its cultural integrity" and has shifted from doubting herself to devoting 100% of her time to sharing her story and history of her valley with greater conviction and reverence. Finally, Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu expressed the impact of sharing her knowledge with the scholars and her gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the IWR:

> Engaging with the scholars was a good exercise for me to always be mindful that there are new, budding, blooming minds and hearts as well as spirits. And as they find their way into the world, as they navigate their path, you know, even the most simple and humblest of sharings, can make all the world of difference. So, I can only hope that my time spent with them and my engage, you know, availed itself to them and their growth…You know, what it did for me was just kind of kept me in good exercise and practice of …keeping me fluid…even if I said it only kept me exercised, that's not a marginal thing…I'm so thankful that I got to be a part of things.—Community Host

Across all three host groups, a shared theme was expressions of deep gratitude for the reciprocal relational and cultural exchange that occurred during this IWR.

Relational Actions and Scholarly Productivity Supported by the IWR

Impacts on scholarly work among IWR participants are diverse and multifactorial. Twelve scholars participated in a post-retreat survey, four of whom were advanced graduate students and eight of whom were in professional academic positions. Participants indicated the number of relational actions they engaged in and academic achievements or successes that occurred during the 10 months following the IWR. While many activities were ongoing before the IWR and reflect typical academic expectations, survey responses revealed that the IWR impacted scholars in profound ways. One scholar noted: "I believe my work on all of these

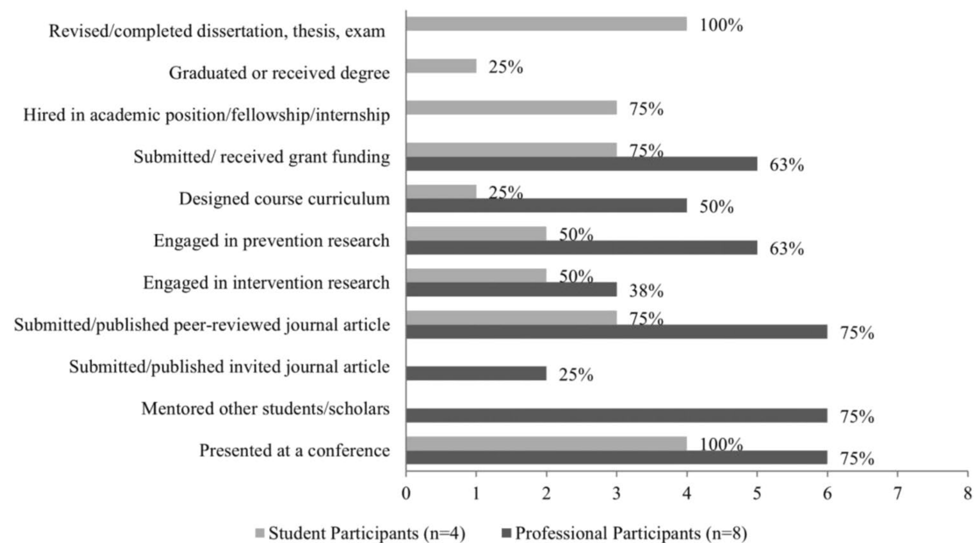

Fig. 2 Academic activities in the ten months since the IWR)

activities was meaningfully impacted by my experiences/learnings and relationships built at the 2022 IWR." Figs. 1 and 2 serve as quantitative representations of relational and scholarly productivity, with the purpose of visually capturing the magnitude of contributions that Indigenous researchers may make to their communities and to academia when they are properly supported.

Relational actions since the IWR consisted of five areas in which respondents engaged in scholarship within their respective communities. As shown in Fig. 1, it is notable that most (92%) of the participants built and/or deepened relationships with community partners. About three-quarters (75%) engaged in cultural traditions in new ways or more deeply and participated in advisory board or group meetings. Over half (67%) presented to their communities and two (17%) launched a community project or group. The IWR was a space where community engaged and community-based participatory research (CBPR) was encouraged and supported. CBPR is crucial and especially relevant in Indigenous communities as it involves community-level protections, and self-determination over colonial and racist research narratives contributes to preventing harm, protecting communities, and benefits communities directly (Beans et al., 2019; Schultz & Spencer, 2022; Wallerstein et al., 2017).

