



The GDI Communicator is an internal newsletter intended to increase communication between management and staff of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research

In this issue:

- DTI Most Under Funded College in Sask
- GDC Bursary Recipients
- GDI Strategic Plan Released

Highlights:

DTI Office Ed	2
All Staff Mtng	3
GDC Bursary Recipient	5
GDI Move Complete	5

DTI Most Under Funded College in Saskatchewan

Over the past year Brett Vandale, Director of the Dumont Technical Institute (DTI), has been grappling with funding figures—and after a full twelve months it seems they still don't add up. DTI has conducted analysis based on Regional College annual reports and funding allocations made by Saskatchewan Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. The results of this analysis are that DTI is grossly underfunded in comparison with Saskatchewan's Regional Colleges. In fact, when a comparison is done based on 2006-07 Annual Reports and 2007-08 funding letters, the findings are startling: for every training dollar (\$1.00) that DTI receives, it receives thirty cents (\$0.30) for its core operations. The Regional Colleges, however, receive an average of a dollar thirty-six (\$1.36) for core operations to every training dollar (\$1.00) received. This amounts to a glaring disparity. DTI ranks last in its operating funds from government in the 2007-08 year, and is well below the funding allocation of Regional Colleges that deal annually with less training

dollars and less students.

In Saskatchewan, DTI and the nine Regional Colleges provide certificate and diploma skills training and Adult Basic Education programs. All these Institutions, including DTI, broker their certificate and diploma programs from the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology; all offer similar ABE-type programs; all receive provincial funds to provide this programming; and all adhere to the same accountability and reporting criteria for those provincial funds. And yet, DTI is doing so at a significantly reduced capacity. In addition to meeting the same reporting and accountability criteria as the other institutions, DTI provides training and education programs to Métis communities throughout the entire province while the Regional Colleges provide programs specific to their own geographic region. In essence, DTI is expected to do more with a lot less.

The final Report of the 2005 Training System Review Panel, "A New Training Model" makes a

few particularly relevant observations with regard to the province's Aboriginal Institutions. The report notes that the Aboriginal Institutions (like GDI) "hold the key to the future competitiveness of Saskatchewan," and it is essential for Aboriginal educational initiatives to receive "sustainable, adequate, long-term core and program funding and a new level of policy priority that will ensure the rapidly growing Aboriginal population has the necessary access to skills education and training." Finally, the report acknowledges that Saskatchewan's "world-class system of Aboriginal post-secondary education institutions and models...have historically been underfunded in both core funds and program funds...This underfunding has hampered the ability of this system to meet the labour force education needs of their communities and of Saskatchewan."

The GDI Board and senior management are working toward addressing the inequities in DTI's core operational funding and are optimistic that a resolution can found.



DTI Office Education Program Ends Successfully

By Kristen Rutten



DTI Regina Office Education Program Graduates and their instructors, 2008

The dining room buzzed with energy, and was full of conversation and congratulations as family, friends and guests celebrated the successes of the Regina Office Education students on July 5, 2008 at the Dumont Technical Institute's Office Education Celebration and Awards Dinner. Nine months of preparation, study and determination were recognized as the students received Office Education Certificates/Certificates of Completion for classes completed, as well as individual awards recognizing their accomplishments.



We were delighted to have Larry Grant, Office Education Program Head, and Linda O'Halloran, Continuing Education Consultant, from the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAS) Wascana Campus to celebrate with us. They added to our program with their encouraging words. They also presented each student with gifts on behalf of SIAS.



The Celebration and Awards Dinner was the peak of a successful year for the Office Education program. Classes ended on June 27, at which time students embarked on a two-week work placement. The work placement is a culmination of the entire year's work and allows students to extend their

learning directly into an office setting. One third of the students have already received temporary employment contracts with their work placements.

Interest in our students was overwhelming with employers calling from both private and public sectors. There would have been enough placements to place each student three times! The following employers received a work placement: Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, University of Regina, Ministry of Social Services, Stantec, Red Cross, and TransGas.

The following awards were given out:

Award of Excellence—In recognition of **Jessica Metz's** outstanding academic achievements in Office Education by attaining the Highest Overall Average in the class. Jessica graduated with her full Office Education Certificate.
Team Player Award—For **Sara Harrison's** significant contributions to the class and for continuously nurturing a learning environment. Sara graduated with her full Office Education Certificate.

Dedication Award—In recognition of **Bobby Herman's** determination and perseverance throughout the year, and for achieving the best attendance in the class. Bobby received a Certificate of Completion

for the following classes: ACCT, COAP, MATH, OPRO, CKEY, and BCOM103.

Aptitude Award—presented to **Angie Wellman** for standing out as having a wide spectrum of knowledge and skills which will guide her in a professional office career. Angie expects to conquer 45 wpm by July 31 at which time she will graduate with her full Office Education Certificate.

