



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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## GDI Signs \$47M Agreement with Federal Government

By Lisa Wilson

In a special signing ceremony on Friday November 19, 2010, the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) formally recognized their new five-year \$47.5 million agreement. Under the agreement, GDI will provide employment and training programs and services to Saskatchewan's Métis community.

The agreement was signed at the opening of the GDI 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cultural Conference, and included remarks by the Honourable Ed Komarnicki, *Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour*; the Honourable Rob Norris, *Minister of Advanced Education Employment and Immigration*; President Clément Chartier, Métis National Council; and President Robert Doucette, Métis Nation—Saskatchewan.

The agreement falls under the federal government's Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training

Strategy (ASETS). The Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of HRSDC announced the strategy in September, 2009. ASETS replaces the former Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS) under which GDI was also an agreement holder. The new agreement will be administered by GDI's Training and Employment program, which operates in a similar way to the three pillars of the ASETS: demand driven skills development, partnership creation, and accountability.

"Under the new ASETS Agreement, GDI will retain the successful approaches, programs, and practices established under the former agreement," said GDI's Chair, Karen LaRocque. "The Institute foresaw the ASETS direction and took a proactive approach in order to build in practices and structures that would support the demand driven skills development and partnership aspects of the ASETS."

GDI strengthens Métis people's attachment to the labour market with meaningful, quality training and employment programs. The ASETS

Agreement enables GDI to design, manage, and deliver human resources development programs and services tailored to the needs and circumstances of Métis people and employers in Saskatchewan. GDI offers employment, placement, and training programs to Métis people throughout the Province of Saskatchewan, namely labour market development programs. GDI works with employers to ensure ready workplaces conducive to diversity, specifically for Métis people, and ensures programming meets labour market needs.

"Our government is helping Aboriginal people get the skills and training they need in Saskatchewan," said Mr. Ed Komarnicki, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour. "Investing in training is one of the most important measures our government is taking to protect Canada and its workers today, while strengthening the long-term competitiveness of our economy."



## GDI Staff Member Represents MNC to Deans of Education

By Lisa Wilson



Michael Relland, Program Coordinator, SUNTEP Prince Albert (photo credit Peter Beszterda)

Last month, Michael Relland, Coordinator of SUNTEP Prince Albert, represented the Métis National Council (MNC) and GDI at a meeting of the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) in Ottawa. The ACDE were seeking guidance and advice as to how to best bring about the vision of their *Accord on Indigenous Education* which the ACDE launched in June 2010. The ACDE has a keen awareness of the vital needs in the area of Indigenous education. The purpose of the Accord is to advance Indigenous identities, cultures, languages, values, ways of knowing, and knowledge systems in all Canadian learning settings. The ACDE was looking to Aboriginal governments and institutions for insights about how to prioritize the principles and goals outlined in the accord in their own faculties, university settings, with school districts, and in other educational contexts.

The discussion was moderated by Cecilia Reynolds, Dean of the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, and by Fern Snart, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. The meeting was intended to be informal and

relaxed, with free-flowing discussion, questions, and answers.

Michael Relland reported that there was a strong sense from the Deans that they would like to do the right thing, but that they are somewhat uncertain as to how best to affect change in a positive manner. He indicated there was a frank discussion on this subject and the Deans seemed quite receptive. Michael Relland noted, "The Accord reveals a vision that, if actualized, has the capacity to assist the University community achieve deeper levels of knowledge as well as enrich the university experience of all students."

The two broad categories of challenges and priorities noted by Michael Relland in his report on the consultation are first, to start with the Deans and their Institutions to make a paradigm shift, and second, to engage the Aboriginal community. With regard to the notion of starting with self, some of the suggestions include professional development with university faculty, building the changes mandated by the Accord into Bachelor of Education programs, and work toward perception/attitude transformation of non-Aboriginal teacher candidates. In terms of engaging the Aboriginal Community, Michael Relland notes that what is needed is a form of

proactive "outreach" important in the initial stages of relationship building in order for the University to be perceived as a welcoming, safe place that validates the psyche of Aboriginal peoples. This commitment to engagement needs to be reflected in university policies and program directed to Aboriginal students. Michael Relland also notes that there is a need to work with both levels of government and the Aboriginal community to eliminate systemic barriers and to build capacity within Aboriginal community, particularly Aboriginal educational institutions (e.g. Internship reimbursement). Unfortunately, as currently funded, most Aboriginal educational institutions lack the capacity to adequately respond to the needs of their educational partners. As a result, the University may be deprived of a value ally and resource toward achieving the goals outlined in the Accord.