Respondents also noted several academic achievements since the IWR. In particular, many of the student participants successfully defended their thesis or dissertations, graduated from their doctoral programs, and accepted post-doctoral positions. Scholarly outcomes that emerged since the IWR include 12 peer-reviewed publications, with topics including: conceptualizing an Indigenous model for healing and post-traumatic growth for formerly incarcerated Native Hawaiian women, identifying community strengths and resisting structural racism to prevent Indigenous youth suicide, and uncovering ongoing coloniality in child welfare. Through IWR connections, new collaborations were formed among some participants who were later awarded grant funding for their research. Three of the 12 participants were awarded both local and national grants focused on improving the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples in their respective communities. Ten scholars have presented at conferences. Several IWR participants impacted the next generation of university students as 6 or 75% of the IWR professional participants mentored more junior students and colleagues. Finally, many IWR participants developed curricula to create culturally grounded, trauma-informed, community validated prevention and interventions to address substance use/misuse, mental health, and suicidality among Native Hawaiian, American Indian, and Alaska Native youth.

Relational Actions (Recommendations) for Future IWR in Indigenous Communities

Upon in-depth reflection, we realized that an IWR, when inclusive of Indigenous epistemology and ontology, empowers Indigenous Peoples and communities to stand together in their sovereignty. As noted earlier, all scholars were encouraged to ku i kou mana (stand in your spiritual power) as a reminder that now is the time for us to stand together in our sovereignty and solidarity. A quote from Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu exemplifies her Kānaka Maoli stance regarding a shift from resistance of eurochristian epistemology and ontology to insistence of the value and merit of Kānaka ways of knowing and being.

> I'm tired of resisting, I insist. I wrote a paper once called "Movement of Insistence," where I insist that

> we give deference to Kānaka ways and Kānaka Worldview. I insist that I will give priority and preference to Hawaiian language over the English language. I insist that application of Kānaka philosophy and Kānaka, you know, implementation of things in life is the, you know, the main way to go about it, whatever that is. I insist. I don't have to keep resisting… Insisting is putting oneself in that power.—Community Host

While this quote exemplifies a movement to insistence from her Kānaka Maoli worldview, the value of insistence is relevant for all Indigenous Peoples. However, insistence does not mean that we do not resist structural oppression, but rather it is honoring and standing firm so that we may bring our cultural identities forward into academic spaces.

An IWR that is grounded in Indigenous epistemology and ontology and also interweaves eurochristian approaches can support Indigenous scholars in further building their resilience by drawing inspiration from their Indigenous wisdom and training grounded in eurochristian viewpoints as they navigate the often challenging and colonizing terrain of academia. Conducting the IWR in this manner creates opportunities for scholars to heal and find balance between Form and Essence so that they can have the stamina, confidence, and heightened awareness of their kuleana (privilege and responsibility) to engage in their respective valuable work. The following quote highlights the fact when Indigenous scholars write and conduct research, it is a process involving the totality of who we are. When given time and space to cultivate connections with the land and each other and one's ancestors, we are able to decolonize our minds and come full circle from resistance to insistence in our healing journey which is ultimately reflected in our collective kuleana—to uplift those that we serve.

> For us, when we craft works of art, including our stories, research, we bring our ancestors, our spirits, our good minds, thoughts, spirits, teachings, and our people [together]. Since colonization has disrupted these relationships, we need time and space, land, and each other [in order to] locate, heal, and grow those relationships. It is then that we can write with our whole beings, with our ancestors, with our lands and spirits. Our writing, our art, our science, becomes whole, becomes useful for our own people, and for all of humanity. It is how our ancestors intended. This is decolonial, this is resistance, re-awakening, and reclaiming, and insistence.—Scholar

Relational Actions (Recommendations)

Indigenous scholars have attributed the sustainability of relationships between self, others, environment, and beings seen and unseen to the relational strength passed on from our ancestors and to relational knowledge exchange, from which healing, liberation, exercised sovereignty, and transformation are possible (Ullrich et al., 2022). The IWR presented in this manuscript is an example of relational knowledge exchange. We offer the following four relational actions (recommendations) using the acronym of PONO to represent key areas that overlap with one another to maximize the learning, grounding, and confidence building for scholars and mentors engaged in future IWRs: (1) preparation, (2) observation, (3) navigation, and (4) oneness.

