



# **Center for World Indigenous Studies**

## **45th Annual Report**

October 2024

This report highlights the main activities and outcomes of the Center for World Indigenous Studies (CWIS) from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024. The Center operates as a global community of activist scholars, working to advance the rights of Indigenous Peoples through the application of traditional knowledge.

# Contents

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 2. OUR MISSION

## 3. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND PERSONNEL

3.1 Board of Directors

3.2 Personnel

## 4. PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA

4.1 Dr. Rýser's Opus

4.2 Textbook - Harnessing Indigenous Epistemologies for Sustainable Progress

4.3 The Nations International Criminal Tribunal (NICT)

4.4 Fourth World Journal

4.5 Media and Documentary Production

4.6 Newsletters and Social Media

## 5. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

5.1 Internships

5.2 CWIS/CTM Digital Preservation Project

5.3 George Manuel Library (GML)

5.4 Medicinal Plants Database

5.5 Translations (English to Spanish)

## 6. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

6.1 Festival of the Trees / Festival del Árbol

6.2 Sinchi Foundation Collaboration

## 7. FINANCIAL REPORT



The home page and donation pages were rewritten and redesigned and will be uploaded fall 2024. [A new video page](#)<sup>1</sup> was developed using new back end and front end. Our flagship publication, the **Fourth World Journal** (FWJ), saw growth in subscriptions, and we are in the process of introducing a peer-review process for all articles, which will position the journal for increased global visibility through formal evaluation metrics. The **CWIS YouTube channel** also experienced a surge in engagement, with 31 new videos uploaded and significant increases in views, watch time, and subscribers.

In the realm of **Documentary and Video Production**, work on the *Pathfinder: The Untold Story of the Indian Business* documentary continued, with over 50 hours of footage produced and a dozen clips and extra videos uploaded online. Additionally, the **CWIS/CTM Digital Preservation Project** progressed with the scanning of 16,257 pages in Olympia, WA. and 3098 files in Mexico. We also implemented AI tools to streamline file management in the **George Manuel Library**.

Through our **Community Outreach program**, we collaborated with the Puerto Vallarta Botanical Gardens and Los Mangos Library for the *Festival of the Trees*, where we showcased the documentary *Searching for Capomo* and organized a panel discussion led by members of the *Comunidad Indigena de Chacala*. Our partnership with the **Sinchi Foundation** allowed for further dissemination of our *Salal, Cedar, and Spruce* documentary.

Finally, our **Internship program** flourished, with five interns and one volunteer contributing meaningfully to a range of projects. The interns underwent a comprehensive training program, which included learning to analyze and write abstracts and keywords for documents in the **George Manuel Library**. Their work not only enhanced the library's searchability and alignment with professional standards but also supported the preservation and organization of critical research materials. Beyond their contributions to the George Manuel Library, the interns played a vital role in other areas such as plant biomedical research, digital content management, and support with archival research for documentary post-production. Their efforts helped advance CWIS's mission of preserving and disseminating Indigenous Knowledges while also gaining practical experience in writing, archival work, research, and digital preservation.

Finally our fundraising efforts were fruitful with an increase in FWJ subscribers, donations for the Legacy of Dr. Rýser and support for the Digitization and Preservation project.

1. <https://www.cwis.org/video/>

## 2. Our Mission

CWIS is an independent, non-governmental research and education organization established in 1984. Its mission is to promote the knowledge and ideas of Fourth World peoples while encouraging constructive dialogue between Fourth World peoples and metropolitan states. CWIS is guided by the principle that access to knowledge and shared ideas can reduce conflict and foster cooperation based on mutual consent. By promoting democratic relationships between nations and states, CWIS aims to preserve the cultural diversity of nations and enrich the world as a whole.

## 3. Board of Directors and Personnel

### 3.1 Board of Directors

- **Rudolph C. Rýser, PhD.** – Chair of the Board, Emeritus (Cree, Oneida [USA])
- **Dr. Leslie E. Korn** – Ashkenazi (USA), Chair of the Board of Directors.
- **Amy Desjarlais, B.A., MA** – Secretary of the Board (Anishinabe [Canada])
- **Skʷumq̓n̓álq̓s (Amelia Marchand)**, MELP – Treasurer (Okanogan, Moses-Columbia, Palus, Chief Joseph Band of Wallowa Nez Perce, and Sinixt [USA])
- **Kū Kahakalau, PhD.** – (Hawaiian – [US-occupied territory])
- **Martha Schmidt, LL.M.** – Educator on Human Rights and the Rights of Ecosystems
- **Henry Cagey** – (Lummi Nation [USA])
- **Gillian Joseph** – (Ihaŋktoŋwaŋ Dakota)
- **Kʷilsolc̓ís (Joaquin J. Marchand), MPA** – Director (Sinixt [USA], Blackfeet, and Iroquois)

