



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 Receives Funding for Essential Skills Programming

By Lisa Wilson

Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) has recently come to agreement with Saskatchewan Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI) for funding for two distinct Essential Skills programs. The first program is in the Adult Basic Education category for an Essential Skills for the Workplace program (ABE-ESWP). In 2011-2012, the AEEI Ministry committed funding for programs to help Adult Basic Education learners with low levels of literacy. ABE-ESWP focuses specifically on Literacy Levels One and Two, and will help students gain workplace skills that will allow them to enter the workforce.

Workplace skills include reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others,

computer use, and continuous learning. A primary outcome of the program includes participants' successful transition to employment.

The DTI program will be delivered in Prince Albert. The Prince Albert Learning Disabilities Association is a partner in the project. DTI has received \$100,000 for this project from AEEI.

The second program is under the Workplace Essential Skills Saskatchewan (WESS) program and will allow DTI to deliver a Construction Worker Prep Essential Skills program in Pinehouse in partnership with the Village of Pinehouse. The WESS program supports the training of job seekers and existing employees

in the workplace to gain the workplace essential skills needed for long-term employment and/or advancement.

WESS provides funding for the development and delivery of essential skills training that is tailored to a specific workplace. The budget for this program is approximately \$115,000 with an AEEI contribution of approximately \$77,000.

For more information on these projects contact Brett Vandale at 242-6070. 



## Veterans Monument

By Lisa Wilson



On July 23<sup>rd</sup> in Batoche, Veterans Affairs Canada announced \$50,000 funding to the Métis Veterans Monument project. The funding comes from the federal Community War Memorial Program and will be added to the fundraising efforts for the \$300,000 project. GDI has been helping with the fundraising effort by doing such things as writing the proposal that secured the Veterans Affairs funding. The Institute was asked to

be involved because of our ability to offer charitable receipts to those who donate money to the project.

Over the course of the spring, GDI spent time developing fundraising packages for the monument project. Those packages have since gone out to some potential donors. In addition, GDI has worked with MN—S Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lennard Morin, on many details of the project, including a draft

design and project budget. A process will need to be developed for gathering and vetting the approximately 3,600 names of Métis Veterans that will be collected for the project.

The concept drawings for the monument include eight granite stones, set in a circle, with the names of the Métis Veterans etched in the stone.



## GDI Apprenticeship Initiative—Linking Aboriginal Apprentices with Saskatchewan Employers

By Lisa Wilson



The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) has recently announced a multi-million dollar project to improve the participation of Aboriginal people in apprenticeship in Saskatchewan. The new GDI Apprenticeship Initiative will provide funding so that employers can take on Métis and First Nations apprentices. The funding is in the form of wage subsidies that will help offset costs to employers of hiring and training apprentices. The program recognizes the unique training needs of apprentices and therefore, offers wage subsidies for up to 52 weeks, which are also renewable. This helps ensure that Métis and First Nations apprentices and the indenturing employers can receive the support they need for the apprenticeship

period. At the end of the apprenticeship period employers are encouraged to hire the Métis apprentices.

"Reports indicate the trades sector is facing moderate to severe labour supply shortages," said GDI's Vice Chair Glenn Lafleur. "The GDI Apprenticeship Initiative will help employers train Aboriginal apprentices and at the same time help Aboriginal people to access good jobs in the trades. It's a win-win situation."

The new GDI Apprenticeship Initiative is funded by the Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF), an initiative of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada,

along with key partners such as the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship Trade Certification Commission, and private sector apprenticeship employers throughout the province, who together will contribute approximately \$8 million to the project over three years. The initiative also builds capacity within GDI by training educational counsellors who will coordinate and manage apprenticeships between Aboriginal workers and employers, as well as developing a long-term strategy for apprenticeship programming at GDIT&E. For more information contact Jason DeBack at 657-2256.



