



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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## Expectations vs Perception: A Conundrum

By Jim Edmondson

In a work environment, just like in life, sometimes the line between our expectations and our perceptions is blurred. This can result in misunderstanding, miscommunication, and disputes between employees. You have expectations regarding your life, your job and how things will turn out; your job has expectations of what you will provide as well. Expectations are defined as a belief that someone or something will or should achieve or result in a certain thing. The issue with expectations in most situations, especially in work places, is that unless expectations are clearly and concisely communicated, it's very difficult to hold someone accountable. Without some detail regarding what is expected, it's very hard to produce a result.

The conundrum occurs when our understanding of our relationship, role, or how an instruction was delivered by our superior is clouded by our perception. Perception, in this case, is defined as the way we have of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something. Perception is also often referred to as an impression, notion, belief, estimation, or judgement.

Perceptions vary from person to person. Different people perceive different things

about the same situation and often we assign different meanings to what we perceive. This can be problematic because, the meanings of things and situations can be distorted and cause or inflame issues.

In the workplace, generally, conflict and dispute do not exist without some pre-existing perception problem. When such a problem exists between two people, each perceives or believes that they have incompatible interests and that the other person is opposed to or does not understand their position. Identifying the source of misperceptions or conflicts before it turns into a dispute is essential to maintaining a good and productive work environment.

A huge perception and conflict issue exists when colleagues have differing ideas about their respective professional futures. This is the "just a job" versus career aspirations scenario. Take two employees, Jane and Bob. Bob is anxious to get ahead and frequently spends extra hours in the office, takes on additional assignments and is viewed by Jane as "kissing up." Jane views these actions - and Bob - with disdain, and possibly anger. While Jane's perception - and fear - is

that Bob is making her work look bad, Bob may be fulfilling a lifelong dream, does not have the family responsibilities that Jane does, or perhaps is just passionate about the job he does. Until the perception is dealt with there will continue to be conflict between the two employees which will eventually impact their effectiveness.

When determining how co-workers, supervisors or subordinates do their jobs, which regrettably we all do in a work environment, it is critical to understand that every person works differently, at a different pace and has their own way of achieving the end result. Just because the person doesn't work like you or do the exact same process we often perceive them as lesser but that is dangerous and leads to conflict. As best we can, it is always advisable to look at the situation from all angles before forming a perception. Being aware of the pitfalls of our perceptions can alleviate some of the issues.

Our perceptions in the workplace are often affected by the management style employed by our manager and can impact the manager-subordinate relationship. If a manager is hands-off, they may be perceived as not caring enough about the work the staff does.

Continued on Page 4.



**BRIEL DUMONT**  
ative Studies and App



Chris Merasty with his spouse Agnes and daughter Nitanis

SUNTEP graduates have gained excellent reputations as teachers and role models in schools across Canada. Their training combines a sound academic education with extensive classroom experience and a thorough knowledge of educational issues.

**PROGRAM FEATURES**

- a four-year, fully accredited Bachelor of Education program, offered by the Gabriel Dumont Institute in cooperation with Saskatchewan Learning, the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan
- the program is offered in three urban centres – Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina
- focus on Native Studies and cross-cultural education with an emphasis on Métis and First Nations history and culture
- a solid foundation in the theories and skills of teaching enhanced each year with classroom experience

Photos by James Oloo

## Chris Merasty's Inspiring Journey Through GDI

By James Oloo

Hollywood actor Kevin Conroy once said that “Everyone is handed adversity in life. No one's journey is easy. It is how they handle it that makes people unique.” Indeed, how people walk their journey in life is what makes some experiences quite inspiring.

While struggling to make ends meet, Christopher Merasty, then a single father of one young girl looked at his daughter and made the decision that he had to change the direction of his life with hopes of reaching a better destination. His first stop was GDI. He says, “As I walked through the doors at GDI, I had no idea on what I was doing there or where to go, when Dwayne (Docken) took me in, guided me and gave me a chance to enroll in an apprenticeship program.” Chris remembers how, “As I met with Dwayne a few more times, I could imagine myself working in the trades and owning up to the goals I had for myself and my daughter.”

