



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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Partnership Office Update

By Lisa Wilson and Cecile O'Neil

The GDI Strategic Partnership Development initiative (informally known as the "Partnership Office") is an initiative funded through federal economic stimulus money under the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF). The Partnership Office is aimed at the pro-active marketing of GDIT&E partnerships, programs, services, and clients to small to medium sized employers across Saskatchewan. The project aims to target municipalities, cities, provincial government departments, and private sector employers that will receive funds flowing from federal economic stimulus.

Cecile O'Neil fills the role of Coordinator for the Partnership Office, which works out of ED Feehan High School in Saskatoon. GDI currently has an on-going partnership with ED Feehan. In addition to the Partnership Office in ED Feehan, Dumont Technical Institute is offering Educational Assistant, Security Guard training, and Continuing Care Assistant out of the school. Moreover, ED Feehan High School is currently in the process of

turning their school into a Health Excellence centre. The students are receiving help in transitioning from high school into the workforce. Having Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment in the building is also a great addition to helping with the transitioning.

Since its inception, the Partnership Office has established their physical office space, recruited and hired staff, initiated partnerships with numerous employers, referred DTI grads and T&E clients to employers, held workshops for clients applying to crown corporations, and provided mid-term outcome measures of success for the funding agent. To date, the Partnership Office has assisted 80 clients and developed nine employer partnerships. Partnerships are with employers such as Stars and Stripes Construction, Beaver River Housing Corporation, Lorway Diesel, Ministry of Highways, City of Meadow Lake, Batoche National Historic Site, and many others.

The partnership with Beaver River Housing Corporation provided

training for 15 students who will be hired by the contractors. Northern Apprenticeship Committee will meet with the contractors and students to provide information regarding apprenticeship in Saskatchewan. A partnership with Casino Regina has provided 15 clients with the opportunity to complete their GED and secure employment. Built into the process is on-going job counselling and supports for clients.

The ASTSIF fund's intention is to strengthen partnerships between Aboriginal employment service organizations like GDIT&E and employers through training-to-employment programs linked to concrete job opportunities. The fund supports short-term, focused initiatives designed to help Aboriginal people obtain the specific skills they require to benefit from economic opportunities.

The Partnership Office will be an important step toward implementing the partnership- and results-based successor to the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS), to be put in place in the near future. 



GDIT&E Clients Chosen for Aboriginal Job Fair

By Lisa Wilson



GDIT&E clients Jaxon Desautels of Saskatoon and Brett Paquin of Regina have been accepted to attend the *Inclusion Works '10* Aboriginal recruitment fair being held in Toronto at the end of this month. Jaxon is a Commerce student at the University of Saskatchewan; Brett will graduate this spring with a degree in Petroleum Engineering from the U of R. *Inclusion Works '10* is a job fair specifically designed for Aboriginal post-secondary graduates and soon-to-be graduates. Participants from across Canada apply for an opportunity to attend *Inclusion Works '10*. Those who attend will

be interviewed by some of Canada's leading-edge inclusion employers that are coming to Toronto to recruit top post-secondary Aboriginal graduates. The Aboriginal Human Resource Council has made a commitment to bring Aboriginal post-secondary graduates from across Canada to participate in *Inclusion Works '10*.

Application to this recruitment fair was open to First Nation, Métis and Inuit people in Canada that have graduated from a recognized post-secondary institution or are completing their final year of post-secondary study in 2010 (includes

diploma, trades apprenticeship and degree programs).

Once selected, participants are involved at all stages of *Inclusion Works '10*, including, but not limited to, a graduate skill building session, recruitment fair interviews/networking reception, professional development workshops, event gala and post-event follow-up measurement surveys. Participants at *Inclusion Works '10* are provided with important networking opportunities with corporate, Aboriginal, and government leaders and have the opportunity to connect with mentors and peers.



Board Update

By Lisa Wilson



Several committee changes occurred at the recent GDI Board meeting in March, 2010. The GDI Board appointed two new members to the GDI Governance Committee: Tammy Mah and Paul Trottier. Other members of the Governance Committee include Guy Blondeau and Kathy Palidwar (Treasurer).

The Board appointed Glenn Lafleur to the Audit and Finance Committee. Other members of the Audit and Finance Committee include Kathy Palidwar (Treasurer), and members of senior management.

