



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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## Employers Give GDI Apprentices High Marks

By James Oloo

In March 2012, GDIT&E prepared the *GDI Apprenticeship Initiative Employer Partner Partnership Value Report*, whose aim was to explore how satisfied our employer partners are with the GDI Apprenticeship Initiative. Ultimately, the goal is to improve employer and client experience and to enhance the success of the program. The report is based on monthly employer surveys and is prepared in accord with GDIT&E responsibility to prepare such a report and share it with our employer partners and to submit it to Service Canada.

Employers are a key partner in the GDI Apprenticeship Initiative. They provide on-the-job training to the apprentices, pay their wages, as well as supervise, mentor, and indenture apprentices. At the end of February 2012, there were 39 apprentices working, or 33% of the Initiative's goal of 120 apprentices by end of 2013.

The employer survey had eight questions and an invitation for further comments. For seven questions, respondents were asked to check one of the following responses: 1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4)

Agree 5) Strongly Agree. 17 employers completed are returned 30 surveys. These are summarized below.

85% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the apprentice's work ethic and attitude. 66% of employers agreed or strongly agreed that the apprentice was punctual for work.

82% of employers agreed or strongly agreed that 'The apprentice is meeting expectations and requirements of the job.'

A broad range of tasks and experiences in a trade could increase the depth and breadth of knowledge, competence, and expertise when the client gets his/her journeyman certification and joins the labour market. 90% of employers agreed or strongly agreed that they do offer a broad range of tasks to the apprentices.

GDI Apprenticeship is a partnership involving apprentices, employers, and project partners, each with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. 89% of employers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'We are familiar with the *Saskatchewan Apprenticeship Program: A Guide for Employers*.

Employers have expectations with respect to productivity, performance, and punctuality, that they would like their employees, including apprentices, to meet. 90% of the employers agreed or strongly agreed that overall, they are satisfied with the quality of the apprentices' work ability.

Employers' satisfaction with the partnership is important because it may impact the partnership and their likelihood of recommending the program to other employers who are currently not partnering with GDI in the Apprenticeship Initiative. 88% of employers agreed or strongly agreed that overall, they are satisfied with the support they are receiving in the partnership with GDI.

Employers were invited to provide further comments. 54% of the comments were very positive. These included, 'I'm satisfied with his work,' 'He is very competent and efficient,' and 'Apprentice exceeds expectation.'

50% of the positive feedback noted that the apprentice had "potential" or "promise" to succeed. Other words used by employers to describe the apprentices were "quick learner" and "very competent." Employers also commented on the Apprenticeship Initiative. 92% of the comments were positive and included, "(It is an) excellent program." 



## Do You 'Like' GDI?

By Michelle Suteau

GDI has a Facebook account. It is moderated by David Morin, a SUNTEP graduate and curriculum developer at the GDI Publishing Department. I recently had the pleasure of interviewing David to discover the history behind the Institute's decision to use social media as a marketing and communication tool.

As a curriculum developer, David develops resources that "fill in gaps of what's out there", meaning he helps develop resources that fill the deficits in the accurate representation of Métis people, history and culture in the education system. So how did he get involved in creating a Facebook page for GDI?

In the fall of 2011, Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director of GDI, asked David to head the social media committee. After attending a conference put on by Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers, Tim Metz, a Program Coordinator (PC) with T&E in Meadow Lake had developed

a proposal highlighting the benefits of social media in marketing and brand awareness which got the ball rolling. In reference to communication strategies adopted by many companies in the recent past, Tim states, "How, then, is our organization fitting in to the trend of Western, no, worldwide communication shift? Are we providing the public with every opportunity to develop an understanding of who we are? Are we presenting every opportunity for our clients' success in this ever-changing landscape? I believe the answer to all of these questions is: we are not."

David, Tim and Chantelle Gagnon, a PC at DTI, attended a social media conference delivered by Skill Path. They debriefed after the conference and, with Delaney Tait, a Career Counselor at DTI, established a social media committee. It was recognized that GDI was

not effectively reaching the demographic it was targeting with the current use of advertising media.

