



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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## DTI Construction Readiness Program Ends Successfully

By Jennifer Waldner



On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010, ten students graduated from the Construction Readiness Program in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. For the graduation event, the students and instructors transformed one of the classrooms at the Western Region I Community Centre into a beautiful banquet hall and approximately thirty friends and family joined in the afternoon celebration honoring the graduates.

During the twenty-week program, the students, with the help of Instructor, Gary Aubichon, completed

numerous projects, which included reinstalling portions of the building's floor, putting in a new door and doorframe, insulating and reinstalling some walls, and improving the general aesthetic appeal of the building.

"This program involves local students in their community," said Western Region I Area Director Mavis Taylor. "It's terrific that the students have the opportunity to be active in their Métis community, help improve Métis community infrastructure, and train for employment at the same time."

The students also built a shed, shelving, work tables, and saw horses which were donated to Western Region I. The students built picnic tables and donated them to a street outreach program called the Door of Hope.

The program was a great success with one student securing a position in the construction field and many others with prospective jobs. We would like to thank all the individuals that had a hand in making the Construction Readiness Program a huge success!



## GDIT&E Director Recognized by the Province

By Lisa Wilson

In December, 2010, in honour of the Year of the Métis, the Ministry of Social Services recognized four outstanding Métis women for their demonstration of leadership in their communities. GDIT&E Director Tavia Laliberte was one of those honoured.

“As the Year of the Métis comes to a close, our government is pleased to recognize the historic and on-going contributions of Métis women to Saskatchewan and Canada,” said June Draude, Social Services Minister and Minister

responsible for Status of Women.

The following biography about Tavia was presented in a press release by the Ministry of Social Services:

Tavia has worked for over 10 years with the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) and served as Director since 2006. In this role, she oversees Métis training and employment operations and services for Métis communities across Saskatchewan.

Her formal education includes a four-year Bachelor of Arts Honours

Degree in International Studies and a Master's of Business Administration Degree from the Edward's School of Business at the University of Saskatchewan. Tavia was recognized by the Edward's School of Business in their Role Model Campaign in 2009 and by the Province's Status of Women office in celebration of Métis Women in 2010 – The Year of the Métis.

Her informal education includes wife, mother, aunt and avid adventurer.

Congratulations Tavia!



## Student Information System

By Jessica Sandell and edited by Lisa Wilson

*The use of the SIS does not change or impact the unique, culturally-relevant, community-based programming of DTI.*

After many years of research DTI has begun to implement the Student Information System (SIS), a database that will track and maintain all DTI program activity. This system has been in use for a number of years by the Regional College system in Saskatchewan and is part of a larger IT system used by the service agencies in provincial government called One Client Service Model or OCSM for short (pronounced “awesome”). OCSM is based on the principle of shared client information as a means to provide more efficient service and less data entry.

Historically, DTI has maintained hardcopies of documents, student records, and program information. However, with the SIS system, DTI will be able to be more environmentally conscious, ensure data integrity, and manage our student information with the same system used by the mainstream colleges. The manual system was, at one time, sufficient to meet the needs of both DTI and its stakeholders. However, DTI has grown over the years and now registers hundreds of students each year, making the manual system time consuming and

inefficient. The use of the SIS does not change or impact the unique, culturally-relevant, community-based programming of DTI.

The SIS system will allow the Institute to create electronic student files, conduct searches through our student database, and provide accurate reporting for our stakeholders. As part of implementation, DTI signed on to a Data Sharing Protocol which speaks to the protection of client information and is based on respect for the privacy of individuals. We look forward to utilizing the SIS program to its full capacity.



# GDI Payroll Cut-Off Calendar

## FEBRUARY 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
				Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			Cutoff @ Noon for Stop Pmts on Student Feb 11 Direct Deposit Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for Feb 15 Payday	Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Student Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Feb 25 Student Payroll	<b>Staff Payday</b>		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	<b>Family Day Stat Holiday</b>	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Timesheet & Payroll Revisions for Feb 28 Payday	Cutoff @ Noon for Stop Payments on Feb 25 Direct Deposits	Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Student Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
27	28					
	<b>Staff Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for Mar 11 Student Payroll					

**Please Note:**

- Employee contracts due at payroll upon job acceptance
- Payroll must receive contracts prior to payroll cutoff date
- If received after the cutoff date the employee will be paid on the following pay period
- MRTS due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month

For more information contact Jim Edmondson at 657-2272 or Cory McDougall at 657-2257.

## GDI Act Update

By Lisa Wilson

In recent months a draft GDI Act has been developed by a joint GDI-Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI) committee in anticipation that the provincial government will take the proposed legislation forward. The concept was

introduced to our Métis membership at a GDI Annual General Meeting in 2005 and has been a part of GDI's strategic plan going forward. In November 2010 GDI held its Annual General Meeting. At the meeting, the Métis membership ratified the principle of the GDI Act and moved that

GDI proceed with the pursuit of the Act. Similar legislation is standard for all other post-secondary training institutions in the province and brings with it certain advantages, such as exemption from municipal property taxes. The pursuit of a GDI Act remains a priority for the Institute.



