



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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Deana Kempel: Teaching is About Relationships

By James Oloo

We recently caught up with one of our alumni to discuss how her time at Gabriel Dumont Institute has impacted her personal and professional landscapes. Deana Kempel (maiden name Deana Seida) trained as a teacher at the Gabriel Dumont Institute's Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) and graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree in 2008. She is currently a teacher at the Prairie South School Division in Saskatchewan.

Deana traces her Métis roots from her mother Norine Seida's side of the family. "My mother's family name is Chartrand. She has rich Métis roots that originated in the Red River. The Chartrand family migrated to Willow Bunch, Saskatchewan which is where my grandfather John Chartrand the Third was born."

Deana completed a Kinesiology degree at the University of Regina and was working as an Educational Assistant at a school whose principal happened to be a graduate of the Northern Teacher Education Program (an Indigenous teacher education program that is not affiliated with SUNTEP). The principal, who knew that Deana's family was Métis,

suggested she look into the SUNTEP program as a viable pathway to the teaching profession.

"I decided to go to a SUNTEP open house and I made my husband (boyfriend at the time) come with me. We were both blown away by how great the program seemed. I knew right then that SUNTEP was the right program for me and that it would provide me with everything and more that I needed to become a successful teacher," Deana said. She then applied and was accepted to the SUNTEP Regina program.

Deana noted that her impressions of SUNTEP proved to be true. "SUNTEP teaches you about who you are as a person, which is so important to know if you want to be the best educator you can be. SUNTEP has high expectations, because they want to place the best teachers into classrooms for all children, but especially Indigenous children."

She continued, "SUNTEP fostered into me the importance of adding Indigenous content to all areas of the curriculum for all students. It is important that we keep our Indigenous culture alive and that all students learn the rich vibrant culture of our Indigenous peoples. Further, SUNTEP taught me the importance of

community in the classroom, and the school. This is something that I always bring with me. My most vulnerable students, the ones who too often get left behind or pushed aside, are the ones that I work with the most to get to know their families. I try and make them and their families feel comfortable and welcome in the school. SUNTEP always did that for me and I am grateful for this teaching."

Now in her tenth year of teaching, including her early career at the Regina Public Schools, Deana noted that "I have been lucky enough to work with students of different ages including those in grades four, five, and six. I have also worked as an Aboriginal Consultant, and Vice Principal. Currently, I am working as a Student Support Teacher with the middle years in the mornings and with students with behavioural needs in the afternoons."

Deana gets inspiration from her own previous teachers and from her desire to see her students succeed. "I had a lot of great teachers that have impacted my life. I got into teaching to make a difference and to give back what I received, and I see education as an important factor in helping our young people, especially Indigenous youth, to achieve their potential."

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GDI Publishing Department
In the community

On Road to Success with Driver Training Program

By Ashley Goy



Karon Shmon, Director

The Class 5 Driver Training Program in Meadow Lake has ended with an excellent student completion rate. The partnership between Dumont Technical Institute and Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment provided two students the opportunity to achieve their Class 5 Driver's License and six students to achieve their Class 7 Learner's License.

Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI), and needed to be completed in order to qualify for the Class 5 Drivers License Exam after nine months.

Those who already held their Class 7 Learners License were eligible to take their Class 5 Driving Exam once their six hours of driving were completed. We received a great deal of positive feedback from the students in the program, and they were excited to have achieved their licenses.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute Driver Training Program has provided our students with an opportunity to overcome a barrier that can affect their attendance at school. Having a driver's license also makes it easier to fulfil family

commitments, as well as to secure and maintain employment. This barrier can be especially cumbersome for those who live in rural areas and rely on others to transport them to an urban centre to attend training or their job as it may not always be a reliable mode of transportation.

Those who do live in an urban centre may have other options such as public transportation. However, there are many cases where an employer requires staff to hold a Class 5 Driver's License. As the pilot project progresses, we hope that we can empower more students by giving them an opportunity to achieve their Class 7 Learner's License and Class 5 Driver's License. 🌐



David Morin,
Curriculum Developer
Photos by April Sora

Students in the Driver Training Program are required the students to write their Class 5 License Exam (if they did not currently hold a Class 7 License); attend six hours of in-class instruction and six hours of driving practice. These requirements followed the regulation of

Education Makes a Difference ... *Continued from Page 1.*

Deana also discussed her teaching philosophy with us. "Relationships matter. As a teacher, I find it very important to develop and foster positive and respectful relationships with students. I pride myself on getting to know my students. The most important thing we can do with students is build trust. Fostering a relationship is the key to doing this. Everything else, including a sense of belonging, inclusion and active student participation, will fall into place if you take care of relationship first."

have always been good to their families in the past. As we move forward with Reconciliation, and as the proportion of school-aged Indigenous children increases at a faster rate than their non-Indigenous counterparts in Saskatchewan, I think it is important to have as many Indigenous educators working in the school systems as possible. These educators can be leaders in providing culturally relevant pedagogies to students and schools."