## 3.2 Personnel

Personnel contributing to the work of the Center include:

- Leslie E. Korn, PhD, Chair, Board of Directors, Director, Research and Education  
Director, Center for Traditional Medicine
- Claudia Garcia, Digitization and Preservation Project Manager, Intern  
Coordinator
- Janneth Castellanos, Information Management Specialist
- Angel Estrada, Software Engineer
- Sam Stoker, Projects Manager, Producer and Screenwriter
- Melina Corona, Managing Editor, Fourth World Journal
- Max Valladares Montalban, Cinematographer
- Juan Salvador Gradilla, IT programmer
- Michel Medellin Valdez, Graphic Artist
- Fatima Mora, Web Design
- Jon Rýser, Web Lead
- Aimee Little, Accounting

## 4. Publications and Media

Last year, CWIS placed a strong emphasis on expanding its reach through publications, multimedia production, and by enhancing its outreach channels. With a deep commitment to preserving and sharing Indigenous Knowledges, this year's efforts focused on honoring the legacy of Dr. Rudolph Rýser. CWIS also made significant strides in strengthening its media presence through its journal and collaborations with international broadcasting channels. The following subsections provide an overview of key publications, ongoing projects, and multimedia initiatives that have defined our work this year.

## 4.1 Dr. Rýser's Opus

One of our key focuses this year has been the preservation and publication of the works of Dr. Rudolph Rýser. His extensive body of work has been organized into three main areas:

- **Ongoing Inventory:** As part of the CWIS Digitization Project, Dr. Rýser's papers—both published and unpublished—are being cataloged to ensure their preservation.
- **Completion of Unfinished Works:** Chapters and articles that Dr. Rýser was working on before his passing are being completed.
- **Thematic Collections:** Selected collections of Dr. Rýser's work are being curated into thematic collections. These collections will be made available open-access, available for download, on a dedicated webpage, with licenses offered to libraries. This initiative builds on the precedent set by CWIS's earlier publication, *The Fourth World Geopolitical Reader*. Sam Stoker, screenwriter of the *Pathfinder* documentary, is working on these thematic collections, conducting a comprehensive review of Dr. Rýser's work.

## 4.2 Textbook - Harnessing Indigenous Epistemologies for Sustainable Progress

Before his passing, Dr. Rser was working on a chapter for Patrick Nugulube's forthcoming textbook, *The Spiral of Knowledge - the Fourth World and Sustainability*. In response to a request by Dr. Nugulube, Dr. Leslie Korn finalized this chapter. The book is set to be published in 2025.

## 4.3 The Nations International Criminal Tribunal (NICT)

One of Dr. Rser's final passion projects was the years-long collaborative creation of the Nations International Criminal Tribunal (NICT), aimed at developing a mechanism to address the genocide of Indigenous Peoples. His passing left a leadership gap that reverberated through the working group and caused divisions. In the first six months of

the year, CWIS staff and Board members facilitated numerous discussions, providing support and assistance through live Zoom meetings and email exchanges regarding the reorganization and the charter's application. These efforts resulted in two groups moving forward.

Dr. Rýser always envisioned the charter as a roadmap for any Indigenous Nation or group advocating for Indigenous Peoples' interests and applying them to their local context. CWIS is currently developing a web page to host the charter as an open-access document, along with background papers to help Indigenous Peoples worldwide apply its principles. Recently, Yezidi representatives informed CWIS that they are using the charter in negotiations with Iraq.

Dr. Hiroshi Fukurai (Ainu), a working group member, remains in close contact with the CWIS staff and has solicited papers from several members for a special issue on NICT for the Fourth World Journal. Among these papers is one by long-time associate scholar Dr. Melissa Farley, whose work focuses on anti-trafficking initiatives among Indigenous and non-Indigenous women and children.