After running all over Saskatoon handing out resume after resume, Chris soon got a job placement with Loraas Disposal under the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative. The three-year federal Skills and Partnership Fund's GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative created jobs for over 220 Aboriginal clients including 157 who were

indentured with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Commission (SATCC). Chris was indentured with the SATCC as a Year I Heavy Duty Mechanic. That was in 2012.

This month, Chris, brought his daughter Nitanis and spouse Agnes to GDI to discuss his experience with us and to let the “two ladies” know how a previous visit to GDI was a turning point in his life. Chris is now a Jet Bore System operator with Cameco Corporation. His family continues to motivate him to be the best person he can ever be. Chris also gives back to the society by volunteering with Aboriginal organizations. He says, “Back then, I could have never imagined being in a position that I am in today, owning my own house and a vehicle, thanks to GDI.”

Chris' journey was, however, not always easy. Before he could be indentured as an apprentice, Chris had to take Accuplacer examination, an experience that he describes as being “challenging.” Accuplacer, is a computer-based skill assessment and online learning tool, which helps individuals to improve their literacy and math skills. According to the Saskatchewan Ministry of the Economy, Accuplacer is offered at no cost for SATCC

apprentice applicants to ensure their preparedness for technical level training (for more about Accuplacer, please click [SATCC-Accuplacer](http://SATCC-Accuplacer) or [www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4Q6\\_tMTkbb&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4Q6_tMTkbb&feature=youtu.be)).

Further, Chris asserted that “Many times, I felt like quitting. It seemed easier to give up.” However, he says that he got the strength and courage to stay on “Thanks to support from GDI, especially Dwayne, working with my Elders and helping out with the Sweat Lodge, as well as my daughter.” His daughter gave him “the urge to keep going so that I could give her a better life than what I had growing up. Plus, I wanted to show her that through struggle and hard work, it is possible to succeed. My daughter still inspires me today, and here she is now listening to this conversation.”

Chris' says that, “We all face challenges and struggles in life, but with the guidance and support from organizations, such as GDI, one can overcome these if he (or she) does their best and remains positive and focused on their goals. Positive life changing opportunities come once in a life time, and it is good if that individual is ready to take that opportunity at that time.” He concludes, “I'm happy with my life right now, and I am grateful for my family and everyone who has helped me, like Dwayne, GDI, my elders and the ones who have been there for me along the way.”

## GDC Launches a New Certificate Program

By James Oloo

In 2014, the University of Saskatchewan contacted Gabriel Dumont Institute about delivering a Certificate

Program in Education: Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) program. On September 26, 2015, Gabriel

Dumont College held its first class of the PAA in Prince Albert with a cohort of 28 students. *Continued on Page 4.*



## IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

### SaskTel Select Wi-Fi

SaskTel Select has been installed in over 800 locations in major urban centres across Saskatchewan. This feature allows SaskTel mobile devices to connect automatically to Wi-Fi, enabling data access without impacting any mobile data plans. More information can be found here:

<http://www.sasktel.com/wps/wcm/connect/content/home/wireless/wi-fi/>

### Safety Videos

The Institute has access to a whole range of safety videos through safetyhub.com. These videos cover such topics as safety basics, manual handling, office safety, hazardous substances and forklifts. These would be a great resource for OHS committees, for instructors to use in class and any other Institute function. To access these, there is a safety videos, please contact IT at support@gdins.org.

### IT Support System

The upgrade to Track-IT 11.4 is now complete. There are some changes that really enhance the experience. For example, if you created the Work Order, now you are able to reply to an email received from the "GDI

Support Team" and the email details will be added to the Work Order automatically.

In August, 41 new Work Orders were received into Track-IT. Of these, 36 are now closed (87% completion rate). Overall we closed 22 Work Orders in the month. There are currently 47 open Work Orders. Contact IT if you have any question.