Looking back to the day she attended the SUNTEP open house, Deana stated that "It is more important than ever that I was trained through SUNTEP. I am currently the only one from my clan that has been through SUNTEP. A number of my cousins are just now at the age where they are in high school and I am always boasting about the program to them. I know that

SUNTEP is an important career pathway that my family and students should consider."

Deana concluded that "We will be the teachers that help us to break through the seven generations of trauma caused by Residential Schools. It saddens me when I hear educators that still don't understand the importance of teaching Indigenous content." She noted that, "Sometimes I feel like a lone wolf fighting to push the importance of embedding Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum. My passion to help students and families affected by racism, Residential Schools and other forms of government assimilation, was really the focus that helped me recently complete my Master of Education degree from the University of Regina." 🌐



Deana Kempel, B.Ed, M.Ed
is a SUNTEP Regina graduate
and teacher at the Prairie
South School Division, Sask.
Photo Courtesy of D. Kempel

Deana also talked about the importance of having Indigenous teachers in our schools. "Indigenous teachers are very important to have in the classroom as we can help Indigenous students to feel comfortable in a system that may not



A Brief Sharing of Métis Art at a Local School

By Daniel Downs

One thing that has impressed me most working for a Métis Institute is going into communities and seeing the pride and tradition that I had never really noticed before. This happens not only in our traditional Métis communities, but also in all communities. Be it the infinity symbol license plate, a flag hanging in the window, or someone wearing a jacket with Gabriel Dumont Institute logo while grocery shopping, there are signs everywhere of pride and identity.

I have two children, Elsa, who is 10 years old, and Carthur who is six. Both go to school in Warman. I have been with the Institute for nine years now. During that time, my children have known no other life than Dad working for the Métis School. They can easily identify and point out every time they see “Gabe’s Face” around the community, and always fondly ask if I know the people that work at that building.

My daughter brought home some homework she had. I

was proud to see that her School in Warman class was doing reports on prominent Métis figures. I asked her whom she was writing on, and whom others were writing on, and was extremely impressed by the variety of people she noted. During our conversation, she asked me to help find a nice picture of Louis Riel. I gladly showed her some pictures. Some of the pictures had pointillism watermarked in the background. Elsa asked what the fancy dots all were.

I asked her if her teacher had mentioned the term pointillism when her class was doing their Métis cultural work. Her response was that she had learned about beadwork, and First Nations Dream Catchers etc. at school, but not the Métis artwork. This got me thinking, that while there was a huge focus of fundamental First Nations art and tradition in their class, little was being said regarding Métis art and tradition. As luck would have it, Darcie DeBruyne, Dumont Technical Institute Program

Support Facilitator, and I made plans with Elsa’s teacher to have Darcie visit their class.

Under Darcie’s guidance, 24 students were provided the unique opportunity to complete their own pointillism projects based on Métis artist Christi Belcourt’s book *Medicines to Help Us: Traditional Métis Plant Use* (along with some personal items and rather vivid imaginations). The students learned about the importance of art in culture; the importance of art in tradition; and how something as small as a dot of paint, strategically put next to other dots of paint, can begin to paint a tapestry for a whole people.

I am very proud of the organization I work for and what the Institute does to promote Métis culture. It was a great honour to be able to share even a small piece of what Gabriel Dumont Institute is with the students in Warman. Their art is much better than anything I could do. 🌍

George Gingras, BFA, MFA
A Success Story



George Gingras
A June 2013

GDI Communicator article
(by James Oloo & Sheena Yew)
featured a story of
George Gingras following his
graduation with a
Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.
This month, George completed a
Master of Fine Arts degree
(University of Saskatchewan).
His MFA graduation exhibit titled
Magnificent Lore
is available online on
YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram
at @georgegingras.
Below is one of George’s art
Title: “Cardinal and Hawk”
Acrylic and oil on Canvas.

Check it Out: GDI Libraries Have a New Look

By Gabriel Dumont Institute Library Staff

For those of you who use the GDI Libraries in Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon regularly, you may have noticed that our [library catalogue](#) has a new look. In May of 2017, library staff (ably assisted by the GDI IT department) completed the multi-year process of migrating from outdated library management software to a cloud-based next-generation library system which allows us to better integrate our physical collection with

both open access and licensed digital content. The new library system includes a staff-facing component for managing the library’s collections, as well as our public interface, [GDI Quick Find](#), which allows anyone with an Internet connection to search our collections for books, AV materials, and digital content.

The move to this new library system was undertaken in co-operation with members of the Consortium of Academic and Special Libraries of

Saskatchewan (CASLS) – which includes, among others, libraries at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan Polytechnic, and the Saskatchewan Health Region. This partnership is beneficial to the Institute on a number of levels, not least of which is the opportunity to provide our students and staff with a familiar interface as they access library resources from our own libraries, as well as the libraries of our partners.