## Continuing Care Aid Buffalo Narrows

By Lisa Wilson

GDIT&E has partnered with Northlands College to offer a Continuing Care Aid program in Buffalo Narrows at the Northlands campus. The program will run between September 2011 and June 2012 and will train 12 Métis Continuing Care Aids for employment in the Keewatin Yathe Health Region.

Costs for the program are being shared between GDIT&E and Northlands College, with GDIT&E contributing tuition and income support for the students while Northlands contributes instructor and other training costs.

The one-year certificate program combines hands on classroom learning with practical clinical

experience. CCAs are employed in long-term care, home care, and acute care settings.

The demand for assisting occupations in health care is expected to continue to grow as the senior population increases. For more information contact Sheena Daigneault at 833-2761.



## GDI Books Launched at B2B

By Lisa Wilson

On Friday July 22<sup>nd</sup> GDI launched two of its latest books at the *Back to Batoche* celebrations. Darren Préfontaine's new book, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words*, was launched at the event, along with Lawrence Barkwell's *Veterans and Families of the 1885 Northwest Resistance*. Both books are amazing additions to the resources that GDI Publishing has produced.

Darren's book, which focuses on images of Gabriel Dumont, is not only a visually stunning piece, but contains an analysis of Gabriel Dumont upon the collective psyche of the Métis people. The book also includes a thorough listing of journalistic and first-hand accounts about Gabriel Dumont from the 1860s to the present. As the media release for this book notes, "Gabriel Dumont has always been

a hero to the Métis, and he is now a Pan-Canadian hero: institutions, streets, and buildings bear his name from British Columbia to Québec. He is also an inspiration for artists throughout North America. This is ironic since Dumont led Métis forces during the 1885 Resistance and wreaked great havoc on the fledgling North-West Field Force. How this one-time "rebel" became so universally admired is the story of this timely book."

Lawrence Barkwell's book, *Veterans and Families of the 1885 Northwest Resistance*, also promises to be an intriguing resource. It lists all the Métis participants in the 1885 Resistance, of which 250 Métis men participated by taking up arms to fight for Métis rights against an oppressive political regime. In this monograph, Barkwell not only documents the

resistance, but also provides a useful genealogical resource. He documents the heroines of Batoche as well as the First Nations and European Canadians who rallied to the Métis cause. "Perhaps most importantly, this monograph provides a tangible link between contemporary Métis community people and their ancestors who desperately fought to preserve their way of life so long ago."

The book launch was held in the Elder's Lodge on the Batoche grounds where the authors were in attendance to read excerpts and sign books for interested individuals. The event was well attended by many. Congratulations to both authors on the successful launch! Copies of these two new books can be obtained from GDI Publishing.



Darren Préfontaine and Lawrence Barkwell at the GDI book launch



## LPN Student Success

By Teresa Simmonds



Licensed Practical Nurse,  
Robyn Keays

Robyn Keays is a Métis woman living in Prince Albert. Four years ago her father received a heart and double lung transplant. Seeing the care he received from his nurses inspired Robyn to apply to the Practical Nursing Program at Dumont Technical Institute. Robyn was accepted in 2009 and with funding supplied through Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment she began her journey into Nursing.

It was long, hard road going to school full time as well as being a mother to three children but with a good support system, a lot of determination and hard work, and a lot of coffee Robyn was successful.

Some of the things Robyn learned in school were how to administer medication, start IV's, change dressings, patient care plans, patient education, how to assist in ensuring the daily well being of patients, the theory behind nursing and the ability to prioritize your time.

One of the things Robyn enjoys most about working in the Nursing field is the smiles she sees on the faces of her patients and their families after having taken care of their loved one. Robyn graduated from the Practical Nursing Program in 2011 and was the recipient of The Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nursing Award. The Prince

Albert Parkland Health Region at Victoria Hospital currently employs her.

The 2009-2011 Practical Nursing Program at Dumont Technical Institute in Prince Albert has been very successful. Eight out of the ten graduates have successfully received employment with the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region. Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment provided substantial funding for these ten students, a key partner in allowing the students to realize their dreams of become Licensed Practical Nurses.