Preparation

A three-prong approach is recommended to fully prepare for a future IWR: planning committee preparation, scholars' and mentors' preparation, and community hosts' preparation. First, we recommend the planning committee consult with those of the host culture, Indigenous researchers, and cultural practitioners to ensure that the planned agenda incorporates an interwoven tapestry of both customary writing retreat activities and Indigenous relational knowledge exchanges and insight-building activities (including a cultural orientation and connections to the spiritual, environmental, and human realms through chant, ceremonies, and culturally based service learning opportunities). Finally, having funding for scholars to attend this type of in-depth IWR is very important as many scholars would not be able to attend otherwise.

Second, it is recommended that scholars consider what type of cultural food items and cultural tools, specific to their Indigenous groups, could be offered during the IWR. By bringing these cultural gifts and tools, scholars can demonstrate their gratitude and support the clearing of what might be blocking them from maximizing their potential. Aunty Māhealani shared how she prepared for our visit to her family farm lands which reflects the Kānaka Maoli way of spiritual preparation in her naʻau (where her spiritual core lives) to welcome us as invited guests to her property.

> I prepare my naʻau ahead, to get myself aligned [individually, with my environment, and spirit], you know so my whole being is sensitive for responses, from kūpuna (Elders)...I want to be correct, for my kūpuna. I want to make sure I represent them well. Whether it's just me out there walking around and [observing] the area, or you know …[asking myself], "Who's coming and how I would be? How could I best honor their walk and why they have chosen to come here," and at the same time honor my kūpuna here, and the reason why I am representing them? To me it's a spirit thing, and it has to do with my whole preparation, with my naʻau connected with my spirit, and trying to connect

> with kūpuna, everything at once so I can be like their vessel.—Community Host

While this quote is centered on Nohona Hawaiʻi or the Hawaiian way of preparing, we recommend that when planning and preparing an IWR, time be allocated for Indigenous scholars to "tune-in" to their spiritual Essence and ponder how they want to represent the lives and teachings of their ancestors in their scholarly activities and relational exchanges as they prepare themselves to be Indigenous health scholars.

Observation

Indigenous Peoples around the world are attuned and observant of the signs in nature and rely upon their intuitive feelings to make sense of the world around them. Throughout the IWR, time to be keenly observant and deeply reflective about those observations proved to be transformative for all who participated. Thus, we highly recommend that flexibility with the planned agenda be incorporated to create additional time to observe, "digest" their experiences in the naʻau (place where mind, heart, intuition, and experience comes together), and deepen healing connections and bonds. A particularly poignant observation was made by one of the scholars that exemplifies the profound impact of this type of observation:

> I observed our spiritual and ancestral forces winning all week against western concepts of time and agenda. Our ancestors' forces were so strong, and it came to be that our space was filled with connecting to each other as guided by our extended Native Hawaiian ʻohana (family), [who have been] guided by their ancestors' We need to remember that we are in their homelands, so we must listen to and trust their knowledge and guidance that our hosts are fulfilling their responsibilities by following their original instructions. To do so any other way would be disrespectful to their ancestors. So, we moved through this time and space with the upmost respect.—Scholar

We also recommend creating opportunities for scholars to observe and have interactive and cultural protocols in various places within a given location. Being in specific spaces within a cultural group's homelands can expand scholars' awareness of the parallels between the host location and their own home lands. As noted by one of the scholars, "Visiting the Tribal land of my Hawaiian relatives, learning their story, and spending time in nature with my community was also very restorative."

Observing and participating in cultural protocols to honor a higher power such as pule (prayer), oli (chant), engagement in hoʻolauna (introductions), and exchanging mele (songs) can strengthen spiritual and emotional wellbeing. Ceremonies are also a way to "focus mana [life force energy] and maintain pilina [relationships/bonds]" (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2021. P. 12). Thus, infusing cultural protocols and ceremonies through a future IWR is one of the ways Indigenous and allied researchers can achieve cultural grounding, promote well-being, and be inspired to work toward reversing the negative impact of colonization in Tribal communities.

Navigation

Since many scholars experience similar trauma to those they serve and are often isolated in academic spaces, we highly recommend future IWRs include exercises that foster healing to support their ability to amplify their mana (spiritual core) and to support their ability to successfully navigate challenges their encounter within academia (e.g., Bowl of Light exercise). Healing is the first step to building the courage among Indigenous scholars to overcome adversity and navigate their scholarly and research work. Once healing and true understanding occur through experiential learning, scholars and mentors can bravely advocate for the centrality of Indigenous ways of knowing and being into their scholarly and community work. The following quotes emphasize the value of healing and true understanding to fulfill the kuleana (privilege, birthright, and responsibility) bestowed upon scholars and mentors.