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Photos courtesy of G. Gingras



George Gingras, BFA, MFA
MFA Exhibit

Organizational Challenge: Recruiting and Retention

By Jim Edmondson



All organizations face the challenges of recruitment and retention of employees. There are a vast number of ways to address this issue but they are predicated upon what the current demographic of the staff is. We at Gabriel Dumont Institute are fortunate that we have a stable employee base with a significant number of long-term staff. Having long-term employees is an indicator of a great employer and consistency. However, it may also raise some concerns regarding succession and knowledge transfer that need to be addressed.



A base of long-term staff has obvious advantages such as a wealth of experience, and cultural and operational knowledge that allows the organization to operate more efficiently. This type of employee demographic lessens the cost of onboarding, provision of training and allows for the achievement of quicker and potentially higher productivity and overall effectiveness. Further, a long-term compliment of staff implies employees believe in the organization's mandate and vision.



Despite these advantages, a long-term staff base has potential challenges. Operating with long-term staff may impede innovation as employees often become entrenched in the way things worked in the past. This may slow an organization's ability to adapt to the ever changing environment.

It is great that organizations are recognizing the value of long-term staff and the wealth of knowledge and experience

they possess. But without proper preparation or succession planning they risk losing all that corporate knowledge and skill when those individuals eventually leave—and they will! This is where timely and effective recruitment of talent or retention strategies is most critical. The first step to addressing this looming challenge is for organizations to evaluate their existing staff to identify possible areas where a departure could result in a major loss of knowledge, experience or skill. At that point the existing talent must be evaluated to determine if there are adequate potential candidates for transition into the role. If not or it is not immediately obvious who that potential successor is then that succession gap must be addressed through a focused recruitment campaign. Sounds complicated, but there are some items that can be proactively undertaken that can lessen the impact and allow the organization to transition more smoothly when these issues arise. In particular, organizations should consider the following:

Plan

Identify who is approaching the critical age or place in their career or life that they would be contemplating moving on. If an organization has recruited effectively in the past, there should be options internally that can be groomed/trained or mentored to be successors.

Identify talent

There is potentially a gem right under your nose. So, it's critical not to limit ourselves to our immediate department or area because specific skills can be trained but aptitude,

understanding of culture. It's crucial to look for those pieces of skill or talent that have transferability, for example someone with multi-tasking or people skills will have those skills and traits no matter their workplace. Such skills are transferable from role to role, job to job and situation to situation, just let those people prosper.

Recruit effectively

If the talent or skill that is required to complete the succession is not readily available within the organization then a tailored recruitment strategy must be put in place. The first rule of recruitment is to recruit for the skill you require and not to settle for less.

Train

With existing employees or recruits, it is imperative that the tools and resources they need to build their capacity and achieve the expected results are available. Training, whether on the job or in the form of employee professional development, is a good indicator of a person's aptitude and provides a glimpse into their potential. If an employee, new or existing, shows a desire or aptitude to learn and grow in the organization, then we need to nurture that because the benefits tend to grow exponentially.

Gabriel Dumont Institute has embraced and adopted these principles into its human resources management plan. Our employees, including the long-term staff, continue to be our strength and we have taken proactive steps to plan for whatever the future may bring. 🌐

Photos by James Oloo



GDI Libraries ... Continued from Page 4

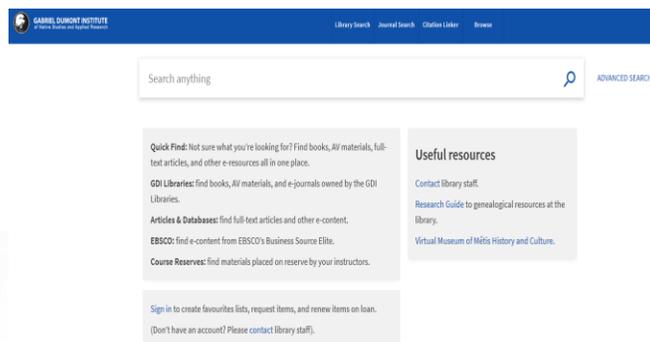
For Institute staff and students who are not located in close proximity to the physical materials held in our branches in Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon, [GDI Quick Find](#) offers exciting new possibilities for accessing digital content from the comfort of your offices and classrooms.

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Payroll Cutoff Calendar, February 2018

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
				Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Feb 16 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/P Invs – Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Feb 15 Payday	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on Student Feb 16 Direct Deposits		Staff Payday Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Family Day Stat Holiday	Cutoff @ Noon for March 2 Student Payroll		A/P Cheque/EFT Run Cutoff @ 4:30 for Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Feb 28 Payday	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices	
25	26	27	28			
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on Student March 2 Direct Deposits	Staff Payday			

Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.

MRTS due by the 15th of every month, and employee contracts are due prior to payroll cutoff date.

If received after the cutoff date, the employee will be paid on the following pay period.



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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)

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[https://gdins.org/student-
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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