



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

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## Duty to Consult Initiatives Move Forward

In November 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada handed down rulings that changed Aboriginal rights law by declaring both the federal and provincial Crowns have a duty to consult and accommodate in cases where Aboriginal rights have been asserted. The Duty to Consult applies whenever the Crown has knowledge or contemplates action (approval) that could negatively impact Aboriginal rights.

At GDI, the Supreme Court of Canada's rulings on Duty to Consult have sparked the development of a new university-level course. Earlier this year an academic researcher at the University of Saskatchewan was contracted by GDI to research and design a course on the legal duty to consult on and accommodate Métis rights, interests, and way of life when dealing with exploration, resource development and extraction, land use, and other similar developments.

The course is intended for two uses: 1) as a tool for discussions about the duty to consult and accommodate in order to share information with

Métis communities, industry, government, and others, and 2) as an academic university-credit course for GDC.

One of the pressing issues around Duty to Consult has been that of resources to ensure meaningful consultation. On December 1, 2008 the Government of Saskatchewan announced it was providing a \$200,000 grant to the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) to participate in duty to consult discussions.

Based on the Supreme Court of Canada rulings on Duty to Consult, governments have a responsibility to ensure that Métis people have a reasonable capacity to express their views during government-initiated consultation. With limited human and financial resources, it was difficult for the MN—S to effectively engage government, its 12 MN—S regions across Saskatchewan, more than 100 Métis locals, Métis citizens and industry to discuss consultations and other strategic interests.

In a press release issued by the department of First Nations and Métis

Relations (FNMR), Minister June Draude is quoted as follows: "The Province is pleased with the co-operation and respectful relationship we have with the Métis in our province. It is essential that the views of the Métis people are heard in the consultation process."

As the Saskatchewan economy thrives due to the strong demand for its natural resources, it is crucial that Métis communities are involved in the developments occurring across the province.

MN—S President Robert Doucette said, "We are very pleased to receive this funding from the Province. This money will assist the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, and the regions in providing additional capacity to participate in the consultation process."

The new GDC course will examine contemporary situations in which the Crown's duty to consult is worked out through real life negotiations and confrontations between the federal and provincial governments and the Aboriginal governments, making the new GDI course both timely and dynamic. 



## Short Term Disability Benefit Plan Terminated

by Jim Edmondson



As employees were informed in previous Communicator issues, the Short Term Disability Plan with Great West Life has been terminated as of January 1, 2009. In previous Communicator issues and in a number of email communications from the Human Resources department, employees were advised that as of January 1, 2009 any absence from work due to illness, disability, or accident (not work related) will require that the employee access whatever sick time they have accumulated. The Long Term Disability benefit from Great West Life remains available to eligible GDI employees

following completion of the prescribed 119 day wait period.

In the event that an employee does not have sufficient sick time accrued to cover the 119 day wait period for Long Term Disability, the employee has the option of accessing the EI Sickness Benefit.

Information on how this benefit works and any eligibility criteria can be retrieved from <http://www1.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/ei/menu/eiho/me.shtml>.

In order for GDI employees who access the EI sick/disability benefit to maintain their Health Benefits with Great

West Life, such as Vision, Dental and other services, they must make arrangements to remit the required premiums to Great West Life; employees can make arrangements with GDI Payroll to do this. If the dates of absence are known, an employee can make a lump sum payment of the premiums that they will miss, or they can submit the premiums on a monthly basis.

Any questions please contact the Human Resource department at (306) 657- 2264 or (306) 657-2272



## Board Highlights

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is pleased to announce it has just received notification that Gabe Lafond, Treasurer, Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S), has been appointed as the new Minister of Education for the MN—S. The MN—S Minister of Education sits as the Chair of the GDI Board of Governors. Gabe Lafond brings extensive experience from his past work with METSI and with the Federal Government. The GDI Board and staff look forward to working with Gabe Lafond as MN—S Minister of Education.