> The IWR was a deeply powerful experience for me. I was in need of motivation to continue my studies and am at a university where I am the only Indigenous scholar and do not receive a lot of direct support for this piece of my identity. I experienced a lot of healing at the IWR, especially centering was beginning the IWR by the sharing of burdens and feeling seen and heard by my community.—Scholar
> I better understand - through the lived experiences we had - what Indigenous ways of knowing and being are and how they relate to the teaching and research that I do. I am better able to apply those in my work - and importantly, be brave in advocating for not only their relevance, but their centrality, when I am in spaces or with colleagues who don't understand what Indigenous ways of knowing and being are and how they relate to the research we do.—Mentor

Oneness

Ullrich (2019) observed "...connectedness, the interrelated welfare of everyone and everything, has been one of the keys to Indigenous survival and wellbeing." (p. 121). The relational exchange facilitated at the IWR embodied pono, the balance of relationships between

the mentors, scholars, and community hosts, to move toward oneness. Pono invites us to strive to live with respect for others, beyond humanity, with the intent to benefit all beings seen and unseen around the world. Oneness nurtures resilience for Indigenous Peoples, especially when faced with adversity. When there is a disruption of oneness, or connectedness, it is harmful to everyone, not only Indigenous Peoples, communities, or lands (Ullrich, 2019). Overall, health and well-being are intrinsically tied to social relationships. Thus, our final, and perhaps most important recommendation, is to incorporate multiple opportunities for scholars and community partners to experience, reflect, and articulate their interdependent connections with one another to restore harmony and balance to connections and work toward standing in solidarity together. Kuʻuipo Kumukahi summarized the value of coming together to form a community, "Call upon other community partners, sit in each other's presence, talk story, ask questions, involve haumana or language students or pull community together to sit at a table together as equals to foster community all of us together, kūpuna [Elders] makua [parents] and keiki [children]."

Conclusion

In sum, the IWR was a "safe space" for Indigenous graduate students and early career academic researchers to affirm their Indigenous identity and authentic expression of self, celebrate culture and cosmology, and ultimately strengthen their confidence in academic skills and community engagement. Scholars embraced their kuleana as researchers and processed through challenges individually and collectively to empower themselves and each other.

Indigenous health equity scholars are actively and creatively building Indigenous futures of health and well-being through structural resilience to promote health equity for Indigenous Peoples. The IWR revealed the critical need to balance our Form and Essence as we engage in scholarly work and relational exchanges. For Indigenous scholars, Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies are essential, especially when navigating Western academic spaces. In academic writing, we are accountable not only to ourselves, but to our respective communities as we elevate the wisdom of our ancestors.

In line with the ʻōlelo noʻeau (Hawaiian proverb noted at the beginning of this article), we collectively recognized a shared kuleana—to articulate the experience of the IWR as a codified process. The IWR strengthened our capacity to provide Native leadership and scholarship specific to alleviating health inequities and substance use/misuse within Indigenous communities. It is our aim that the IWR stands as a framework rooted in Indigenous protocol for scholars to utilize as a potential method to communicate work to a broad audience through academic writing. Although the perspective of this approach is Hawaiian and the context is health inequities in SUDs, we believe the IWR can be adapted to fit analogous worldviews and the broad enterprise of health equity research.

Two primary lessons emerged from the IWR: (1) there is great value in inviting Indigenous researchers to reshape approaches to academic tasks by incorporating Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies rather than reshaping Indigenous researchers to adopt Western approaches and (2) incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being takes time and thoughtful intention, but has the potential to strengthen scholars' cultural identity, promote equity, and instill feelings of hopefulness. The IWR creates space to honor our lived experience and deep inner knowledge to elevate healing grounded in Indigenous culture and connection. Thus, the IWR facilitates growth of our hearts, minds, and spirits from buds to fully blossomed flowers and engagement in meaningful, high-quality work as scholars and researchers.

It is our humble hope that other Indigenous scholars and mentors will strive to be pono and adapt the intentions and methods of the IWR to their own cultural contexts and homelands. The kaona (deeper meaning) of mōhalahala articulated in this article—to transmute fear and worry and strive for balance and harmony to blossom and build confidence and courage through what we have learned—offers inspiration for other Indigenous scholars and allies, with related areas of expertise, for the healing and well-being of Indigenous nations around the world.