Glenn Lafleur was also appointed to the GDI Act Committee, on which the GDI Board Chair, senior staff members, and AEEL representatives currently sit.

The GDI Board is made up of 12 members from each of the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MNS)

regions, and a Chair who is the MNS education Minister. The current GDI Board of Governors is as follows:

Karen LaRocque, Minister of Education, MN-S
Kathy Palidwar, Eastern Region II (Treasurer)
Glenn Lafleur, Northern Region I (Secretary)

Bernice Aramenko, Northern Region III
Michael Bell, Western Region I
Guy Blondeau, Eastern Region III
Tammy Mah, Western Region II
Gerald St. Pierre, Eastern Region IIA
Paul Trottier, Eastern Region I

Jackie Kennedy, Western Region IA
Shirley Ross, Western Region IIA
Collette Robertson, Western Region III
Vacancy, Northern Region II



DTI Celebrates Practical Nurse Grads

By Lisa Wilson

The Dumont Technical Institute is celebrating the graduation of 174 graduates from its Practical Nursing program since DTI began offering the program in 1999. Today DTI is the second largest trainer of Practical Nurses in the province, second only to the accrediting body for the training (SIAST). The Practical Nursing program was first offered by DTI to 16 students in Prince Albert in 1999. In 2001 the Institute began offering the program in Saskatoon where the program had never been offered before. In the same year the Institute began offering the program in partnership with the Northwest Regional College in Meadow Lake.

DTI was the first “college” to offer the program outside of SIAST and broke ground for the off-site delivery of the Practical Nursing program by other institutes such as

the Regional Colleges. In those early days there were many difficulties getting the program up and running since DTI was the first to take the program to community-based delivery.

Establishing the program involved building a lot of relationships with not only the people heading up the program at SIAST, but also with the health regions involved in taking the students for practicum placements. Fortunately the health regions saw this program as critical to their labour force needs and assisted and cooperated on all levels, including providing assistance with setting up complicated labs for the students to do their training. By and large, the support of the health regions has been critical to the program’s success.

The program is supported by a partnership between DTI and GDIT&E to fund course delivery and student support. The DTI

Practical Nurse program addresses both the shortage of trained nurses, particularly trained Aboriginal nurses, and the shortage of nurses in remote areas in Saskatchewan. The program offers a unique four to eight week preparatory program where students learn medical terminology, update math and writing skills, and focus on particularly challenging practice areas. The course also includes a cultural component where students learn about Métis culture to help build their sense of pride and confidence. Lastly the program aims to foster a sense of community within the class and with partners in the broader community.

The DTI Practical Nursing program boasts a successful completion rate of about 90% and graduates have no trouble finding employment upon graduating and successfully writing their licensing exams. 🌐



Practical Nursing Grad (Prince Albert)

30th Anniversary Culture Conference

By Lisa Wilson

Events and activities for the GDI 30th Anniversary Culture Conference and Annual General Meeting will be held this year over three days, November 18, 19, and 20, in Saskatoon. The planning committee for the event has been meeting since February to draft out the event schedule and begin to work on the details of the

various components. Tentative plans include presentations of the Order of Gabriel Dumont, an anniversary gala banquet, performances by top Métis talent, student recognition, Métis keynote speakers, leadership sessions, academic presentations, dignitaries, cultural sessions, and much more. The planning committee members are Amy Briley,

Karon Shmon, Brandy Laronde, and Lisa Wilson.

GDI’s 30th anniversary dovetails with the 125th anniversary of the Métis Resistance at Batoche and occurs in the Year of the Métis. This is an important and opportune year for GDI to highlight and showcase Métis culture and accomplishments. 🌐



GDI Forward Planning

By Lisa Wilson



In April, 2010, GDI will begin a forward planning process to review the 2008 strategic goals, assess progress to-date, update our labour market understanding, examine significant changes that impact the Institute, and adjust or set new goals based on new information. Built into the process is a consultation with Saskatchewan Labour Market Analyst Doug Elliott as a means of increasing organizational awareness of Labour Market Information and identifying partnership development opportunities with business and industry. It is anticipated that this process will be complete by November, 2010.

The 2008 GDI Strategic Plan was implemented following a number of planning sessions and consultation. A discussion document was developed and circulated to Métis

regions, Métis Locals, The MN-S Executive, Provincial Métis Council, and other stakeholders in the province.