Personal Growth and Achievement Award—In recognition of **Darrell Klyne's** determination to strive towards personal goals and for significant growth achieved in Office Education. Darrell received a Certificate of Completion for BCOM, ACCT, MATH, OPRO, COAP111, 112 and COAP101.

Fortitude Award—Presented to **Janelle Browne** to honour her strength and determination to achieve her academic goals while balancing multiple roles and responsibilities. Janelle graduate with her full Office Education Certificate.

It was a magnificent year full of learning, laughter, support, and success. The students are ready to find new opportunities and embrace their new careers as office professionals. Best wishes and blessings for all of the students' future endeavours. 🌍



GDC Graduate Student Bursary Recipient

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) launched its Graduate Student Bursary Program in 2006 in response to the priority established in the 2004 Strategic Plan for graduate studies programming at the Institute. The Graduate Student Bursary Program is operated under Gabriel Dumont College (GDC), and is a three-year pilot project. The objectives of this program are: (1) to provide financial assistance and encourage Saskatchewan Métis to pursue full-time graduate studies and conduct research in fields related to Métis people; and (2) to increase Métis employment in Saskatchewan and within GDI. The program operates under a Terms of Reference which can be found on the Institute's website at www.gdins.org, and a Selection Committee meets twice per year to review applications and award funding.

The Selection Committee has held a total of four

adjudication meetings: November 2006, May 2007, November 2007, and April 2008. At the November 2007 adjudication, Natasha Beeds received a bursary for \$10,000 to support her graduate studies and research.

Natasha Beeds received a GDC Graduate Student Bursary in November 2007 in support of her studies in the Interdisciplinary Master of Arts Graduate program at the University of Saskatchewan. Natasha Beeds is of Nêhiyawî-Métis (Cree) and mixed Caribbean ancestry. She grew up in the territories of her mother's family: Mistawâsis, Atâhkakohp, and Nêwo-nâkîwin (Mont Nebo). Ms. Beeds taught at First Nations University of Canada for seven years and credits her many students for inspiring her to return to university to get her Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. She describes her research as follows:

"In my work, I seek to

reaffirm my Nêhiyawî-Métis community's resistance to the processes of colonization by reclaiming and recovering the land with their stories. Many Nêhiyaw and Nêhiyawî-Métis stories begin with a specific area. From that place on the land, the stories unfold, locating the people, their identities, and their histories. Due to the disruptions caused by colonization processes and attempted assimilation practices, many of these places were made inaccessible to the Nêhiyawak and Nêhiyawî-Métis. As a result, they have been forgotten by the younger generation. Our kêhtê-ayâk (Old Ones), however, still remember. As our transmitters of knowledge, our kêhtê-ayâk (Old Ones) hold the keys to our understanding of who we are and where we come from. From them, and their stories, we can begin to locate ourselves and locate the paths of the past for the future." 



GDC Graduate Student Bursary recipient
Natasha Beeds

"As our transmitters of knowledge, our kêhtê-ayâk (Old Ones) hold the keys to our understanding of who we are and where we come from."

GDI All-Staff Meeting

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) All-Staff Meeting is an opportunity for Institute staff to meet, share ideas, exchange information, and build collegial relationships.

This year, the GDI All-Staff Meeting will be held **September 25 and 26, 2008** in Saskatoon.

A planning committee has been working to establish the details of the meeting, such as accommodation, meals, activities and agenda items. Planning committee members are Donna Ross, Amy Gallagher, and Rhonda Pilon.

The meeting will include

presentations of GDI's Strategic Plan and the Policies and Procedures project to all Institute staff.

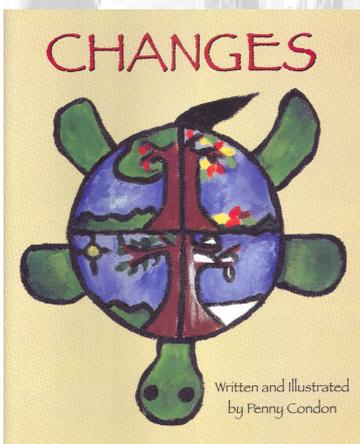
In addition, rumour has it that talent consisting of past and present GDI/DTI/SUNTEP students will be on hand. GDI staff will be sure to enjoy the planned entertainment. 

*"This year, the GDI All-Staff Meeting will be held **September 25 and 26, 2008** in Saskatoon."*



GDI Three-Year Strategic Plan Released

“One of the key considerations for the Institute over the next three years is strengthening and stabilizing GDI after a period of rapid growth.”