Appendix 1

Glossary of Hawaiian terms

Sources for translations in this glossary are from the *Hawaiian Dictionary* (Pukui & Elbert, 1986); *Nānā I ke kumu: Look to the Source, Vol.1 and Vol. 2* (Pukui et al., 1972a, 1972b); *and Nānā i ke kumu: Helu Ekolu: Look to the Source, Vol. III* (Paglinawan et al., 2020). Other sources are specifically noted for individual terms.

Ahupuaʻa: land division extending from uplands to the sea; so called because the boundary was marked by a heap (ahu) and surmounted by an image of a pig (puaʻa) or because a pig or other tribute was laid on the alter as tax to the chief

Aliʻi: chief/cheifess; monarch
Aloha: love, empathy, compassion, humility, and grace (unconditional positive regard)
Aloha aku, aloha mai: to give and receive love, empathy, and compassion
Aʻo aku, aʻo mai: to give and receive knowledge; teaching and learning is viewed as a reciprocal process
Ha'aha'a: humble, modest
Hoʻohana Pilina: community building with human, spiritual/ancestral, and environmental realms. Throughout the IWR, ceremonies were engaged in to focus mana (Divine power and life force energy) and cultivate pilina (relationship bonds)
Hōʻola i ka Nohona Kanaka: Give life to cultural identity and native intelligence
Hoʻopono: cleanse and let go; to "make things right" through mind, body, spirit alignment. Through courageously identifying what holds Indigenous scholars back from productive writing and working toward releasing those negative attachments, they were able to heal themselves and amplify their spiritual power
Hoʻoponopono: Hawaiian spiritually grounded process to restore harmony and balance to strengthen the family system
Hoʻoulu a mōhalahala ʻike: cause to thrive; inspire growth and develop knowledge and insight
Hoʻoulu (inspired growth) + mōhalahala (blossoming beyond worry, fear, and illness) + ʻike (perceptual wisdom) attained over time. The kaona (hidden, deeper) meaning of this intention refers to facilitating professional growth and development that occurs once scholars' heal by overcoming their fears and building their confidence. Thus, insight is gained over time through experiential learning and in-depth reflection
Hui: group, society, organization
ʻIke: To see, know, feel, greet, recognize, perceive, experience, understand; perceptual wisdom
Kaona: hidden, deeper meaning, as in Hawaiian poetry; concealed reference, as to a person, thing, or place
Kapaemahu Pōhaku: the story of *Kapaemahu* speaks to four legendary healers who came from Kahiki. In the context of Hawaiian history, Kahiki could mean Tahiti proper, as Tahiti is one of the ancestral homelands of our people, or any foreign lands outside of Hawaii. So it's a very Hawaii centric way of looking at our world. These four legendary healers bring with them the knowledge and skills of healing. Their time here was so appreciated and they became so beloved that four great stones were erected in their honor. One of the unique elements about the healers is that they were actually recorded as having many elements about them that were female, although they were physically male. When we refer to people like this, the term "māhū" is used (excerpt from a recorded interview with Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu on April 15, 2021)
Keiki: child, offspring
Kokua aku, kokua mai: to give and receive help
Kukui nut: symbol of enlightenment as oils were used to create torches to see in the darkness
Kuleana: birthright, privilege, and responsibility. Because Kanaka Maoli believe that an individual's identity is inextricably linked to collective identity, kuleana also refers to a concern for all people.
Kumu: teacher, source of knowledge and wisdom; closely related to ʻike kumu (fundamental knowledge)
Kumu hula: teacher of Hawaiian dance
Kumulipo: origin, genesis, source of life, mystery; name of the genealogical creation chant of Kanaka Maoli
Kūpuna: Elder, grandparent, ancestor, relative; kūpuna plural form of kūpuna
Hoʻolauna: Friendly introductions with the intention to form a relational connection
Lāhui: nation, race, tribe
Lei: garland or wreath; necklace of flowers, leaves, shells, ivory, feathers, or paper: given as a symbol of affection; Figurative meaning is a beloved child wife, husband, sweetheart, younger sibling or child; so called because a beloved child was carried on the shoulders, with its legs draped down on both side of the bearer like a lei
Lolo: brain; cognitive mind
Lōkahi: unity, balance, harmony
Makua: parent
Mana'o: thoughts, ideas, beliefs, opinion, theory, feelings, desire, want; insight; Kumu Hula (hula master) John Kaimikaua Lake translates this term as one's inner light as he was taught from his kumu, hula master, Aunty Maʻiki Aiu Lake (State Foundation on the Culture and the Arts, 1984 as cited by Martin, 2019, p. 136)
Mana: Divine power; life force energy that comes from one's ancestors and/or is cultivated within individuals
Mele: song, anthem, or chant of any kind
Naʻau: bowels, heart, of the heart and mind; affections, mood, temper, feelings, emotional intelligence; visceral mind

