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2010—Year of the Métis



GDI Communicator

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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Successful Partnership Links Training to Employment

By Deborah Mihalicz

What issues would you say are among the top concerns for northern communities? If one of your answers is housing (or lack of it), you are correct. Fortunately, Beauval is home to a unique program which has just successfully linked 83% of its graduates to employment that will directly benefit housing tenants in northern Saskatchewan.

Beaver River Regional Housing Authority (BRRHA) is an agency that provides and maintains housing for low income families and seniors in the seven northwestern communities of Beauval, Cole Bay, Green Lake, Jans Bay, Patuanak, Pinehouse and Sled Lake. This adds up to approximately 320 units to maintain with a present slate of nine contractors, averaging about 36 units per contractor with a significant distance to travel between communities.

And if this isn't challenge enough, BRRHA Manager Doreen Docken noted about a year ago that with almost half of their contractors approaching retirement age, even this limited resource is about to become even more scarce. At the same time, she was concerned to see in her home community of Beauval a significant number of young adults in need of training towards gainful employment.

Doreen formerly worked as program coordinator for Gabriel Dumont Institute, an organization that specializes in developing and delivering Métis-specific educational programs and services. So she visited her former office to inquire into setting up a partnership program whereby GDI would train young adults in the skills necessary to maintain residences and BRRHA would provide, not only a couple of housing units for hands-on skills training, but more importantly,

employment for graduates of the program, as apprentices and hopefully beyond, to fill the shoes of retiring journeyperson contractors.

Doreen collaborated with GDIT&E Partnership Coordinator Cecile O'Neil on this project, and saw her dream become reality on May 3rd, 2010 when 14 students began an eight-week Construction Employment Readiness (CER) program in Beauval. GDI's Adult Basic Education arm, Dumont Technical Institute, provided Instructor Victor Landry. The students received hands-on, comprehensive training not only in all aspects of the carpentry trade but also in Math, Essential Skills (computer time generously donated by Valley View School in Beauval), Employment Readiness (e.g. time management & conflict resolution), Entrepreneurship,

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GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

Back to Batoche

By Lisa Wilson



GDI summer student Bradley Brown (above) was spotted participating in the Guinness World Record attempt for the most people playing the spoons at one time.



Louis Riel's sword (above) was on display in the Métis Nation of BC pavilion when it went missing. Fortunately it was returned a short time later.

Back to Batoche Days has been an annual celebration of the Métis since the mid to late 1880's. This year's celebration marked the 125th Anniversary since the Northwest Resistance of 1885 with a special eight day celebration from July 18th to 25th at Batoche.

Many GDI employees attended the festivities in a variety of capacities: as volunteers for the Batoche event, as employees manning the GDI displays and booths, as independent artists, as judges and organizers for various competitions, and as citizens of the Métis Nation enjoying the festivities with family and friends. GDI made many contributions to Back to Batoche including participating as an ex-officio member of the planning committee, developing the logo competition and sponsoring the prizes, contributing 25 staff days to volunteer at the event, working with Eagle Feather News to produce a special feature during Year of the Métis, and volunteering to develop, copy and distribute the first Batoche daily newsletter.

Many events and shows attracted visitors from across Canada and internationally as well. Highlights included the Grand Entry on Sunday July 18th; the arrival of

Métis honour runner Shannon Loutitt who ran 100 kilometres from Saskatoon to Batoche in her moccasins; a special commemoration and reconciliation ceremony at the cemetery; "Métis Got Talent" show each evening culminating in finals on Thursday with the top three winners opening for Michelle Wright on Saturday night; square dancing competition; jigging competition; fiddling competition; a special CD release by GDI featuring *Proud to be Métis*, also known as the Métis National Anthem; main stage performances by Michelle Wright, Andrea Menard, Donny Parenteau, and many more talented performers.

There are also many new buildings at the Batoche site including new provincial pavilions. Each province of the Métis National Council (MNC) was represented: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. Starting Monday July 19th, each day was dedicated to one of the provinces of the MNC with one day also being dedicated to international Métis of Turtle Mountain. In this way each province was acknowledged and had the opportunity to make opening remarks and to host the day's events.

Three large tents housed the Artisan's Village where

artisans displayed and sold their wares, history and cultural sessions took place, trade booths were set up, and youth programming, including drama and film, were available. The Artisan's Village was a bustling place to be each day!

On Friday evening there was a Guinness World Record attempt to beat the existing world record for the most people playing the spoons at one time to a single song. Donny Parenteau led the group with some sizzling fiddle playing and all around the large crowd could be seen tapping their toes, playing their spoons, and even jigging a few steps. Well over 800 people participated to try and beat the world record. Unfortunately, they were 31 signatures short of making it but will try again next year!