## Technology in the Classroom

By Kim Rowe and edited by Lisa Wilson



Chalk boards are a thing of the past at DTI in Prince Albert. We have embraced technology and introduced the SMART Board. The SMART board is an interactive whiteboard to help improve the learning environment. It uses touch detection for user input in the same way a PC operates with a mouse and keyboard, except the whiteboard acts as a large touch screen. The SMART board combines the simplicity of a whiteboard with the power of a computer, allowing the user to create unique lessons, conduct Internet

searches on the spot, write notes in digital ink, and save your work—all with the simple touch of a finger.

How it works: “A projector connected to the computer displays the computer’s desktop image on the interactive whiteboard. The interactive whiteboard accepts touch input from a finger, pen, or other solid object. Each contact with the Smart Board interactive whiteboard is interpreted as a left-click from the mouse” (Wikipedia).

The SMART board is proving to have many benefits. For instance, sometimes, technology can be intimidating for students; if the instructors demonstrate computer use on a day-to-day basis in their interactions with students, the students will become more confident and accustomed to the functions of computers. The SMART board in the classroom also allows students the opportunity to travel around the world using sites like Google Earth.



## Medical Lab Assistant Program Underway in Saskatoon

By Lisa Wilson



On December 13, 2010 the Medical Lab Assistant (MLA) program got underway in Saskatoon at the Dumont Technical Institute. Eight students were excited to begin the course, which has an instructor/student ratio of 1:8 for many of its components.

The first week and a half of the program was a preparation and orientation phase where students engaged in First Aid and CPR training, immunizations, and program orientation. This prepared the students to immediately get into the full swing of the program

upon their return on January 4<sup>th</sup>. The MLA classrooms are located at ED Feehan High School and the labs for the program are held at Kelsey SIAST campus.

“I am looking forward to this new group of students,” said DTI Program Coordinator Chantelle Gagnon. “They are very motivated and energetic.”

Medical Lab Assistants have been identified by the Saskatoon Health Region as in-demand jobs. The MLA program is one of the in-kind programs offered by DTI

in conjunction with the Health Initiative under the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund.

The students will complete the course content before they go to clinical sites throughout Saskatchewan at the beginning of April for nine weeks. They will then write the National Exam in June and complete the program June 17, 2011.



## GDI Presents Health Initiative at National Conference

By Lisa Wilson

In January 2011 GDI was invited by Service Canada to present its Health Human Resources Initiative funded under the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF). GDIT&E Director Tavia Laliberte made the presentation at the two-day national conference, *Knowledge Circle 2011*, held in Montreal. Tavia's presentation covered some of the history of GDI and an overview of the Institute before providing statistics related to the health sector in Saskatchewan. The health sector is the third largest employer in the province and has an average employee age of 43 years. The health sector has experienced hiring and retention issues and can

look forward to further HR problems as their workforce ages and enters retirement.

For this project, GDI drew on its experience in the health sector operating Practical Nurse training programs as well as a number of entry level health program partnerships. Under the Health Initiative, GDI partnered with eight health regions to provide 18 programs. The training falls into two categories: skills training and entry level training. The skills training programs involve accredited programs most often delivered under the DTI-SIAST Federation Agreement. The entry level programs focus on short-term skills for employment. All programs have a connection to an employer and are job-specific.

Many partnerships ensured the project's success including in-kind contributions by Health Regions worth \$380,000 for space, equipment, human resources, orientation, interviewing and selection. The Government of Saskatchewan contributed \$463,000 to the project for income support, and education partners contributed \$1.4 million in complimentary health training programs.

The GDI Health Initiative is the largest ASTSIF-funded project in Canada and it was clear from the presentations at the national conference that GDI's project is strategically structured, comprehensive, and based on sound labour market information.



## Finance & Operations Upgrades Go Smoothly

By Cory McDougal

The department of finance and operations recently completed extensive computer server and accounting software upgrades at the central administrative offices in Saskatoon. The project, coordinated and implemented by Accounting Coordinator Gary Kichula, IT Coordinator Gareth Griffiths, and IT service technician Gordon Holtslander, was planned out months in advance with the assistance of the Institute's suppliers Encore

Business Solutions and Professional Computer Services.

"The process started in September with a training trip to Winnipeg. With careful planning and good support, we were able to make some very extensive changes with minimal disruption to operations. I believe we were even able to complete a cheque run during the week of the upgrade - which was an unexpected bonus. We commend our finance and IT people for a job well

done" said GDI's Executive Director, Geordy McCaffrey.

Training support has been arranged for all GDI staff members who utilize the Great Plains accounting software on a daily basis. It is expected that the upgrades will allow the administrative unit to continue to improve the internal and external reporting functions of GDI as well as save time and money on the Institute's financial audits.



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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 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