> The Kānaka Maoli term naʻau is often translated as a "gut feeling" or instinctual knowing that comes from one's mana or Divine power located in the stomach. It is an internal guidance system that guides a kānaka on how to conduct oneself (Martin et al., 2021, p. 20)

Oli Mahalo: Chant of Gratitude: This oli was composed as a greeting of thanks for the hospitality, love, generosity, and knowledge that is given to us. It also gives thanks to the beauty of the People. Concepts from the chant include: Haloa is ever-lasting breath. The kalo plant is considered to be an ancestor of the Hawaiian People

that is cherished and preserved. Makaloa is the finest mat ever woven. It is considered higher quality than lau hala. The message is that it is important for us to practice being "thankful" every day and to share our appreciation for those that share their wisdom and aloha with us. *(Adapted from Project Aloha 'Āina, © 2009, Pacific American Foundation and Wāipa Foundation)* This chant was offered at the closing of our visit to Maunalaha to express our profound gratitude for the experience and learning that we experienced

'Ohana: blood relationships and extended family; relative and kin group ('aumakua and ancestors)

Pi kai: a ritual sprinkling with seawater or other salted water to purify an area or person from spiritual contamination and remove kapu (taboos) and harmful influences. In Hawaii's pre-Christian era, fresh water, seawater and even coconut water were all used ceremonially

Pilina: Relationship connections and bonds

Pono: strive for harmony and balance with oneself, the spiritual, environmental, and human realms; mind; body, spirit alignment; fair, just, hopeful, at peace. Likeke Paglinawan (1997) further emphasizes this point with his definition of pono, "Pono in my mind, it is the integration of self with your environment, in the way you relate to people" (as cited by Aluli-Meyers, 2003, p. 152)

Pule: prayer, blessing

Pu'uhonua: place of refuge and sanctuary

Wai: life-giving water; symbolic reference of love, acceptance, and belonging for Indigenous scholars

Waiwai: assets, abundance of land and resources; worth and value of a person

Appendix 2

Sample agenda: Indigenous Writing Retreat (IWR) 2022

The IWR was held on April 11–15, 2022. Each day, scholars had protected writing time and academic mentors were available for consultation.

Day 1: Indigenous cultural orientation and sense of place

Activities

Opening protocol, including Oli Aloha (welcoming chant) Kapaemahu Pōhaku (healing stones in Waikiki, O'ahu)

Scavenger hunt/walking tour to 4 Waikiki hotels aligned with Native Hawaiian royalty

Welcoming from Hawai'i NCRE scholars and mentor (pono boxes)

Review retreat goals and assign writing accountability groups (Hui)

Create SMART writing goals

Scholar check-in and sharing about entering retreat space

Protected time (PT) to write, analyze, consult, or collaborate with mentors and colleagues

Hui check-in: progress on writing goals and daily reflections

Dinner on your own or with peers

Day 2: culturally based learning opportunities

Activities

Cultural visit and protocol at Maunalaha (farm in Makiki Valley on O'ahu)

Debriefing, cultural exchanges, speak from the heart activity at Pu'u Ualaka'a (hill of the rolling sweet potato)

PT to write, analyze, consult or collaborate with mentors and colleagues

Hui check-in: progress on writing goals and daily reflections

Dinner on your own or with peers

Day 3: connecting with community partners

Activities

Hui check-in: focus of the day

National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant writing course

Lunch with University of Hawai'i Mānoa, Dept. of Native Hawaiian Health

Visit University of Hawai'i Mānoa campus office, Dept. of Psychiatry

PT to write, analyze, consult or collaborate with mentors and colleagues

Hui check-in: progress on writing goals and daily reflections

"Meet & Greet" with invited researchers, community partners and special guests

Day 4: professional development and in-depth reflections

Activities

Closing protocol, including Oli Mahalo (gratitude chant)

PT to write, analyze, consult or collaborate with mentors and colleagues

Brown bag lunch, Hui check-in, Society of Prevention Research (SPR) conference planning

Bowl of light exercise, speak from the heart activity, wrap-up, and adjourn

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Declarations

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