Gabe replaces Robert Doucette, President, MN—S in the role of Education

Minister and GDI Board Chair. The Board and staff extend their appreciation for President Doucette's service to the Board as Minister and Chair for the past fourteen months. President Doucette now turns his attention to Powley and the provincial Métis registry.

The current GDI Board of Governors is as follows:

- Gabe Lafond, Chair
- Glen Lafleur, Northern Region I
- Linda Pederson, Northern Region II
- Bernice Aramenko, Northern Region III

Michael Bell, Western Region I

Jackie Kennedy, Western Region IA

Tammy Mah, Western Region II

Sheila Pocha, Western Region IIA

Darrel Hawman, Western Region III

Brian Chaboyer, Eastern Region I

Kathy Palidwar, Eastern Region II

Gerald St. Pierre, Eastern Region IIA

Guy F. Blondeau, Eastern Region III.



Gabe Lafond, MN—S Treasurer and Minister of Education



## New GDI T&E Selection Committee Members

### Appointed

Two new members have been appointed to the GDI T&E Northern Selection Committee. Chester Herman from the Community of Ile a la Crosse, a private business owner in the Construction field, and Millie Goulet from La Ronge, who is employed with Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region as a Representative Workforce Coordinator/Career Path Advisor, were both named to the Northern committee. Their first meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2009.

The role of each Selection Committee is to provide prioritized, systematic, open, and transparent student sponsorship selection related to labour market needs that will result in measurable outcomes. Selection Committees operate on the principles of consensus, respect, team

building, and professionalism. Each Selection Committee is comprised of six voting members. A senior staff person of GDIT&E functions as the facilitator for the Selection Committee meetings, which allows consistency among and within Committees and also allows all members of the committee to vote. Furthermore, Selection Committees operate on blind judging of each application. This will provide confidence in the system and ensure the integrity of the process, in that adjudication decisions are based on the merits of the application as it relates to labour market attachment, rather than on the individual identity of clients.

The members of each committee are as follows:

#### Northern Selection Committee:

Chester Herman, Norm

Como, Leo Gardiner, Tracy Tinker, Millie Goulet, and Nancy Morin-Roy

#### Central Selection Committee:

Donald Dugan, Melvina Goulet, Shirley Isbister, Laura Strand, Pat Letendre, and Roy Fosseneuve

#### Southern Selection Committee:

Tim Roussin, Ed St Pierre, Albert Robillard, Angela Miller, Paul Tourand, and Deanna Oblema.

Resource people from the following organizations may be invited to attend Selection Committee meetings:

- 2 GDI staff members
- Regional College Rep
- HRSDC Rep
- Can-Sask Rep

The role of the resource people is to provide information relating to labour market needs. 




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*"The role of each Selection Committee is to provide prioritized, systematic, open, and transparent student sponsorship selection."*

## T&E Acting Director Named

In February, 2009 the GDI Training & Employment Director, Tavia Laliberte will be going on Maternity leave. The position of Acting Director for the term of that leave has recently been announced.

Cecile O'Neil will be responsible for the Director position for GDI Training & Employment for the term of Tavia's

leave. Cecile will begin this responsibility effective February 1, 2009. While Tavia is unsure when she will begin her Leave, Cecile's February 1<sup>st</sup> start date ensures a smooth transition.

GDI T&E Program Coordinators have a Coordinator's meeting scheduled for January 21<sup>st</sup> in Saskatoon. T&E staff

who have questions are welcome to bring them forward to their Program Coordinator in advance of the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Questions can be discussed at that meeting.

Congratulations Cecile and good luck in your new role as Acting Director of GDI T&E.

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*"Cecile O'Neil will be responsible for the Director position for GDI Training & Employment."*



## Call for Submissions—Naming of New GDI Scholarship/Bursary Program

*The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Board of Governors is calling for submissions for naming of a new scholarship/bursary program.*



The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Board of Governors is calling for submissions for naming of a new scholarship/bursary program.