## GDI Director Delivers Publication at Aboriginal Trustees Gathering

By Lisa Wilson

On June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, GDI Publishing Director Karon Shmon, along with former GDI Board member Sheila Pocha, presented an overview of their guidebook called Strengthening Our Voice: A Guide for Engaging First Nations and Métis Peoples in Public Schools. The book was commissioned by the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) to support their goals of improving Aboriginal student achievement and increasing public engagement among

Aboriginal people. The book focuses on promising practices for improving the connections between First Nations and Métis families in the school system.

The presentation provided attendees with insights about the history and barriers Aboriginal people have faced within the school system and focused on relationship building as means to improve Aboriginal engagement in schools. They stressed that the intergenerational impacts

of residential schools, racism, absence of role models, and lack of cultural appreciation are long-ingrained issues that have made Aboriginal parents cautious. These issues and their effects won't go away over night. Schools must work toward creating welcoming environments and to do this, there is no one size fits all approach—every school is going to be different in its approach.

The book is available on line at [www.saskschoolboards.ca](http://www.saskschoolboards.ca)



Photo: SSBA



## DTI Celebrates First MLA Graduation

By Jennifer Waldner

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011, seven students, six of which were Métis, graduated from the Medical Lab Assistant (MLA) program in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The students, instructor, and DTI staff met at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Grill on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in Saskatoon to commemorate the student's success in a small, intimate graduation celebration.

The graduates and DTI are pleased to celebrate the program's completion—this is the first time DTI has brokered the program from SIAST. The MLA program took place at E.D. Feehan High School beginning December 15, 2010 and ran for twenty-three weeks, ending on June 15, 2011. The program

included training courses in First Aid, CPR, Immunizations, Fit Testing, intensive classroom work as well as a nine-week practicum. The student's practicum placements were well received as they went to various communities in Saskatchewan to complete them including, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Melfort, and Swift Current. One student expressed her appreciation of the practicum saying, "My favourite part was going to Cypress Regional for my practicum. I learned so much and was filled with pride to be a paraprofessional student in a very nice hospital."

Program Coordinator, Chantelle Gagnon proudly notes that the difficult program had an excellent

success rate, with all seven students that began the program, completing it, six of which have secured employment in the Medical Lab Assistant field. Graduates felt a sense of pride and success regarding the program, stating that, "DTI was a huge support during my program and a huge part of my success in the program." and "DTI did an amazing job meeting everyone's needs."

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the students completed the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) Medical Laboratory Assistant National Certification Examination, which they are anticipating the results from in August 2011. Thank you to all the individuals that had a hand in making the Medical Lab Assistant Program a huge success!



## GDI Contributes to B2B 2011

By Lisa Wilson

Back to Batoche, which took place July 21-24, 2011, was a terrific success with several days of activities and events. In addition to a financial contribution to the celebration, GDI once again contributed to the successful celebration in numerous ways. GDI recruited and transported volunteers from our staff to work in the food booth at the event. The Publishing department coordinated a Veterans Monument display, which was set up in the Elders Lodge and manned by Métis Veteran

Ed St. Pierre. The Institute issued receipts for donations to the monument and supported the involvement of Lennard Morin, the MNS Minister of Veterans Affairs.

In addition, GDI occupied a large display in the trade booth tent, with GDIT&E, DTI, Publishing, and SUNTEP all side-by-side in the centre of the tent. GDI Publishing hosted a book launch event in the Elders Lodge, and supported a number of Elders to attend the various events. GDI

sponsored the wagon rides between the Batoche Festival grounds and the Batoche National Historic Site (BNHS). Beadwork workshops were held at the BNHS with artists that GDI brought in for the event. GDI promoted Michif by having Norman Fleury and Harriet Oaks available to speak Michif for a few hours each day. GDI also helped decorate the MNS pavilion and provided sashes and flags for a number of events.

GDI is proud to support the Back to Batoche celebrations.



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Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
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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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