### Website

The website ([www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)) had 3,412 pageviews (including 2,893 unique pageviews) in August. About 29% of visitors to the home page clicked on What We Offer, 19% used the search function, 18% each scrolled through the News and Events items, and 9.4% went to the Contact Us page.

### Social Media Summary

Analytics for our Social Media channels for August were as follows. Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/gabriel.dumontinstitute>): Total number of people liking the page grew by 36 to 959. Total Engagements (number of links clicked, likes or comments) was 766. Total reach of posts (number of people that saw a post in their feed) was 12,042 with 24,253 impressions (number of times a GDI page appeared in others news feeds). The most popular post was the DTI GED /Apprenticeship program ad,

reaching 2,612 people and 84 Likes, comments and shares. This was closely followed by the Funding Renewal post, with 2,099 people reached and 81 likes, comments and shares.

### Twitter

([https://twitter.com/gdins\\_org](https://twitter.com/gdins_org)): 29 tweets earned 12,800 impressions. There were 30 new followers in the month, 42 mentions and 1,260 profile visits. The top tweet was Michael Relland at the inaugural GDI-University of Regina Master of Education graduation, earning 677 impressions. Top mention was Cory MacDougall and James Oloo at the same grad ceremony with 33 engagements. Top media tweet was Joselyn Britton, Red Seal Sous Chef then and now with 638 impressions. We currently have 459 followers.

### Windows 10

The work on evaluating Windows 10 has begun, so far so good. If you notice a popup on your computer about upgrading to Windows 10, remember that the link is valid, and not spam. However, as an organization we are not ready for Windows 10, so do not install the upgrade at this point.

### Closing Thought

My reality check bounced! 🌐

### Aboriginal Mentorship Program



Thomas Lavergne, an engineering student at the University of Saskatchewan is funded by GDI

GDI has partnered with the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) in the Aboriginal Mentorship Program to connect Aboriginal students in science and engineering with mentors. The students gain experience through summer jobs, and one to one mentorship. Thomas is the first U of S student in the mentorship program. He is funded by GDI and works closely with GDI Training & Employment Counsellor Audrey Arcand. Thomas has expressed his "Heartfelt appreciation to GDI and Audrey for the opportunity."



Photos by James Oloo

## GDC's New Certificate Program ... *continued from Page 2*

The Certificate Program in Education: Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) is comprised of about 30 credit units of PAA classes, completion of which along with a Bachelor of Education degree prepares candidates to teach PAA in

Saskatchewan schools. The program has been approved by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education as an Additional Qualification Certificate with specialization in Industrial Arts and Home Economics. Admission to the program is open to current Bachelor of

Education students and those with a Bachelor of Education Degree and valid Professional 'A' Teaching Certificate. For more information, please contact Michael Relland at [michael.relland@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:michael.relland@gdi.gdins.org) or call (306) 764-1797. 🌐



## GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project Update

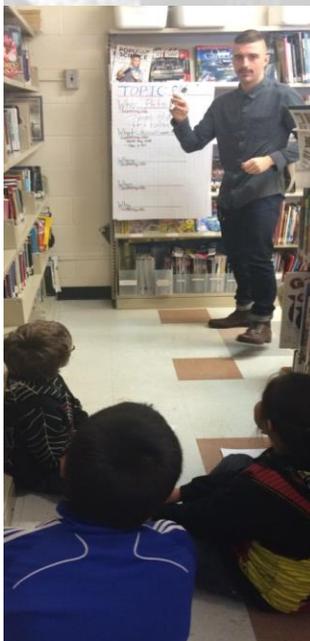
By Chelsie Scragg, James Oloo, and Shawn Mahar



Dr. Laurier Schramm,  
President and CEO of  
Saskatchewan Research  
Council  
Photo by James Oloo

*"We received funding from Gabriel Dumont Institute that will enable us to take in more Aboriginal students into the Aboriginal Mentorship Program."*