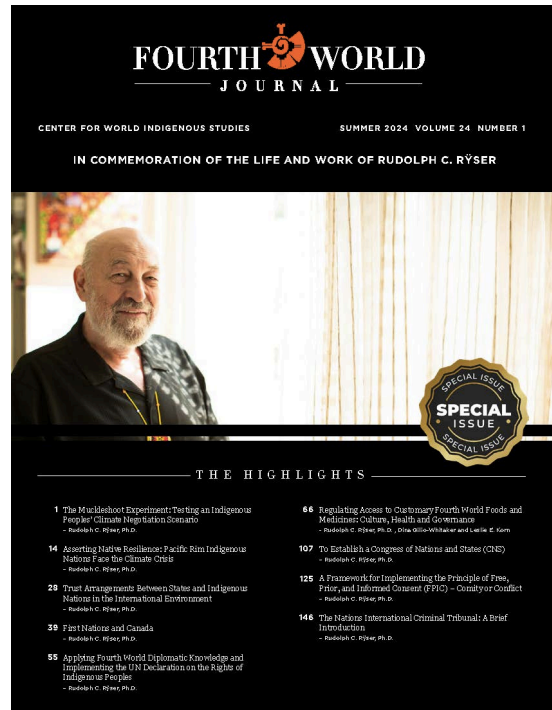
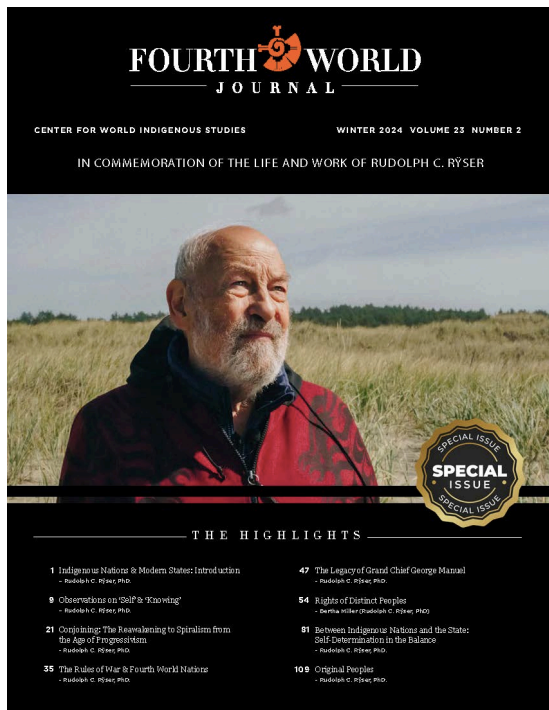
## 4.4 Fourth World Journal

This year, subscriptions to the Fourth World Journal (FWJ) grew. Melina Corona joined CWIS as Managing Editor of the FWJ after serving as a dynamic copy editor and administrative lead, taking over from Aline Castañeda. Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Colville) also joined as Book Editor, overseeing book reviews for the journal.

We renewed our licensee relationships with journal library distributors. In addition, we initiated a peer-review process for all articles, a step expected to significantly elevate the journal's visibility by allowing it to join the global metrics system for journal evaluation.



Two commemorative journals, published in January and June 2024, were also part of this preservation effort, featuring a collection of Dr. Rýser’s work.



## 4.5 Media and Documentary Production

### Pathfinder Documentary

Work continued on the writing, production, and editing of our documentary series *Pathfinder: The Untold Story of the “Indian Business.”* The film explores the Fourth World’s struggle for self-determination and control of its ancestral homelands, told through the eyes of one of its most effective proponents, Dr. Rudolph Rýser.

Production of *Pathfinder* is nearly complete, with over 50 hours of content filmed and ten hours of archival footage collected. New interviews are being conducted during Fall 2024 focusing on NICT working group members. The project is now in post-production. Scriptwriting for two episodes has been finalized, and the editing of those episodes



(Episode One and Episode Six on the Constitution Express) is well underway. Additionally, we have built a webpage for the project, where we have edited and uploaded numerous extra-feature interviews. CWIS optimized the website and videos for search, performance and accessibility.

### **Pathfinder Extra Feature Interviews**

These extra-feature clips come from our *Pathfinder interviews* with key figures such as Zoltan Grossman, Henry Cagey, Wendell George, Tiffany Waters, and Christian Rýser and focus on their personal experiences grappling with identity, overcoming racism, and fighting for Indigenous sovereignty. These are the new, short clips we created. Find them at <https://www.cwis.org/pathfinder-the-untold-story-of-the-indian-business-documentary-film/>

- Zoltan Grossman – [Unlikely Alliances](#)
- Zoltan Grossman – [Who I Am](#)
- Henry Cagey – [Values in Education](#)
- Henry Cagey – [Who I Am](#)
- Wendell George – [Tribal Culture Saving the World](#)
- Wendell George – [Clovis Point](#)
- Wendell George – [Broken Treaties](#)

- Tiffany Waters – [Advocating for the Health of Yakama Territories](#)
- Tiffany Waters – [Who I Am](#)
- Christian Rýser – [Who I Am](#)

### **Salal, Cedar and Spruce and Other CWIS Documentary Work**

Six video clips, totaling over 40 minutes, were produced from the documentary [Salal, Cedar & Spruce](#).<sup>1</sup> These clips continue to explore Indigenous culture and its vital role in environmental sustainability.

