



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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Gabriel Dumont Institute Celebrates 30 Years of Success

By Lisa Wilson

2010 has been declared the “Year of the Métis” in Saskatchewan as a means to acknowledge Métis history, celebrate Métis accomplishments, and commemorate the 125th anniversary of the 1885 Northwest Resistance. 2010 also marks the 30th anniversary of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), the official education arm of the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan and the largest Métis educational institution in Canada. Thirty years ago, in 1980, GDI was incorporated to serve the educational and cultural needs of Saskatchewan’s Métis community. The Institute has continued to grow and thrive over the last three decades.

Today GDI offers a wide variety of education opportunities and services for Métis people across the province. Programs are offered at the university, technical, and upgrading levels. Human resource development services are offered in a dozen Métis communities through the Training and Employment arm of GDI. Each year dozens of scholarships are awarded to Métis students by way of a Scholarship Trust established in 1985.

The longest running program of the Institute is the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) offered in cooperation with the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina. To date, SUNTEP has graduated almost 1000 students with their Bachelor of Education degree. These graduates make not only economic contributions to the province but significant social contributions as well.

“If we estimate that the SUNTEP graduates each teach 20 students per day, that’s close to 20,000 students who have the opportunity to experience education that is culturally sensitive and affirming,” says GDI Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey. “This means that more Métis and First Nations students will experience greater success and have more pride in their school endeavors. This is an outcome that has positive results for everyone in our province.”

GDI also offers arts and science courses to its students through the Gabriel Dumont College and in 2006 the Institute launched its Graduate

Studies program which today supports 20 Métis Master’s and Doctoral students studying at universities around the world.

The Dumont Technical Institute (DTI), which operates under the GDI umbrella, is responsible for thousands of graduates in trades, health, business and industry. In the last ten years, DTI has contributed to the health sector by graduating over 170 Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). All DTI programs are community based and are strongly linked to local and regional labour markets. DTI also offers adult upgrading and literacy programming. Programs are offered in over 20 locations in Saskatchewan.

Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment (GDIT&E) offers career services to Métis clients across Saskatchewan and operates community-based offices in Métis communities. GDIT&E offers not only client support, but employer support as well. Services include wage subsidies, summer student work experience, scholarship matching, and ready workplace training. *(continued on page5)*



Best of Luck to Summer Students!

By Melissa Dicus

Another summer has gone by at GDI. As fall approaches it comes time to acknowledge some of the hard-work and positive outlook our summer students have contributed. The summer student program gives the Institute a chance to introduce students to our workplace and encourages them to consider GDI as an employer of choice once they have completed their studies. GDI wishes to enhance the talent and skills of students to enable them to apply these skills to further use within GDI or other employers. Providing students with the ability to help fund their studies is also an aspect of the summer student program. It is a way to widen the impact that GDI has on our young Métis people as well as brightening a positive image of the Institute.

This summer GDI was fortunate to have the opportunity to employ seven summer students. Ashley Matheson returned

to DTI for the summer. Ashley is a University of Saskatchewan student pursuing a degree in Political Science. She has spent a few summers with DTI as well as working part-time in the fall. Amanda Goller is also at DTI as a new summer student. Amanda is one of our very own SUNTEP students going into her 3rd year of the program. Joining the GDI Finance and Operations team this year was Kendall Trotchie. Kendall is a SUNTEP student in Saskatoon. Also coming from her studies at SUNTEP is Kaylie Bell who worked at GDI Training and Employment this summer. Working for our new ASTSIF Partnership was Alicia Elliott. Alicia is a University of Saskatchewan student working towards a Bachelor of Commerce. Over at GDI Publishing was returning student Bradley Brown. Bradley is a SUNTEP student who has been with Publishing part-time during the year and previous summers.

Last but definitely not least is Kayla Morrison, also employed at GDI Publishing. Kayla is a University of Saskatchewan student who is pursuing a Bachelor in Commerce.

One, of many, highlights of the summer was contributing to designing, decorating and being a part of the GDI float in the Exhibition parade this August. As a former summer student, I was fortunate enough to be able to be involved as well. Despite the rainy day, we all had a blast decorating the float and putting on our sashes to promote GDI. Participation in positive cultural events, like the GDI float and Back to Batoche, is something that I am sure the summer students will look back on with appreciation.