- Dr. Schramm  
September 25, 2015



Tyler Frei, a SUNTEP Regina student, conducting a class at Regina Public Library  
Photo courtesy of Janice R. Thompson

Following the successful completion of the three-year GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative in April 2014, in which 223 Aboriginal clients got jobs and 157 were indentured as apprentices to the provincial labour force, GDI Training and Employment submitted a funding proposal to Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) to enhance its apprenticeship programming. In February 2015, the WD announced a \$3.1 million funding agreement for the new GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project to create 150 new jobs in Saskatchewan, indenture 100 new apprentices in severe shortage trades, and send 50 apprentices to technical training.

At the end of September, GDI Training and Employment has signed employer contracts to create 186 apprenticeship jobs – 118 of which have been filled by our Aboriginal clients. The 118 employment positions

### Expectations vs Perception ... *continued from Page 1*

Alternatively, a manager may be so detail-oriented and anxious that they are perceived as not trusting the employees to do their jobs. The former may lead to apathy on the part of individuals who aren't self-motivated; the latter may lead to resentment among those who are.

Expectations are important in all relationships; and if not well communicated, they may result in conflict and dysfunction within relationships. A good manager will let staff know what is expected of them, how their performance will be measured and what 'success' looks like. This is described clearly up front through training and continuous feedback about

represent 78 percent of the goal of 150 new jobs.

A [report](#) by the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Commission (SATCC) and Ministry of the Economy describe severe shortage trades as a situation where skilled workers needed by employers "are not available in local and adjacent markets so that projects or production may be delayed."

The SATCC identifies 23 designated trades in the province that experience severe shortage. These are Agricultural Equipment Technician, Automotive Service Technician, Boilermaker, Bricklayer, Carpenter, Construction Craft Labourer, Electrician, Hairstylist (in the Estevan/Weyburn and La Ronge-North areas), Heavy Duty Equipment Technician, Industrial Instrument Technician, Ironworker (Reinforcing), and Ironworker

(Structural /Ornamental). Others are Painter and Decorator, Partsperson, Pipeline Equipment Operator, Plumber, Powerline Technician, Roofer, Sheet Metal Worker, Steamfitter-Pipefitter, Steel Fabricator, and Welder.

Of the 23, GDI Training and Employment, in partnership with employers, has created jobs in 16 severe trades with 118 clients currently working. As well, 54 clients have been (or are in the process of being) indentured with SATCC as apprentices.

More than just numbers, the Project continues GDI's tradition as a beacon of hope and opportunity for many Métis people. The program informs and inspires clients to make the most of their talents and interests, and get knowledge and marketable skills while working under certified journeypersons.

*Continued on Page 5*

whether expectations are being met. If you are not clear on the expectation of a task, then ask. This should be done when the task is given and not when you deliver it and the boss is unhappy with the results. It is always advisable in work situations to be clear regarding what is expected or required. I operate by the old adage that there are no stupid questions. It is prudent to get clarification before proceeding because it can avoid issues at a later point.

A valuable technique to gain clarification on expectations, at work and personal life, is reflection or parroting. When someone tells you what they expect, reflect it back to them in

your own words to ensure that what they said and your interpretation of it are the same. This lessens misunderstanding and potential perception issues. Try to ensure that following any instruction or project; make sure you have some semblance of a specific detailed list of the actual actions you need to take, and then take them.

Next time you are given a directive at work or you are interacting with a co-worker, think about expectations and perception before making a decision, being aware of the pitfalls will always result in less conflict and a more harmonious workplace. 🌐



# GDI Apprenticeship Project Update ... Continued from Page 4

SUNTEP Saskatoon

In general, the clients have pointed out how the program is impacting their lives. Chevy Balzer, a Year I apprentice Automotive Service Technician, said, "Having a counsellor who is always helpful makes me feel that I can do this. It is good to have a Métis organization (like) GDI that is giving me support and encouragement ... Thanks a lot GDI for the opportunity to do what I love, and for having faith in me." Robin Scott McLean, a Year I Apprentice Carpenter who is working at the new Mosaic Stadium in Regina, stated that "GDI gave me (an) opportunity of a lifetime. I am very happy and fortunate to work here on the biggest construction site I have ever seen." Matthew Buffalo, another

Year I Apprentice Carpenter in Regina, said, "Working here has given me a purpose and responsibility that I never had before ... I do not know where I could have been at this time if I did not have this opportunity."