GDI is in the process of establishing a GDI Training & Employment scholarship/bursary program. The scholarship/bursary program is being established to encourage Saskatchewan Métis people to pursue full-time education in fields related to Métis people that will lead to sustainable long term employment as well as fill identified labour market needs.

The scholarship/bursary program is based on an endowment fund of \$1.3 million established under the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA). The goal of this fund is to provide scholarship or bursary funding to Métis clients who have eligible action plans. Interest accrued on the initial investment will be allocated as scholarships/bursaries, and will be available for eligible applicants. The new scholarship program will operate under the GDI Scholarship Foundation and the trust agreement established therein. The GDI Scholarship Foundation currently administers the Napoleon Lafontaine Scholarship Fund, which was established under a similar model, as well as other scholarships.

### Criteria

All submissions should include:

1. The name being recommended for the new scholarship/bursary;
2. Rationale for the name (why this would be a good choice); and
3. Some background information.

### Deadline

Deadline for submissions is **January 15, 2009**.

Please send submissions to:

GDI Board of Governors  
c/o Mr. Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director  
Gabriel Dumont Institute  
917 - 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Phone: (306) 242-6070 Fax: (306) 242-0002  
Email: [geordy.mccaffrey\\_dti@sasktel.net](mailto:geordy.mccaffrey_dti@sasktel.net)



## T&E Policy Changes Affect Student Eligibility

by Tavia Laliberte

### 1. Eligibility of Full-Time Students

In October 2008, the GDI Board of Governors passed policy changes making it easier for full time students to access GDI T&E resources. Previous to this change, full-time students had to be recipients of a scholarship or bursary in their previous academic year in order to access T&E resources for full time studies. With the new change, clients will no longer need to be recipients of a bursary or scholarship. Clients will continue to have to demonstrate barriers to entering the workforce and the training must fit in their Career Action Plan but this change should provide much

needed supports to many Métis post-secondary clients.

### 2. Recent Grade 12 Graduates

In December 2008, the GDI Board of Governors passed policy changes eliminating the practice that those clients engaged in the K-12 system had to wait out one year in order to access GDI T&E resources.

Eligible clients include those Métis people who have recently exited from the K-12 system and are actively seeking employment. GDI T&E will not be able to create and/or act on Action Plans with full-time students currently engaged in the K-12 system. Clients who have

taken steps to create Action Plans, including applications to post-secondary training institutes, will not be deemed as “unemployed” and will not be eligible for funding under GDI T&E’s Individual Sponsorship Program. This policy will assist those clients that have recently exited the K-12 system and are struggling to make the transition into the labour market.

All other eligibility requirements remain. For further details about these policy changes and how they may affect potential clients please contact your nearest GDI Training & Employment Program Coordinator.



## DTI Student Profile—Jessie Tinker

by Jessica Sandell

Jessie Tinker packed up her kids and said good bye to her friends and family as she left her small community of Pinehouse Lake, SK in the summer of 2008. Jessie was accepted into DTI’s Level 3 program in Prince Albert that began in September and has been a motivated student ever since. Jessie realized that in order to become a strong role

model to her children and to her community, she needed to challenge herself and continue her education, even if that meant leaving the comforts of home. Jessie has appreciated the small class sizes, the empathy and patience all the instructors have shown her, and the opportunity to learn in a peaceful environment at DTI.

Jessie looks forward to moving back to Pinehouse Lake once she has completed her education, and encourages others not to be afraid of going back to school as an adult; once you get in the door you are welcomed with open arms.



*“Jessie has appreciated the small class sizes, the empathy and patience all the instructors have shown her.”*



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Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

[www.metismuseum.ca/brows  
e/index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/brows<br/>e/index.php/833)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research



## **GDI Locations**

### **GDI Head Office Saskatoon**

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### **SUNTEP Regina**

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University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
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#### **GDI Mission:**

*To promote the renewal and the development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection and the distribution of those materials and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.*



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research