The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) officially released its 2008-2011 Strategic Plan following an August Board motion to accept the Strategic Plan document. The GDI Board and senior management held two planning sessions in early 2008 to begin the process of developing a strategic plan for 2008-2011. The first strategic planning session was held in January, 2008, and was attended by approximately thirty people, including an Elder, Board, staff, political representatives, community members, student representatives, and managers. The second planning session was held in April, 2008 with the Board and senior management in attendance.

A discussion document was developed that set out key points from the planning sessions as well as the broad statements of strategic direction. In May and June 2008, the strategic planning discussion document was circulated to Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) Regions and Locals, the MN—S Executive, the Provincial Métis Council, and other stakeholders in the province, and feedback was requested. Feedback was compiled and reviewed by the Board in the production of the

strategic plan.

Highlights of the strategic plan include an audit trail of the strategic planning process; an environmental scan of relevant considerations both within and outside GDI; a summary of the planning sessions including the Institute's many accomplishments and the key issues facing GDI; and the Institute's six broad strategic goals.

Key considerations over the next three years are to strengthen and stabilize GDI after a period of rapid growth. In 2006-2007, the Institute experienced unprecedented growth, effectively doubling the size of its staff with the advent of GDI Training & Employment. Over the next three years, GDI will organize internally so that it can effectively and efficiently deliver its mandate. The objectives are to examine and strengthen internal structure and processes and to clarify staff roles and expectations.

Another key objective includes strengthening and stabilizing GDI's governance and legal status. Over the next three years, GDI will seek the implementation of a *Gabriel Dumont Institute Act*. The finalization of such an Act would give GDI permanent legal

status resulting in a firm footing in terms of recognition, credibility and resourcing. This piece of legislation would then be the foundation from which to define and strengthen the relationships between GDI and the MN—S, and the provincial and federal governments.

A significant goal for the Institute is the renewal of its partnership with the federal government to deliver labour market programs and services in Saskatchewan. GDI views the successor strategy to the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS) as imperative; the delivery of training and employment programs and services is a natural and essential component of GDI's mission. Work for the post-AHRDA process is key priority for GDI.

Other priorities for GDI over the next three years include improving its communication policy and program; amassing and disseminating the Métis' cultural legacy; and pursuing the GDI Centre of Excellence.

A copy of the full Strategic Plan 2008 is available on the GDI website at www.gdins.org. 



GDC Graduate Student Bursary Recipient

Jody Burnett received a GDC Graduate Student Bursary in November 2007 in support of her doctoral studies Educational Psychology at the University of Regina. In 2005 Ms. Burnett completed a Master of Education degree in educational psychology, presenting research that examined the effects of problem gambling on Aboriginal family members including impacts on the family's economic, social, psychological, community, and health status. That research earned Ms. Burnett important recognition for her contributions to Saskatchewan population health research. Ms. Burnett's doctoral research expands on her previous findings. The following is a summary of her research:

"My doctoral research is based on the results gathered from inquiry

conducted at the Master's level titled, "The Aboriginal Family Members' Experience of Problem Gambling", which explored the social, economical and psychological experiences of Aboriginal family members of problem gamblers that resided in Regina. Results concurred that support services for Aboriginal problem gamblers and their families were insufficient and often times inaccessible.

As such, the intent of my research has two intentions: first, to gain a better understanding of support services presently available for problem gamblers and their families and to review what services, if any, are culturally-appropriate services for First Nations and Métis people by conducting interviews with physicians or front line workers within the Regina

Qu'Appelle Health Region. Secondly, I intend to work closely with the First Nations and Métis community to ask both individual problem gamblers as well as family members of problem gamblers, what services they have accessed (past or present), the appropriateness of these services, and any recommendations for more responsive services (i.e. counselling support/practices that are in-line with traditional ways of healing).

Results will be shared with First Nations and Métis people in order to inform and perhaps improve practice and the offering of services within our health region."



GDC Graduate Student Bursary recipient Jody Burnett

GDI Move Complete

Changes, glorious changes. Coordinator Jason Johnston has been busy over the summer organizing the move of the GDI Finance and Operations Department and the GDI Training & Employment (T&E) head office. Both units moved to the DTI/GDI building at 917 22nd Street West.

In order to make room for the move, DTI classrooms

were relocated to a newly leased and renovated space down the street from the DTI building. The Adult 12, ABE 10, and Literacy classes all moved to the new site. The Practical Nursing program moved to the same building earlier this year. In addition, the GDI T&E Employment Counsellors also relocated to the new site. The move of Finance and T&E means that a

large majority of GDI services are in one building. The Publishing Department continues to operate from their building at 604 22nd Street West, just a stone's throw away from the DTI/GDI building, and SUNTEP Saskatoon remains in its prime location on the university campus.



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.gdins.org



GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

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GDI Publishing Saskatoon

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GDI Finance and Operations

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