Employer partners have also been making positive comments about their experiences. For example, Wilf Baier, the owner and manager of Bridge City Transmission that employs one of our clients, stated that the partnership is "a win-win situation." He continues, "They (GDI) gives us wage subsidies that enable me to keep Chevy here (and) are always there for Chevy and to answer my questions."

Feedback from both project partners SATCC, the Ministry

of Highways, and Dumont Technical Institute, and employer partners have been very positive. The project partners have all stated that they are confident that the project will meet all its targets. GDI Training and Employment counsellors and program coordinators also gave comments on their experience with the initiative and suggested ways for improvement.

Reporting on the project is on course. To date, we have submitted two reports to the Western Economic Diversification. The project expects to surpass its targets before it starts winding down in 2017. For more information please contact Shawn Mahar, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Toll Free 1-877-488-6888 or [shawn.mahar@gdite.gdins.org](mailto:shawn.mahar@gdite.gdins.org)



SUNTEP Student Zondra Roy  
Photo courtesy of The StarPhoenix  
(Used with permission)

Zondra will receive the 2016 Inspire Métis Youth Award at a ceremony in Vancouver on February 12, 2016. She is a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and a nominee for the 2013 YWCA Women of Distinction Award.  
Congratulations Zoey!

## Payroll Cutoff Calendar, October 2015

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
				Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Student Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Oct 16 Student Payroll			A/P Cheque Run Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for Oct 15 Payday	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	<b>Thanksgiving Day</b> <b>Stat Holiday</b>	Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student Oct 16 Direct Deposits		<b>Staff Payday</b> Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Student Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Oct 30 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for Oct 30 Payday	Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student Oct 30 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Staff Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices <b>Student Payday</b>	

MRTS due by the 15th of every month.  
Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.

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Visit us at  
[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)

Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

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

Follow us on Twitter!  
@gdins\_org



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research

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Saskatoon SK S7M 5W1  
Phone: (306) 934-4941  
Fax: (306) 244-0252

### GDI Finance and Operations

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Toll Free (T&E):  
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Fax: (306) 347-4119

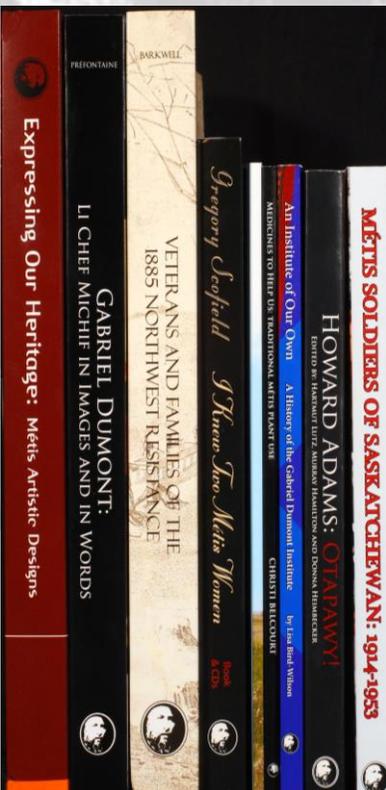
### GDI Library Regina

Room 218 College West  
University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
Regina, S4S 0A2  
Phone: (306) 347-4124  
Fax: (306) 565-0809

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

### GDI Library Prince Albert

48 12th Street East  
Prince Albert, SK  
S6V 1B2  
Phone: (306) 922-6466  
Fax: (306) 763-4834



#### 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