Newspaper, radio and poster ads may be reaching the parents and grandparents of our desired clientele but for the most part it was not reaching the actual clientele. The committee concluded that Facebook would be a better tool to use.

After their decision to tackle Facebook, the social media committee presented their plan to Geordy who discussed the proposal with the directors. A concern that was raised was how to handle negative comments that are malicious or abusive. David responded by adapting a comment assessment flow chart created by the US Air Force to fit GDI's needs, and used the U of S Facebook page as a model to create a statement that explained how the page would be moderated, which basically stated all negative comments would be deleted and all misinformation would be clarified. *Continues on page 3.*

## Travel Rate Changes

By Lisa Wilson

On April 20, 2012 the GDI Board of Governors passed a motion making changes to the travel rates for the Institute. Comparison rates from a number of other organizations were studied in order to determine the best approach for GDI.

The main changes include increases to the meal and private accommodation rates, and the implementation of a new 'incidental' expense rate. The per kilometer travel rates

were not changed because as a federal contract holder, GDIT&E is not permitted to exceed the federal per kilometer travel rates.

The meal expense rate changes are as follows: Breakfast increased from \$8 to \$12, and supper from \$17 to \$22. Dinner remains at \$13. There will no longer be separate rates for out-of-province or out-of-country travel; while employees who opt for private accommodation instead of

booking a hotel will be able to claim \$50, up from \$25. A new incidental rate has been instituted. Employees are now eligible to claim \$15/day for the incidental rate. This allowance is to pay for gratuities, parking, and other costs associated with travel. Gratuities will now be included in the incidental rate. Receipts will not be required for expenses associated with the incidental flat rate. All new rates are in effect as of April 20, 2012. 🌐



John Klyne (l), Employment Counsellor, Nipawin, and Geordy McCaffrey (r)  
Photo by Angie Yew



## Community Profile: Western Region I

By James Oloo

This month we feature Western Region I in our monthly series of socioeconomic and demographic profiles for each of the 12 Métis Regions in Saskatchewan. The goal is to highlight the performance of the Métis population against such indicators. The article uses 2006 Canada Census data.

Each Region has an elected Regional Director who is also a member of the MN-S Provincial Métis Council. The Regional Director for Western Region I (WRI) is Mavis Taylor. Region office is in Meadow Lake with local offices at Chitek Lake, Cochin, Glaslyn, Leoville, Livelong, Paradise Hill, Pierceland, and Spiritwood. Michael Bell represents the Region at the GDI Board of Governors.

WRI has a Métis population of 2,425, about half (46%) of whom are below age 25. 61% of the WRI Métis aged between 15-24 years did not have high school diploma, while 39% had completed Grade 12 or equivalent. Of those with high school diploma, 40% had completed postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree. Among the general population of Saskatchewan in the same age group, 48% had not

completed high school while 52% had high school diploma. Of those with high school diploma, 32% had completed postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

1,140 WRI Métis were in the 25-64 years age group. Of these, 38% had no high school diploma (compared to 19% of the general population in the same age group). Of those with high school diploma, 37% had Grade 12 as their highest level of education (compared to 26% for Saskatchewan); 29% had a postsecondary diploma or certificate in apprenticeship or trade (versus 14% for Saskatchewan); 20% had a non-university certificate or diploma from a college (versus 18% for Saskatchewan); and 13% had a university certificate, diploma or degree compared to 22% for Saskatchewan.

Thus, among those in the 25-64 years age group, proportionately more WRI Métis had postsecondary diploma or certificate in apprenticeship or trades and in non-university postsecondary training than did the general population in Saskatchewan (29% versus 14%). Similarly, proportionately more WRI Métis had non-university

postsecondary training than the general population in the same age group (20% versus 18%). This is a strength, perhaps due to the work of Aboriginal focused institutions such as GDIT&E and DTI, that should be enhanced even as we strive for improved performance in other areas.