A key goal included strengthening and stabilizing GDI's governance and legal status. GDI has been working toward a *Gabriel Dumont Institute Act*. The finalization of such an Act would give GDI permanent legal status resulting in a firm footing going forward 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 has been the renewal of its partnership with the federal government to deliver

labour market programs and services in Saskatchewan. The successor strategy to the AHRDS is imperative; the delivery of training and employment programs and services is a natural and essential component of the GDI mission. Work for the post-AHRDA process has been a key priority for GDI. It is expected that GDIT&E will have the new Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Agreement (ASETA) in place by July, 2010.

Other strategic priorities have included improving our 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.



Daniel Olver poses in traditional clothing supplied by GDI. Photo credit Peter Beszterda

Daniel Olver 1st Gold at CIS

By Lisa Wilson

In December 2009 the GDI Communicator updated readers about the wrestling success of GDC student and former GDI summer student Daniel Olver. Daniel, team captain of the men's U of S Huskies wrestling team, is a Canada West champion, a U of S All-Academic team member, and Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) medalist. Daniel

previously stated his goal was to win CIS. In March this year, Daniel won his first CIS gold after three straight silver medals in the 76-kg category. Daniel defeated Canada West foe Connor Malloy from the University of Regina.

Daniel was also recently one of four Métis youth delegates from Saskatchewan to participate in the opening ceremonies of the 2010

Vancouver Winter Olympics and in an Indigenous Youth Gathering leading up to the games. GDI was proud to supply the youth delegates with traditional clothing for the opening ceremonies.

It is only April and already it's been a busy and exciting year for this GDC student! Way to go, Daniel! 🌟



GDI Supports Métis Presentation to Senate

By Lisa Wilson

On April 14th I had the opportunity represent GDI before the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology in Ottawa. The Senate Committee is researching accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada. The committee is interested in a wide array of topics related to post-secondary education access including issues of special concern for Aboriginal students, institutions, governments, and so on. They wanted to hear about barriers, funding issues, research and development in institutions, and federal/provincial transfer mechanisms for post-secondary education.

In order to fulfill its mandate the Committee invited the Métis National Council (MNC) to appear before the committee as part of a panel in order to

hear the MNC views on the subject. The MNC requested participation from GDI because we are the largest and longest-running Métis-specific post-secondary institution in Canada.

Marc Leclair, MNC Senior Policy Advisor, and I attended on behalf of the Métis. The other panelist was Assembly of First Nations national Chief Shawn Atleo. The Métis and the First Nations representatives were provided the opportunity to make opening statements to the Senate Committee. Marc Leclair made the Métis opening statement on behalf of the MNC and national chief Atleo made the opening statement on behalf of the First Nations. Opening statements were followed by a question and answer period with the members of the Committee. The bulk of

the questions from Senators were focused on First Nations issues of student funding and FNUC concerns. Unfortunately there were very few questions concerning the Métis before the time ran out and the session was over.

The MNC provided a written submission to the committee that outlined the critical points for Métis in the western provinces. Marc Leclair did an excellent job of summarizing these in his opening statement to the Senate Committee and of course the senators have the opportunity to read the full submission. I was pleased to be able to attend as a support person for the MNC and very much appreciated the opportunity to participate in such an important venue. 🌐



(photo credit Greg Taylor, Director of Communications, Métis National Council)

Regional Boundary Mapping Project

By Lisa Wilson

GDI has taken on a mapping project in cooperation with the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) and Statistics Canada to draw the Métis Nation--Saskatchewan regional boundaries onto a census map of the province in order to gain access to Métis statistical and census information.

The mapping project is the first step necessary to access relevant Métis-

specific data in sync with the MN—S regional boundaries. GDI shares an interest in the mapping project and all parties agreed that it is prudent for our organizations to work together to complete the MN—S regional boundary mapping.

MN—S President Robert Doucette has extended support and permission for GDI to move forward with the task of drawing the

boundaries onto a large census map of Saskatchewan, with the understanding that President Doucette will provide final approval prior to submission of the map to Statistics Canada. President Doucette gave GDI access to the large 4x8 foot map of Saskatchewan with the census blocks visible so that copies could be made to accomplish the task. 🌐



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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