### **Spotlight on CWIS Interns**

We continued to showcase the valuable contributions of CWIS interns by producing six personal videos that highlight their work and experiences. These videos can be viewed on our internship page, [CWIS Internships](#).<sup>2</sup>

### **Training Videos for Interns**

A comprehensive six-part, one-hour training video was created to teach interns how to use AI to analyze, abstract, and keyword documents in the George Manuel Memorial Indigenous Library.

### **Video Obituary of Dr. Rudolph Rýser**

A 15-minute video titled *Remembering Rudolph Rýser* was produced for the CWIS website. This video offers a brief exploration of Dr. Rýser’s life, accomplishments, and wisdom.

### **Audiovisual Catalog**

Max Montalban, CWIS’s cinematographer, created a comprehensive catalog to manage the inventory of 110 videos produced by CWIS, further streamlining the organization of the Center’s audiovisual assets.

### **Capital 21 Partnership**

CWIS secured a formal agreement with Capital 21, a leading public broadcasting channel in Mexico, often referred to as the “PBS of Mexico.” This partnership will enable CWIS documentaries and video capsules to be broadcast on Mexican television, significantly broadening the reach of its content to a wider audience.

1. <https://www.cwis.org/salish-foods-medicines/>

2. <https://www.cwis.org/internships/>

## 4.6 Newsletters and Social Media

The CWIS team produced multiple blogs, 16 newsletters sent to over 5,000 subscribers, and 18 social media posts shared across Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

### Administration of the CWIS YouTube Channel

This year, we focused on expanding our video dissemination, particularly through YouTube. A total of 31 videos, trailers, and clips were uploaded to the CWIS YouTube channel. Based on YouTube Analytics, the channel saw significant growth compared to 2023, with

- 209% more views,
- 587% more watch time,
- and 768% more subscribers.

# 5. Educational Programs

## 5.1 Internships

This year, CWIS onboarded five interns and one volunteer. Orientation and training materials were prepared for them, and they participated in a comprehensive training program that included a video developed as part of the preservation project. Each intern was trained to analyze and write abstracts and keywords for 100 documents in the George Manuel Library (GML) to meet library standards and improve searchability.

Here is a brief overview of who they are and what they contributed. Found at <https://www.cwis.org/internships/>

- **Isabella Hinrichs** [Video](#)

Background: A recent graduate from the University of South Florida with a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, concentrating in Anthropology and International Studies.  
Role at the Center for Traditional Medicine (CTM): Conducted biomedical and nutritional research on endemic plant species in western Mexico, transforming complex data into accessible abstracts.

- **Aiyana Coard** [Video](#)

Background: Holds a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of North Carolina Greensboro and an M.S. from New York University in Global Affairs, specializing in Human Rights and International Law.

Role at CWIS: Contributed to the Fourth World Journal and published blog posts. Her master's thesis focused on impunity and justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

- **Patrick Moser** [Video](#)

Background: Intern since September 2023, studying Human Rights and Diplomacy at the University of Stirling, with additional training from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. He holds a degree in Law and Politics from the University of Kent.

Role at CWIS: Produced abstracts for the George Manuel Library and contributed to the Pathfinder documentar , focusing on the Constitution Express.

- **Laura Corradi** [Video](#)

Background: Italian, with a bachelor's degree in Diplomacy and International Sciences and a master's degree in International Cooperation on Human Rights, focusing on Indigenous rights.

Role at CWIS: Archiving for the Chief George Manuel Library and writing/submitting an article to the Fourth World Journal based on her master's dissertation about Mocoví communities in Argentina.

- **Robert Hansell**

Background: A third-year undergraduate student at the University of Edinburgh studying international relations, with research interests in decolonial approaches and Palestinian self-determination.

Role at CWIS: Produced a literature review on food sovereignty, focusing on its links to land sovereignty, resistance, community health, and self-determination.

## 5.2 CWIS/CTM Digital Preservation Project

The CWIS/CTM Legacy Project was renamed the CWIS/CTM Digital Preservation Project. In January 2024, the project expanded with the addition of a librarian/information specialist and a consultant librarian from UC Berkeley. The 4-page Legacy outline developed by the CWIS staff in June 2023 served as the foundation for a comprehensive 49-page action plan. This plan maps out the digitization process, optimized workflows, defined library standards, improved file scanning, and integrated efficiency systems. It includes possible hosts, portals, databases and funders. An inventory of all CWIS and CTM original and received research reports, documents, images, and videos has begun. Checklists and timelines were incorporated to enhance oversight.