Among the WRI Métis population aged 15-24 years, 54% were in the labour force and 46% were not. Of those in the labour force, 78% were employed while 22% were unemployed. For the general population in the same age group, 66% were in the labour force while 34% were not. Of those in the labour force, 88% were employed while 12% were not.

For the WRI Métis population aged 25 years and over, labour force activity was as follows: 72% were in the labour force while 28% were not. Among those in the labour force, 88% were employed while 12% were not employed but looking for a job. Within the general population in the same age cohort, 69% were in the labour force and 31% were not. Of those in the labour force, 95% were employed. 🌐



Scotti Burgess, Program Coordinator, and Sherry McLennan, Employment Counsellor, Prince Albert  
Photo by Angie Yew



Dorothy Aubichon and Glenn Lafleur, the GDI Board vice chair  
Photo by P. Beszterda

## GDI on Facebook... continued From Page 2

They were given approval to go ahead and the Facebook page was created. Recently, Gordon Holtslander, DTI IT joined the committee and has created a link from the GDI web page to the Facebook Page. To upload

a photo or documents on the GDI Facebook page, check with your director first, then forward the information to David and he will post it for you. Right now the page has information regarding a GDI

book launch at the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina on April 27, 2012, as well as new books and resources from the Publishing Department, job postings and deadlines for scholarship applications. 🌐



## New Violence Prevention Policy

By Lisa Wilson



Tim Metz, Program Coordinator,  
North Battleford  
Photo by Angie Yew

At the April 20, 2012 GDI Board of Governors meeting, a new policy for dealing with violence in the workplace was passed. The new policy indicates that GDI maintains a zero tolerance policy towards violence in the workplace/place of study. GDI is committed to providing a safe and healthy work and educational environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and disruptive behavior for all our employees, students, and clients. GDI has adopted this policy to prohibit violence and threats of violence, and encourages employees, students, and clients to take affirmative steps to identify and address potentially violent situations.

Violence is defined by Occupational Health & Safety Regulations as "the attempted, threatened, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely

to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that the employee is at risk of injury."

Violence includes, but is not limited to: causing physical harm to another person; threats of any nature, including verbal or electronic; aggressive behavior that constitutes a reasonable fear of bodily harm to another person; verbal assault, causing emotional duress; intentional damage or destruction of property belonging to GDI, its clients, employees, or students; and possession of a weapon while on GDI premises or while conducting GDI business.

GDI has instituted security measures to minimize the risk of violence to its employees and clients on our premises. Such measures include the following:

- Only employees, clients, students, and visitors conducting legitimate business with GDI shall access Institute property.
- Human Resources conducts background checks on candidates in order to limit the risk of selecting individuals with a known history of violent behavior.
- GDI shall be allowed to conduct searches and inspections of any company property without prior notice given.
- Surveillance of GDI property entrances, where appropriate.

The full policy outlines guidelines for staff and students in the event that violence occurs. A copy of the new violence prevention policy can be obtained by contacting Jim Edmondson, GDI HR Director, at 306-657-2272. 🌐

## IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

### Website

In March 2012, the website had over 122,000 page hits. Excluding the RSS news feeds, the highest activity was on the DTI Programs, DTI Application Form, Contact Us, and SUNTEP Pages. The most recent addition to the site is an integration to Facebook, allowing users to "Like us" directly from the home page.

### Intranet

The Intranet site is now live. Forms, covering such areas as Benefits, Pay administration and General HR, are available for download by staff. Also posted are the current Asset Disposal listings, and Internal Vacancies. The asset disposals will be

enhanced to allow bidding on the items through the site. If you don't have access to this site, please email [support@gdins.org](mailto:support@gdins.org)

### Travel Claim Form

Following on from the board motion regarding travel rate changes, the Excel Travel Claim Report form on the Intranet has been amended to reflect the changes. Please visit the intranet, download this revised version and use it for all travel claims after April 20<sup>th</sup> 2012.