The Deans of Education who make up the ACDE represent institutions that offer initial teacher education and/or continuing professional education and graduate education. They are uniquely positioned to influence new and practicing educators.



Image from the Accord on Indigenous Education published by the ACDE



## New Inductees to Order of Gabriel Dumont

By Lisa Wilson

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) is pleased to announce the induction of several individuals into the *Order of Gabriel Dumont* in Saskatoon at the GDI 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Cultural Conference on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* is awarded by the Gabriel Dumont Institute to a small number of persons who have serviced the Métis of Canada with distinction. The award itself, however, is made to persons without regard to race.

The most recent inductees are Clarence Campeau (posthumous) in the Gold category; Guy Bouvier in the Gold category; Sheila Pocha in the Silver category; Elie Fleury in the Silver category; and Elder Rose Fleury in the Silver category. The recipients join the ranks of esteemed individuals who have been inducted into the Order,

including Maria Campbell, Elijah Harper, and Harry Daniels, to name a few.

The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* Gold medal recognizes those who have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the Métis. In past practice the Gold medal has been awarded based on lifetime achievements and service. The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* Silver honours those who have made a significant contribution to the Métis. Gold and Silver awards were made on Friday November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Furthermore, the Institute introduced the *Order of Gabriel Dumont* Bronze Medal awards this year. The Bronze Medal award has been specifically designated as a student award to honour those GDI students who have distinguished themselves through their perseverance, centre and

community involvement, and overall student performance. The Bronze Medal was awarded to eighteen GDI students on November 18, 2010 at a special banquet to honour the Bronze Medal recipients and kick off to the Gabriel Dumont Institute's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cultural Conference.

The Order is presented in the form of a medallion and a certificate signed by the Officers of the Institute over the Seal which enrolls the recipient in the Order.

GDI was incorporated in 1980 to serve the educational and cultural needs of Saskatchewan's Métis community. The Institute celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year with a Cultural Conference.

Information about the *Order of Gabriel Dumont* and the most recent Inductees can be found on the GDI website at [www.qdins.org](http://www.qdins.org). 



Elder Rose Fleury (centre) receives the *Order of Gabriel Dumont* from presenters Karen LaRocque and Geordy McCaffrey (photo credit Peter Beszterda)



Sheila Pocha, *Order of Gabriel Dumont* recipient, gives acceptance speech (photo credit Peter Beszterda)

## Digital Sign Gets New Look

By Lisa Wilson

Next time you pass the digital sign outside the DTI building in Saskatoon, you may notice many of the ads have been given a new look. The sign now features several "Métis Historical Moments" which highlight a historical incident and are designed to spark

awareness and interest of those driving past. The ads end with a reference directing people to the Virtual Museum. In addition, there are new ads related to services offered by GDIT&E and DTI.

The ads have been developed with a new professional look and are

polished and eye-catching. The objective is to make the most of the potential that a digital sign affords us, not only to advertize our programs and services but to increase our profile within the general public and promote awareness about Métis history and culture.



## GDI Hosts 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cultural Conference and Annual General Meeting

By Lisa Wilson



John Arcand and Maria Campbell  
(photo credit Peter Beszterda)

On November 18, 19 and 20, 2010 GDI hosted its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and Cultural Conference followed by the Institute's Annual General Meeting. The event provided an opportunity for GDI and the Métis community to celebrate 30 years of Métis education, resource production, and cultural programming.

The event began with several pre-conference forums. The SUNTEP Alumni event took the form of a dialogue on the SUNTEP Program as a model of Métis teacher education. Participants discussed the growth and transformation of the program over the last three decades and its impact on the Métis, public education and the economy. Opportunities for SUNTEP graduates and other stakeholders to discuss the importance of the program, the opportunities and challenges encountered, and the benefit to students and schools were provided.

All GDI staff attended *GDI: Looking Back Looking Forward* presented by GDI Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey. The session highlighted the historical, social, and economic circumstances that Métis people in Saskatchewan faced thirty years ago when the Institute was founded. Placing the origins of the Institute in the context of the day served to illustrate

how far we have come with our Institution today.

The evening of Thursday November 18<sup>th</sup> included a special awards ceremony and banquet to celebrate the *Order of Gabriel Dumont* Bronze medal recipients. The Bronze award was introduced as a new award this year. Eighteen students were inducted into the Order with the Bronze medal. Following the award presentations, Métis hypnotist Scott Ward delighted the audience by hypnotizing a number of GDI students and staff.