### Preservation Project Progress

- **Page Scanning:** A checklist was developed, and 16,257 pages have been scanned in Olympia, with an additional 3098 files scanned and inventoried in Mexico. File scanning efficiency was further improved.
- **ChatGPT Integration:** Plans to integrate ChatGPT with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) are underway to enhance file management.
- **Organizing Inventories:** Progress has been made in organizing inventories for both CTM and CWIS.
- **Pitch Deck:** The first version of a pitch deck was developed to present the Preservation Project to potential supporters.

## 5.3 George Manuel Library (GML)

The George Manuel Library has undergone significant improvements, especially in file management. AI tools have been integrated to enhance document processing and summarization. Interns were trained on new procedures through a video training program led by Janneth Castellanos, CWIS Information Management Specialist, ensuring efficient handling and accuracy. These updates have optimized the library's operations and significantly improved overall data management.

### GML Inventory Progress

- 2,000 records designed, organized, with metadata and variables developed.
- 1,200 GML Records Worksheets prepared by interns, followed up, and added to the Masterfile
- 500 records fixed, including abstracts, keywords, and data correction

### Content Preparation for GML and Website Database Portal

- **CCC Files:** 8,206.69 MB of data across 8,411 files
- **HB Plant Page Files:** 24,298.81 MB across 14,543 files
- **CWIS-CTM Content Libraries:** 320 processed files, each assigned a unique ID

### Protocols and Tutorials

- Files Naming Protocol.
- Privacy and Data Protection Policy for Interns.
- GML Records Tutorial for Interns.
- Scanning Instructions.
- Keyword Development.

## 5.4 Medicinal Plants Database

### Digital Content Organization

- 2,500 files culled and 14,543 files organize
- 152 pages of transcripts and 152 corresponding transcript photos organized.
- 500 physical archive items processed.
- **Biomedical Research Support:** 50 plant profiles completed, 20 ready for research and 5 under review.
- **Content Creation (English & Spanish):** 50 plant profiles ready to launch with accompanying text and SEO.

## Chocolates, Chillies, and Coconuts (CCC)

- 4,500 files culled and 8,411 files organized
- 29 pages of transcripts and 29 corresponding transcript photos organized.
- 250 physical archive items processed.

## 5.5 Translations (English to Spanish)

- Article: *“Responsibilities into Rights”* by Eric Cheyfitz
- *Nations International Criminal Tribunal Master Charter Panel* by the Ezidikhan Charter Panel of International Experts.

# 6. Community Outreach

## 6.1 Festival of the Trees / Festival del Árbol

In March 2024, CWIS collaborated with the Puerto Vallarta Botanical Gardens and the Los Mangos Library and Cultural Center to participate in the Festival of the Trees. We presented the documentary *Searching for Capomo* to a diverse audience, including children, teens, adults, and university academics. As part of the event, we also organized a panel presentation featuring members of the Comunidad Indígena de Chacala.





## 6.2 Sinchi Foundation Collaboration

In partnership with the [Sinchi Foundation](https://sinchi-foundation.com/)<sup>1</sup> and Forest Forces, CWIS developed video and social media assets. This collaboration highlighted the Salal, Cedar, and Spruce documentary, which was featured on the Sinchi Platform.

# 7. Financial Report

1. <https://sinchi-foundation.com/>

# CENTER FOR WORLD INDIGENOUS STUDIES

## Balance Sheet

As of September 30, 2024

	TOTAL
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	\$329,164.76
Accounts Receivable	\$69.58
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$329,234.34</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$329,234.34</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	\$2,528.41
Long-Term Liabilities	\$32,230.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$34,758.41</b>
Equity	\$294,475.93
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$329,234.34</b>

# CENTER FOR WORLD INDIGENOUS STUDIES

## Profit and Loss

October 2023 - September 2024

	TOTAL
Income	
Contributed Income - CWIS	60,669.97
Education	653.15
Fourth World Doc Program	203.74
Fourth World Papers Program	5,760.30
Release from Restriction - UR.	50,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$117,287.16</b>
GROSS PROFIT	<b>\$117,287.16</b>
Expenses	
Consultants	83,725.19
License and fees	20.00
Pay Pal Transaction Fee	140.25
Professional Services	4,000.00
Program & Other Expenses	9,888.31
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$97,773.75</b>
NET OPERATING INCOME	<b>\$19,513.41</b>
Other Income	<b>\$ -48,428.09</b>
NET OTHER INCOME	<b>\$ -48,428.09</b>
NET INCOME	<b>\$ -28,914.68</b>