### IT Support System

In March we received 48 new requests to the support system, of which 37 are

already completed and closed (77% closure rate). Overall, we closed 53 calls in this period. There are currently 30 open Work Orders. We are also working to adapt Track-IT to work as a Custodian Work Order system.

### Management Reporter

We are implementing a new Management Reporting system using a new package called Management Reporter. This is a replacement for FRx, and offers additional functionality and stability over FRx. This will form the cornerstone of a new method of producing and distributing Management Reports by staff. 🌐



Jim Edmondson (l), HR Director,  
Shanna Morrison, Employment  
Counsellor, Regina, and Geordy  
McCaffrey (r).  
Photo by Angie Yew



## On The Bench With a GDI Apprentice

By Dwayne Docken and James Oloo

Donavon Delorme is a first year carpentry apprentice in the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative. He works with JABA Construction in Saskatoon.

A member of the Cowessess First Nations, Delorme left a well-paying job in Edmonton and moved back to Saskatoon to be closer to his elderly parents. Delorme has always enjoyed building houses since his older brother developed an interest in building and mentored him along. The interest, focus, and experience came in handy when JABA Construction was looking for an apprentice carpenter.

What Delorme likes the most about being a carpenter at JABA is that there is a good team spirit,

there are always opportunities to learn new skills, and because JABA Construction provides a challenging yet comfortable working environment. "The staff is great to work with and I'm always learning," says Delorme.

Delorme shares his secret for success: good work ethic, being willing and ready to learn, having a good personality, and buying the occasional cup of coffee for colleagues. He adds that an effective worker should be able to go out of his/her way to serve a client because client evaluation can be very weighty.

Delorme's long term goal is to work for himself. What better place to learn the craft of carpentry as well as

the business skills than from his manager, Dave Anderchek, who not only has over three decades of experience as a journeyman carpenter, but is also the President and owner of the very successful, award-winning company, JABA Construction!

Anderchek and Lindsay Fuchs, JABA's Corporate Operations Manager, had nothing but praise for Delorme's performance. Anderchek stated that "Donavon has the drive, quality, and capacity to succeed in his chosen field ... he has a great future in this business." And Delorme is grateful for the opportunity to pursue his career.

For information about GDI Apprenticeship please call Toll free 1-877-488-6888. 



Donavon Delorme (L) with Lindsay Fuchs, Corporate Operations Manager (C) and Dave Anderchek, President (R), JABA Construction.  
Photo by Dwayne Docken.

## Guidelines for GDI During MN-S Election

The Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) is in the process of setting an election date for 2012. Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) is an affiliate of, and owned, by the MN-S. The elected officials of the MN-S and its Provincial Métis Council appoint our Governance structure, in part.

To effectively serve the Métis population, GDI must act, and be perceived to act, in a politically neutral manner. If GDI were thought to be partisan in the MN-S political process, conflicts and accusations of favouritism could arise. Moreover, our students and clients attend GDI for

specific educational, cultural, and human resource programs and services. They do not come to participate in politics. By remaining non-partisan we maintain our ability to work with any candidates successfully elected in the MN-S election process; avoid any conflict of interest, real or perceived; and effectively maintain our high quality and level of services to the Métis population.

To maintain political neutrality and protect the rights of our students and clients, please be advised that once the Chief Electoral Officer issues the *Declaration of Election*, the following rules apply during the MN-S election period:

- No election posters or materials will be allowed to be displayed on or in any GDI facility;
- No GDI property, including copiers, telephone, or other resource will be made available to candidates seeking election;
- No political campaigns will be allowed in GDI facilities during the election period; and
- Candidates for election will not be allowed to address or engage with students, staff, clients, or the general public at any GDI facility or event during the declaration of election period. This includes speaking roles, graduations, or any other presentation role at Institute functions.

Staff, students, and clients are encouraged to take part in the MN-S democratic process. This must be done on the individual's own time, off Institute premises. 



Photo credited to [www.mn-s.ca](http://www.mn-s.ca)



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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