



THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE COMMUNICATOR

*"Give us a chance
and we can do it
together as a people
with pride and
dignity"*



Jim Favel, 1980, from Virtual Métis Museum Archives

The GDI Communicator is an internal newsletter intended to document the achievements of management and staff of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research

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LET'S GET SOCIAL



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WWW.GDINS.ORG

REMEMBERING JIM FAVEL

By Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator

The Gabriel Dumont Institute board and staff mourn the passing of Jim Favel, a past GDI Board Member and passionate Métis activist. Favel is remembered as an important voice advocating for a technical school in northern Saskatchewan for Indigenous peoples. His vision was one that helped to shape GDI's mission, and he served on the GDI Board of Governors in our formative years from the 1980's to the early 1990's. In 1993, Jim Favel was made a Companion of the Order of Gabriel Dumont in recognition of his excellent service to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Many who worked with him remember his motto: "Give us a chance and we can do it together as a people with pride and dignity," which motivated him to dedicate his life to advocating for Métis people at every level of government.

Favel was born in Île-à-la-Crosse where he served as Vice Mayor and raised a family with his wife Marie Durocher. Favel was instrumental in establishing local control of the Île-à-la-Crosse School Division in 1974-75, and he served on the School Board for nearly a decade.

In 1973, Favel began work as a field worker and later an area director at Saskatchewan Native Alcohol Council (SNACC). He returned to serve as Vice-Chair of the SNACC provincial board for over a decade. Favel always stood up for what he believed in. He gave his time and voice to numerous panels of inquiry into justice, health, education, environmental, and employment issues affecting Indigenous people of northern Saskatchewan.

Story continues on Page 4...



Continuing Care Assistant, Prince Albert



Continuing Care Assistant, Saskatoon

MICHIF

WORDS OF THE MONTH

PAPAMOHTEW

Hiker

LI GRAAN BWAA

Forest

MAYNSHCHISHOO

Sunburn

PAAT MIZAYR

No Problem

PAWATAMIHK

Vision

INTRODUCING THE NEW GDI DIRECTOR OF CULTURE & HERITAGE

by Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator

On July 2, 2025, the Gabriel Dumont Institute was pleased to announce David Morin as the new Director of Culture and Heritage taking over from Karon Shmon who is remaining on as a Cultural Advisor. After a wide external search, David was selected for his extensive experience in Métis education, curriculum development, and publishing. David has been with the Institute for over 21 years in the role of Curriculum Developer in the GDI Culture and Heritage department, and he has been working closely with Karon over the past four months to ensure a smooth transition.

David Morin is Métis from right along the Red River in St. Adolphe, MB, and he has made Saskatchewan his home since moving here as a child. David is a proud SUNTEP alumnus and also holds a Master of Education in Educational Technology and Design from the University of Saskatchewan. His achievements include serving as a graphic designer and editor of over 100 books published by GDI Press, contributing over 60 articles to various publications, working with Michif knowledge keepers in the preservation and promotion of Michif, and editing and developing content for the Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.



David Morin, GDI Director of Culture & Heritage

David has also been able to help many organizations navigate the Métis Cultural Development Fund (MCDF) in partnership with SaskCulture, in order to promote Métis culture across Saskatchewan. He is currently mentoring Carson McCaffery to take over the MCDF portfolio. David has also supported many partnerships in his role at GDI, including working with Batoche National Historic Site, Saskatchewan Ânskohk Writers' Circle Inc., SaskBooks, the University of Saskatchewan, the Canadian Museum of History, and more. He will continue to represent the Institute at cultural events and partnerships.

David is looking forward to continuing the great legacy of the Culture and Heritage Department while exploring new opportunities and partnerships. He hopes to continue amplifying Métis voices, authors, artists, and community! 🌟



Continuing Care Assistant, Île-à-la-Crosse





UPCOMING APPLICATION DEADLINES



Class 1 Driver Training (MELT)

La Loche

Ongoing



Early Childhood Education Level 3

Online

Ongoing



Heavy Equipment Operator

St. George's Hill

Ongoing



Adult Basic Education

Various

Ongoing



For a full listing of all current programs and to apply online visit
WWW.GDINS.ORG/PROGRAMS

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

by **Audrey Hestand, Director of GDI Training & Employment**

In the Career Development world, funders often measure success in employment outcomes, graduation rates, and clients completing interventions — but are these the only indicators that matter? Do they tell the real story?

As we continue to walk alongside Métis clients in their career journeys, it's time to ask a deeper question: *what does success truly look like in the context of **miyo pimachihoohk** (good living)?*

Success isn't always a job offer. Sometimes it's the client returning after years away from formal education and making their first phone call to ask about training. It's the single parent gaining the confidence to dream beyond survival. It's the Elder reconnecting to community after feeling left

behind by digital systems. It's the student having the courage to repeat a class they failed. It's someone learning to advocate for accommodations at work or choosing to stay home to care for a loved one.