The final weekend of the Back to Batoche celebrations included Chuckwagon and Chariot races and a rodeo on Friday and Saturday. Saturday night also featured music star Michelle Wright whose performance proved to be very popular. There was so much going on at Batoche this year that it is difficult to write about it all. It was reported that 75,000 people attended Back to Batoche this year. Congratulations to the planning committee for a very successful event!

Cameco and GDI Enter Scholarship Talks

By Lisa Wilson

The GDIT&E Partnership office has entered into discussions with the Cameco Corporation on a possible scholarship partnership. The purpose of the scholarship is to recognize leadership, academic achievement, financial need, and community involvement of Métis students pursuing post-secondary accreditation in one of the following: trades; business administration/commerce/computer science; or other fields of study related to Cameco. It is anticipated that the new scholarship will initially be implemented as a pilot project to be assessed at the end of the pilot phase.

GDI has a Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation (GDSF) that has administered scholarships and bursaries for Métis people since the early 1980's. The GDSF selection committee would be responsible for administering the new awards. Initial discussions indicate there will be five awards available to Métis full-time post-secondary students in degree, diploma, certificate, or apprenticeship programs related to career opportunities with Cameco.

Scholarship partnerships like this one are made possible by the establishment of a special

partnership initiative under the GDIT&E Scholarship Fund. The fund allows GDIT&E to partner with business and industry to provide scholarships to Métis students and to assist businesses in their connection to and recruitment of Métis people after they graduate.

A Terms of Reference for the new scholarship has been drafted and will require approval of the GDI Board of Governors before coming into effect. The hope is that an official signing of the scholarship partnership will take place at the November 2010 GDI Annual General Meeting. 



GDI 30th Anniversary Update

By Lisa Wilson

On November 18 and 19, 2010, GDI will be hosting its 30th Anniversary celebration and Cultural Conference followed by the Institute's Annual General Meeting on November 20th. The event will provide an opportunity for GDI and the Métis community to celebrate 30 years of Métis education, resource production, and cultural programming.

The theme of this special event, "Rooted in Culture, Seeding the Future," provides GDI with the opportunity to reflect on our history and accomplishments and to look forward to our promising future. A special feature of the celebrations will be the awarding of the Order of Gabriel Dumont

medals in three categories: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. The bronze awards honour the success and accomplishments of GDI students; the silver awards honour those who have made significant contributions to the Métis; and the Gold awards recognize those who have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the Métis.

One of the areas of focus for the conference is on learners. The introduction of the Bronze awards for students will take place at a special banquet on November 18th. The evening's entertainment includes Métis hypnotist and entertainer Scott Ward. This special

evening devoted to learners will be followed the next day by a leadership session for Métis learners at the conference.

The day of November 19th will be devoted to conference activities. GDI is pleased to welcome renowned Métis author Maria Campbell as the keynote speaker for the conference. Maria

Campbell is not only a well-known playwright, writer, and teacher, she is the recipient of many honours and awards. Among her many accomplishments, Maria Campbell is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a recipient of a *National Aboriginal Achievement*

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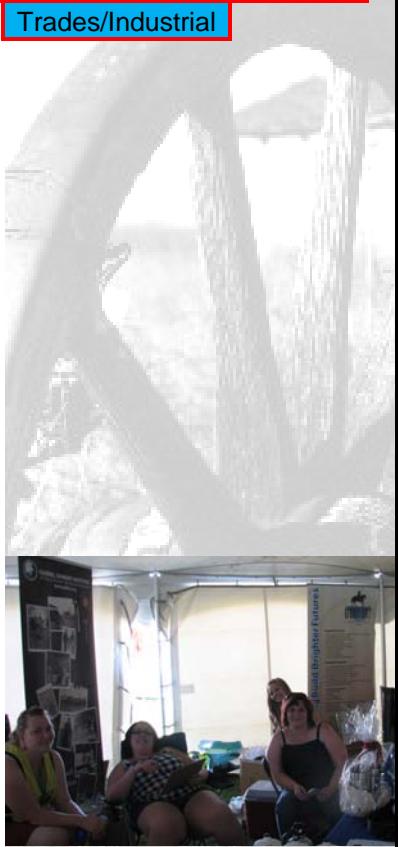
GDI Publishing displays GDI's many resources in the Artisan's Village at Back to Batoche 2010



DTI Program Plan 2010-2011

Legend:

Basic Education	Health
Business	Other
Trades/Industrial	



DTI had one of the most popular displays at Back to Batoche 2010

DTI Program Offerings 2010-2011				
#	Region	Location	Program	Dates
1	NR II	La Loche	Level 1 &2	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
2	NR II	La Loche	Level 3	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
3	WR IIA	Saskatoon	BE Programming based on need	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
4	WR IIA	Saskatoon	Level 3	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
5	WR IIA	Saskatoon	Level 4	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
6	WR II	Prince Albert	Level 3	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
7	WR II	Prince Albert	Level 4	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
8	NR I	Sandy Bay	BE Programming*	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
9	WR IA	North Battleford	BE Programming*	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
10	NR III	Ile-a-la Crosse	Level 3	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
11	NR III	Ile-a-la Crosse	Level 4	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
12	WR III	Regina	GED/Workreadiness	Jan. 2011 - Apr. 2011
13	WR III	Regina	GED PT - Partnership with Casino Regina	PT - TBD
14	MN-S	Province	Level 3 - Soc. Science - Metis Studies On - Line	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
15	WR I	Meadow Lake	Construction Readiness	Jul 15/10 - Dec 15/10
16	TBD	NW Sask (NR II, III, WR I)	Outdoor Power Equip. Technician	Sept. 1/10 - Jun. 30/11
17	WR I	Meadow Lake	Aboriginal Police Prep or TBD	Jan/11 - Jun/11
18	WR II	Saskatoon	Medical Lab Assistant	Aug 25/10 - Dec 17/10
19	WR III	Regina	Medical Lab Assistant or CCA	Aug 25/10 - Dec 17/11
20	TBD	TBD	Sask Energy Readiness	TBD
21	ER IIA	Yorkton	Entrepreneurship/Small Business	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/10
22	WR IIA	Saskatoon	Educational Assistant	Aug 25/10 - Jun 30/11
23	NR I	La Ronge	Health Entry Level Program	TBD
24	WR IIA	Saskatoon	Continuing Care Assistant	Mar. 8/10 - Oct. 22/10
25	NR I	La Ronge	Office Education - Health Link	Feb. 22/10 - Mar. 18/11
26	WR III	Regina	Continuing Care Assistant	Dec.7/09 - Jul. 31/10
27	WR III	Regina	Medical Device Reprocessing	Jan. 25/10 - Sept. 10/10
28	ER II	Nipawin	Health Entry Level Program	TBD
29	WR II	Prince Albert	Health Entry Level Program	TBD
30	WR III	Regina	Office Education (Health Unit Clerk)	Apr. 6/10 - Mar. 15/11
31	WR IIA	Saskatoon	Office Education (Health Unit Clerk)	Apr. 6/10 - Mar. 15/12
32	WR II	Prince Albert	Hvy Duty Truck and Trans. Me	Jan 3/11 - Jun 30/11



GDI 30th Anniversary Update (continued from page 3)

By Lisa Wilson

Award, a Mentor with the Trudeau Foundation, recipient of the *Dora Mavor Moore Award* for playwriting, has been inducted into the Saskatchewan Theatre Hall of Fame, and has received four Honourary Doctorate degrees. We are fortunate and honoured to have Maria Campbell deliver the keynote address.

Concurrent conference sessions throughout the day will allow participants to choose sessions in a variety of areas including hands-on

cultural activities; presentations of Métis-specific research; Michif language sessions; and discussions about Métis cultural history. The awarding of the Order of Gabriel Dumont Silver medals will take place at the conference lunch.

The special Gala Banquet and 30th Anniversary Celebration will take place on the evening of Friday November 19th and will be kicked off with a special presentation of the Métis National Anthem by Andrea Menard and

Donny Parenteau. The Order of Gabriel Dumont Gold will be awarded at the evening celebration to honour and recognize people who have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the Métis. Throughout the celebrations the Institute will pay special tribute to the founders of GDI, recognizing their leadership and foresight to envision a Métis-specific post-secondary institution for future generations.

The Institute's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on the morning of November 20th.



Voyageure display at Back to Batoche 2010

Successful Partnership Links Training to Employment (continued from page 1)

By Deborah Mihalicz

Contracting/Tendering and perhaps the icing on the cake—a day set aside to learn about their Métis heritage, a program which Doreen, as a former teacher with Northern Lights School Division, personally designed and delivered, much to her delight.

Being the first of its kind, several challenges arose and were met, but overall, with the day-to-day assistance of GDI Training and Employment counselor Marina Morin based in Beauval, the program was a resounding success. Since their graduation on June 30th, half of the students are already working for BRRHA contractors, with two more slated for

employment interviews this week. Graduate Chris Blyan, recipient of the Leadership Award, stated "This program was a really good experience and helped me gain a better knowledge of carpentry; [instructor] Vic explained things really well".

A unique feature of the Beauval CER program that enhanced the effectiveness of the program was the extension of instructor Victor Landry's role to Job Coach once class was done, helping bridge the graduates from training to employment. This job coaching will continue into the students' first few weeks as employees, and is

already proving to be a critical factor in their success.

Even before the program started, the unique potential of this partnership attracted the attention of the Northern Apprenticeship Committee, the Apprenticeship Commission, and Service Canada. Both the program partners and the organizations watching the project unfold recognize the potential impact the program could have as a model for future programs.

The BRRHA/GDI partnership is an example of how the resourcefulness of northerners and the power inherent in teamwork can result in resolving issues to improve the quality of life for northern people.



Back to Batoche 2010



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We're on the Web!

See us at:
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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.



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