The students' employment is as much a benefit to the Institute as the students. Geordy McCaffrey Executive Director, states, "Thanks to our summer students from the Institute board, management and staff. The students did fine work and made significant contributions to the Institute." Gabriel Dumont Institute wishes all the summer students the best of luck with their studies this fall and hopes to see them in the years to come.



Back to Batoche Legacy

By Lisa Wilson

The 2010 Back to Batoche Days celebration in honour of the 125th anniversary since the Northwest Resistance of 1885 was, by all accounts, an amazing, memorable experience. Perhaps the most exciting outcome of the celebration is the sense that what happened this year will leave a legacy for future celebrations.

The legacy includes permanent new infrastructure for the site including the construction of seven new buildings and upgrades to another seven existing buildings. There are now five new pavilions permanently located at the Batoche site to host the MNC governing provinces during the festival. The campgrounds have been redesigned and

redeveloped and 32 new electrical campsites were added. The festival site was re-organized with plans to continue to revise the layout of the site. A gated monument was erected at the cemetery and a Veterans Memorial Garden was established. Another important outcome of the celebration is that this year's festival established a new way of doing things. It is the first time a comprehensive report has been written on the event, allowing planners to reflect on what worked and what requires changes in the future. The celebration also established a terrific sense of volunteerism in the Métis community. The volunteer program for the Back to Batoche celebration holds great possibilities for future development.

GDI is proud to have made many contributions to the success of Back to Batoche. GDI participated on the planning committee as an ex-officio member; we developed the logo competition and sponsored the cash prizes; the Institute contributed 25 staff days to volunteer at the event; our staff worked with Eagle Feather News to produce a special feature during Year of the Métis; GDI contributed the giant Métis flag that many people will remember as the stunning backdrop for the outdoor stage; the Institute provided wage subsidies for summer students to work on the event; GDI hosted two display booths at the event; and the Institute contributed aerial photos of the Batoche site for planning purposes.



Server Disaster Averted by GDI Staff

By Melissa Dicus

A major calamity was avoided this summer when in the last week of July the financial server crashed. An electrical storm was the cause of the incident. Fortunately Gary Kichula, Accounting Coordinator, backed up the server only hours before. Therefore no information was lost due to the crash.

"Gary's commitment to good practice saved the Institute a major headache. No data was

lost," stated GDI Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey. Gary regularly backs up the financial server.

GDI's IT professionals, Gareth Griffiths and Gordon Holtlander, promptly jumped into action in order to find a solution to this significant problem. A new server was set-up and in working order by the end of the week. The Finance and Operations staff were able to complete work with little

disruption. There was a slight delay in issuing cheques but payroll was completed successfully. We appreciated all staff's patience and understanding through this nerve-wracking ordeal.



GDI Board Update

By Lisa Wilson



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.

Three of the current GDI Board terms are drawing to an end in September. These are Northern Region III, Eastern Region II, and Eastern Region IIA. Notice has been sent to each of the affected regions. Appointment to the GDI Board follows a

three step process: Regional Council nomination; Provincial Métis Council ratification, and approval by the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI).

The current GDI Board of Governors is as follows: Karen LaRocque, Chair and Métis Nation—Saskatchewan Minister of Education; Glenn Lafleur, Vice Chair, Northern Region I; Kathy Palidwar, Treasurer, Eastern Region II;

Tammy Mah, Secretary, Western Region II; Vacant, Northern Region II; Bernice Aramenko, Northern Region III; Paul Trotter, Eastern Region I; Gerald St. Pierre, Eastern Region IIA; Guy Blondeau, Eastern Region III; Michael Bell, Western Region I; Jackie Kennedy, Western Region IA; Shirley Ross, Western Region IIA; and Collette Robertson, Western Region III.



New Employee Handbook

By Melissa Dicus

In order to facilitate a smooth beginning for new GDI employees an introductory Employee Handbook has been assembled.