Friday November 19<sup>th</sup> officially opened the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cultural Conference. Opening remarks were made by a number of dignitaries including the Honourable Ed Komarnicki, *Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour*, the Honourable Rob Norris, *Minister of Advanced Education Employment and Immigration*; President Clément Chartier, Métis National Council; and President Robert Doucette, Métis Nation—Saskatchewan. In addition, several other political leaders and representatives were in attendance for the conference opening and for the signing of the ASETS agreement.

Keynote speaker Maria Campbell, accompanied by John & Vicki Arcand, presented opening thoughts and read a story with fiddle and guitar accompaniment. Concurrent Cultural and Academic sessions followed throughout the day. In addition, a special student leadership session was offered. The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* Silver medals were presented at the lunch banquet (see article on page three).

The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala banquet took place on Friday evening with musical entertainment by John and Vicki Arcand, special performances by Andrea Menard and Donny Parenteau, the introduction and performance of the new Métis Anthem, and the awarding of the *Order of Gabriel Dumont* Gold medals.

The GDI Annual General Meeting was held Saturday November 20<sup>th</sup> and included a special signing ceremony with Cameco Corporation for a new scholarship partnership.

Overall the event was a resounding success. On behalf of Institute management, I extend sincere thanks to all the staff who displayed the pride and spirit of GDI and pitched in to make the three day event a real success. *Marsii!*



Andrea Menard performs at the Gala banquet  
(photo credit Peter Beszterda)



## GDI and Cameco Sign Scholarship Agreement

By Lisa Wilson

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) is pleased to announce the signing of a new Métis scholarship with Cameco. GDI and Cameco celebrated the new scholarship agreement on Saturday November 20, 2010 in Saskatoon with a special signing ceremony.

GDI and Cameco have partnered to provide scholarships to encourage Métis students to pursue post-secondary education. Under the agreement there are five awards of \$1,300 annually for Métis students enrolled in a post-secondary institution pursuing a degree, diploma, certificate, or apprenticeship program related to career opportunities with Cameco.

The scholarship agreement is a four-year pilot program with a shared contribution by Cameco and GDI.

Scholarships will be administered annually by the *Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation Trust*, commencing in May 2011.

“This is a significant agreement for the Gabriel Dumont Institute because it not only provides scholarship funds to Métis people, it provides links to the labour market via a highly recognized large employer,” said GDI’s Chair Karen LaRocque. “Our partnership with Cameco is a proactive step to address labour force demands and recognize the importance of the Métis population in filling shortages in the job market.”

Scholarship selection will be based on career focus, academic achievement, and the financial needs of Métis students pursuing post-secondary education in the trades, business administration, commerce,

computer science, and other fields of study related to Cameco.

GDI was incorporated in 1980 to serve the educational and cultural needs of Saskatchewan’s Métis community. The Institute celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year with a cultural conference. The GDI-Cameco signing ceremony was part of the celebration.

GDI has the capacity to enter into such partnerships through its various entities, including GDI Training & Employment, a service delivery organization that enters into business and industry partnerships to link Métis workers with employers and training. Furthermore, the Dumont Technical Institute forges partnerships with business, industry, and trades to provide targeted training related to labour market demands. The partnership with Cameco is an example of successful collaboration. 🌐

“Under the agreement there are five awards of \$1,300 annually for Métis students enrolled in a post-secondary institution pursuing a degree, diploma, certificate, or apprenticeship program related to career opportunities with Cameco.”



Tavia Inkster, Dara Hrytzak-Lieffers, and Karen LaRocque participate in the GDI-Cameco signing (photo credit Peter Beszterda)

## It's Christmas at GDI!

GDI staff and their families in Saskatoon are invited to attend a come-and-go event at the Western Development Museum on December 18<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 pm. There will be horse-drawn sleigh rides, refreshments, and museum tours. Contact Amy Briley to register as capacity is limited!

This year’s Christmas Holiday break has been set by the GDI Board from December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 3<sup>rd</sup> inclusive. The Institute will be closed during this time and will re-open after the holidays on Tuesday January 4, 2011. *Marii Krismas & Jwyeu Nwel!*



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Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

[www.metismuseum.ca/brows  
/index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/brows/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

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### GDI Library Regina

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<http://gdi.voyager.uregina.ca/>

### GDI Library Prince Albert

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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