These quieter victories don't always show up in spreadsheets or performance reports, but they are real, and they matter. When we recognize and celebrate these milestones, we reaffirm our commitment to a strengths-based, culturally grounded approach that values healing, identity, and dignity just as much as employment.

As we move forward, let's continue to challenge narrow definitions of success. Let's make space for stories, for growth at all paces, and for the kind of progress that transforms not just résumés, but **lives**. 🌍

STRONG FAMILY TIES: STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

by **Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator**

On July 25, 2025, Kendra Strong-Garcia graduated from the Indigenous Community-Based Master of Education program in Prince Albert. Reflecting on her greatest success, Kendra shared, "It might seem a little sappy, but it was having Myan in [SUNTEP]." She sat down for an interview with two of her children, Myan and Edyn, who are currently enrolled at her alma mater, SUNTEP Regina. They are based in Regina on Treaty 4 Territory with family ties to Batoche, Meadow Lake, and Duck Lake.

All three Strong-Garcias came to SUNTEP for their own reasons but have leaned on one another for support. "It's cool being able to see my brother at school," said Edyn. "We did a collaborative project last

semester," added Myan. Edyn is entering her second year, while Myan begins his fourth and final year. He has a passion for history and research, and he is on track to graduate with Great Distinction. Edyn, gregarious and full of curiosity, is just beginning to explore her Métis identity through SUNTEP and loves connecting with Old Ones.

This may be Myan's fourth year as a student at SUNTEP, but it is not the first time he's been part of the community. Kendra had her second child halfway through her program. "I actually thought I was going into labour when we were in Winnipeg" Kendra laughed, "He wasn't born until a month later on Louis Riel Day."

Story continues on the next page...



Above: Kendra and Edyn Strong-Garcia at Indigenous Community Based Master of Education Graduation Ceremony 2025



Left: Myan Strong-Garcia



GDI AT BACK TO BATOCHÉ



GDI Booth photo by Lisa Klyne



Opening Ceremony photo by Sheena Yew



Marion Gonneville reading at Language Tent, photo by David Morin



Bertha Landrie at Language Tent, photo by David Morin



Opening ceremony photo by Sheena Yew

STRONG FAMILY TIES: STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

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Kendra persevered with her newborn, bringing Myan with her to classes for a few months. Kendra smiled, “at the time I didn’t know, but looking back it’s a great accomplishment” she said, crediting community support as the reason she finished her degree as a single mom. That same support inspired her to recommend SUNTEP to her children.

Each Strong-Garcia has benefited from SUNTEP’s unique approach. Kendra’s tuition-free education as a single parent made her degree possible. Myan enjoyed the history and research. Edyn found motivation in high expectations.

Myan initially didn’t meet university entrance requirements and applied to SUNTEP as a mature student after working in kitchens. The admissions interview instilled in him a sense of confidence, and that changed the way he saw himself as a student. In his third-year practicum placement, Myan co-taught a class of 60 students in the school library. His U of R colleagues admired his

calm demeanor and preparedness during the week long teaching placement.

Edyn, once unsure about teaching, has grown to love being in class. “Holding me accountable made me a very good student,” she said. She now thrives in SUNTEP’s community-focused environment and enjoys the structure and belonging it offers.

Kendra, now Director of Student Experience at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, completed her Master’s capstone on Indigenous Recruitment. She returned to school to keep growing professionally and to show her kids that lifelong learning is always possible. “It makes me feel really safe knowing my kids are going to SUNTEP Regina,” she said. “There’s people I went to school with who are there educating them.” The Strong-Garcias are just one example of the many Métis families who continue to choose SUNTEP Regina. 🌐

REMEMBERING JIM FAVEL

Story Continued from Page 1

In the 1980’s, Favel went on to serve as the Area Director of Northwest Region III for the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNSIS) which would eventually become Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) Northern Region III. He worked tirelessly to ensure that the future of economic development in northern Saskatchewan included Indigenous people. In a November 1980 article for New Breed Magazine, Favel wrote “Once again, I must strongly suggest to all Native groups, it does not matter if you have different viewpoints, the main thing is you are Métis, and your children and your children’s children will be

living in this area of northern Saskatchewan for countless generations. We must unite in order to have a strong solid front to give these future generations something to live for, something much better than the welfare our generation and past generations have been forced to accept.” His message still resonates decades later as the Métis continue to strive for self-determination.

The Institute wishes to extend our sincere condolences to Jim’s family and community.