When starting in a new

position at GDI it is important for an employee to have all the appropriate start-up materials. These materials provide the ability to understand general GDI processes. The materials also include any start-up forms that must be

completed and submitted. The Employee Handbook includes such things as the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for unionized employees, important policies and procedures, tax forms, direct deposit application, union forms and Great West Life forms.



Staff Volunteers Needed for 30th Anniversary Cultural Conference

By Amy Briley

With the 30th anniversary fast approaching and planning underway, the planning committee is looking for staff volunteers to assist in event preparations and be available to work at both the conference and annual general meeting. This is your opportunity to get involved and participate in the conference and anniversary celebrations. If you want to volunteer,

please let us know what dates and times you will be available during the conference and AGM or if you have time in your work schedule for preparations (ie. preparing gifts, kits, nametags, delegate packages etc.). If you have any suggestions or have a specific duty that you wish to do (ie. registration table, decorating, silent auction), please let us know and we

will do our best to accommodate you. This year marks a significant milestone for GDI and we hope everyone is excited about getting involved to celebrate our cultural history, Institute successes, and future directions.

For more information please contact Lisa Wilson at 657-2249.



DTI New Career Counsellors

By Patrick Kazuska

Dumont Technical Institute is very pleased to announce the addition of four new Career Counsellors who will be based in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert and Meadow Lake. The Career Counsellors will be responsible for providing assistance to DTI students with an emphasis on career action planning, conducting pre and post program ESPORT Essential Skills Assessments, and working with DTI graduates to help them achieve their goals and transition from academic studies in basic education,

to post secondary studies, to the labour market.

The DTI Career Counsellors will work in cooperation with GDI Training and Employment for referrals and information sharing. The purpose of dedicated DTI counsellors is to ensure consistency in the career assessments, counselling, and classroom career training from one DTI centre to the next.

Funding for the career counselor positions was secured by DTI from the department of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour (AEEL) under

the Labour Market Agreement (LMA) fund.

Please welcome Jessica Sandell (Saskatoon), Pam Rice (Regina), Sherry McLennan (Prince Albert) and Shelley Bellanger (Meadow Lake). 🌐



L-R Shelly Belanger, Sheena Daigneault (T&E), Pam Rice, Jessica Sandell, Sherry McLennan and Patrick Kazuska (Program Coordinator)

30 Years of Success *(Continued from page 1)*

GDIT&E also operates a partnership office that connects with interested employers to support employer links to the Métis workforce.

In total, GDI serves approximately 2,000 Métis clients and students each year.

A Métis-specific library, and an award-winning publishing department, round out the programs and services of the Institute. The GDI library is located in Regina and Prince Albert and boasts one of the largest collections of Métis and First Nations materials. GDI Publishing is recognized for its beautiful Métis-specific books and learning resources.

Dozens of GDI published books have won and been shortlisted for Saskatchewan Book Awards. Most recently, *Dancing in my Bones* by Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton captured the Award for Publishing, the First Peoples' Publishing Award, and the First Peoples' Writing Award.

Within the past year, GDI is pleased to have been awarded over \$5 million in federal economic stimulus funding. The funds are intended to strengthen partnerships between GDIT&E and employers through training-to-employment programs linked to concrete job opportunities. Under the funding agreement, GDI is operating a large,

province-wide health sector project and a smaller Strategic Partnership Development initiative. The Strategic Partnership Development initiative is aimed at the pro-active marketing of Métis training and employment partnerships, programs, services and clients to small and medium sized employers across Saskatchewan. To date, the Partnership initiative has assisted over 80 clients and developed nine employer partnerships. For more information visit the GDI website at www.gdins.org.

This year, GDI celebrates its 30th anniversary with a special Cultural Conference and Anniversary Celebration scheduled for November

18-20, 2010 in Saskatoon. The first GDI Cultural Conference was hosted by the Institute in 1980, the year operations began. A highlight of the 30th Anniversary includes the presentation of the Order of Gabriel Dumont medals to honour and recognize people who have made significant contributions to the Métis and distinguished themselves with outstanding service.

Over the past 10 years, GDI has grown by approximately 400 percent to become the most notable Métis educational institution in the world. The unique composition of basic education, technical training, university, publishing and human resource development programming has made the Institute one of a kind. 🌐



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We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.gdins.org



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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