Maarsii poor li pawatamihk. 🌐



PEGGY CHARTIER RETIREMENT LUNCH & RIBBON SKIRT WORKSHOP



On July 10th, the Institute celebrated Peggy Chartier's retirement with her colleagues. The Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment Northern staff met in Saskatoon for a day of cultural workshops followed by a staff lunch. Audrey Hestand shared words celebrating Peggy's long career, and Brett Vandale recounted his memories of Peggy from her Métis Nation Association days. Marlee Proulx shared how Peggy had helped her find her career path, and Chelsie Rodriguez presented Peggy with a retirement gift on behalf of the Institute.

Peggy worked as an Employment Counsellor with GDITE in Buffalo Narrows for over 18 years. She has been involved in the Métis community for many years, and she helped countless clients find employment in the North and develop their career skills.

We hope retirement gives you more time to enjoy the little things.
Kwaayesh pishkaapahta.



Office Administration, Regina



Adult Basic Education, La Loche



Practical Nursing, Prince Albert



Adult Basic Education, Saskatoon



Adult Basic Education, Prince Albert



Adult Basic Education, Regina

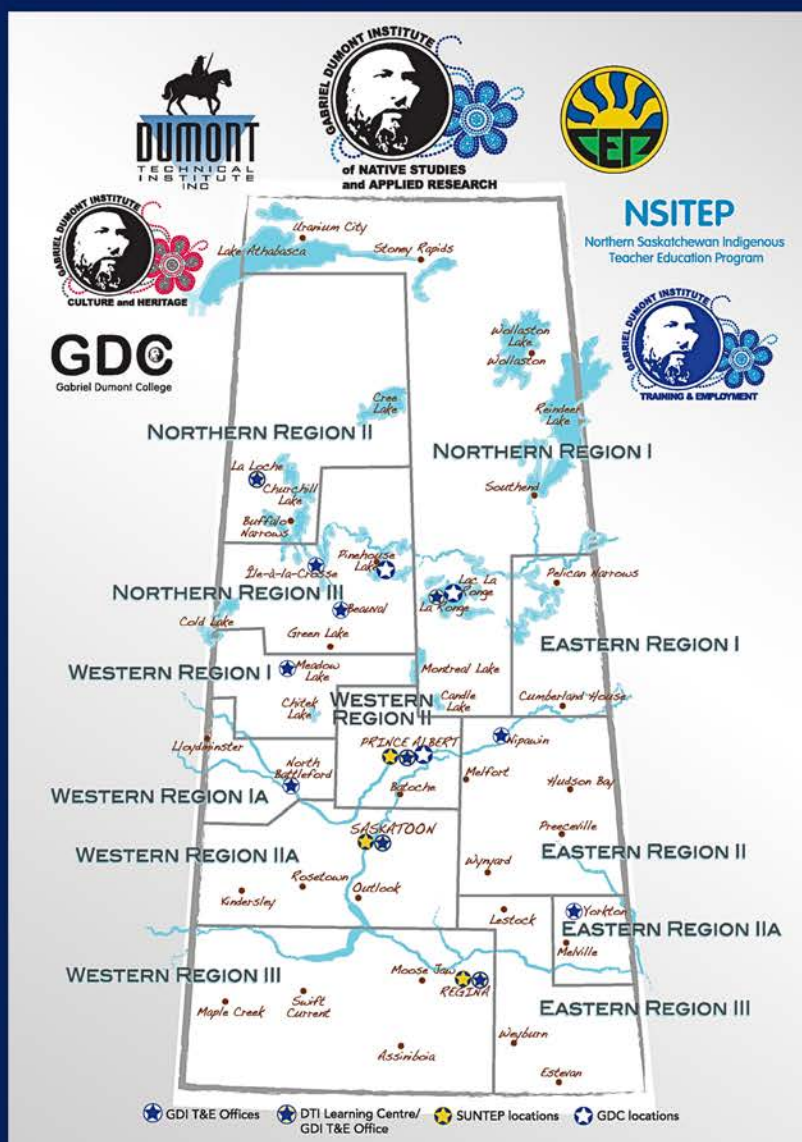
AUGUST 2025 FINANCE & PAYROLL CUTOFF CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Saskatchewan Day Stat Holiday	Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on ISETS Student Aug 8 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/P Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Aug 15 Payday ISETS Student Payday	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on MNU Student Aug 15 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Staff Payday	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on ISETS Student Aug 22 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/P Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Aug 29 Payday ISETS Student Payday	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on MNU Student Aug 29 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Staff Payday	

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 15TH OF EVERY MONTH.



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Previous issues of the *Communicator* can be found online at www.metismuseum.ca

If you would like to submit an article for the *Communicator* please contact Bethani Groat communications@gdins.org

