



# The New Nation

## La noovel naasyoon



Winter 2021

**EDITORS**

Lisa Bird-Wilson  
Karon Shmon

**EDITORIAL BOARD**

Geordy McCaffrey  
Lisa Bird-Wilson  
Karon Shmon

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Desirae Barker  
Lisa Bird-Wilson  
Brendon Demerais  
Audrey Hestand  
Chantelle Julé  
Darren Préfontaine  
Wilmar Shingoose  
Karon Shmon

**DESIGNER**

Murray Lindsay

**COPYEDITORS**

Darren Préfontaine  
Desirae Barker

**COVER ART**

Armand Paquette



# The New Nation La noovel naasyoon

A publication of the  
Gabriel Dumont Institute  
of Native Studies and  
Applied Research Inc.

*Any correspondence or inquiries can be made to:*  
The Gabriel Dumont Institute  
917-22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Telephone: 306.242.6070  
[newnation@gdins.org](mailto:newnation@gdins.org)

*The New Nation* is published quarterly.

All views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the various authors and are not necessarily those of the Gabriel Dumont Institute or its Executive.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, in any shape or form without the express written consent of *The New Nation* and the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Advertising can be obtained by contacting *The New Nation* at the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Advertisers and advertising agencies assume full responsibility for all content of advertisements printed. Advertisers also assume responsibility for any claim arising therefrom made against *The New Nation* or the Gabriel Dumont Institute.

Back issues of *The New Nation* can also be downloaded from:

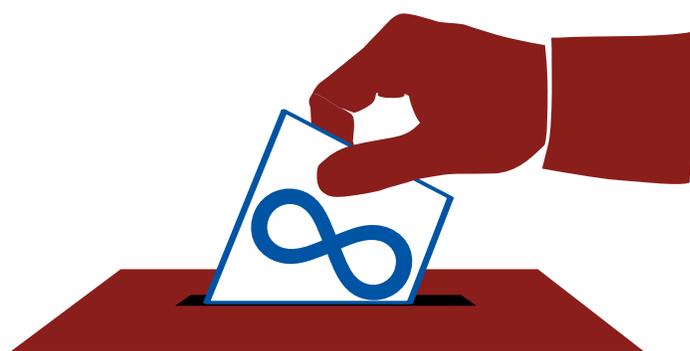
[www.metismuseum.ca/newnation](http://www.metismuseum.ca/newnation)

## Winter 2021

- 3 Message from the Executive Director
- 4 In Memoriam
- 6 First Métis Physician in Saskatchewan Reflects on His Career
- 8 A Métis Jazz Band: The Crescent Lake Rascals
- 11 Lifetime Achievement Award Presented to Senator Nora Cummings
- 12 Practical Nursing Students Adapt to the COVID-19 Experience
- 13 Dennis Fisher Tribute
- 17 Métis Entrepreneur Wins Saskatchewan Tourism Award
- 18 Elder Michael Maurice
- 20 Métis Education Pays in Many Ways
- 22 Terminology in Transition
- 23 Taanishi kischi aen shaakiihiyen
- 24 Bois de flèche, or as some say, Saskatoon

# Contents

- 25 The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Students
- 26 Métis Nation University Sponsorship Program Update
- 27 The Métis Nation—Saskatchewan Citizenship Registry
- 28 An Interview with Métis Entrepreneur Chad Berg of Saskatoon Clayworks
- 30 Kimberly Parent wins SABEX Entrepreneur of the Year Award
- 31 Family Searching for Megan Gallagher



**IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF *NEW NATION***

***Special  
Métis Nation—Saskatchewan  
Pre-Election Coverage***

All executive candidates will be invited to share their political platforms, outlining their principles, goals, and election promises.



*Cover Art:* This painting, titled “school house during winter storm,” depicts early life in and around Batoche when the mail was delivered by horseback and when Saskatchewan’s harsh winters challenged its inhabitants who did not have the warmer clothing and homes we have today.

Métis artist Armand Paquette was born in 1930 and grew up in Winnipeg’s historical North End. He makes his home in Ladywood, a rural community near Beausejour, Manitoba. He has portrayed Métis history and culture in a number of his paintings, including a large commission by Parks Canada. His work has become part of the Back to Batoche Interactive Website, a virtual teaching tool created by the Gabriel Dumont Institute to provide historical and cultural information on Batoche and the Métis.

# Message from the Gabriel Dumont Institute Executive Director

Tanishi,

Each issue of *The New Nation: La noovel naasyoon* magazine is a labour of love for all who work on it, contribute articles, locate content, and collaborate on the design, layout, and look of the finished product. The winter issue is no exception. Within these pages, you will find carefully crafted stories and images about good things happening in the Métis world. As always, the Gabriel Dumont Institute is pleased to offer free access to the magazine on the *Virtual Museum for Métis History and Culture* as well as a limited print run.

This issue is full of news and stories about remarkable Métis from across the province, including Elder Nora Cummings, who was recently awarded a YWCA Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement award for her years of dedication and work within the Métis community. Several Métis entrepreneurs are highlighted, including Michela Carrière, whose business, Aski Holistic Adventures, won a 2020 Tourism Saskatchewan Award of Excellence and Kimberly Parent, owner-operator of Saskatoon Salsa Dance Company and recipient of the 2020 SABEX Entrepreneur of the Year award.

During the quarter there have also been some sad losses in our community. We pay tribute to the memory and contributions of Dennis Fisher, who, along with his wife, Jean Fisher, contributed the Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection to the Institute's permanent collection. Our community also lost Janice Acoose, author, newspaper columnist, and professor of Indigenous and English Literature at First Nations University of Canada. We are grateful for the language and storytelling contributions of Michif knowledge keeper Roy Poitras who recently passed away. Métis Elder Michael Maurice passed away in November, and an article about his life and contributions is included in these pages.



*Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director,  
Gabriel Dumont Institute*

Finally, we catch up with the first Métis physician in Saskatchewan, Dr. Colin MacColl, originally from Île-à-la-Crosse, to find out what he's been doing in his career since he graduated from the University of Saskatchewan College of Medicine in 1986. Another remarkable Métis from our province.

As always, thank you for your support for the Gabriel Dumont Institute. I hope you enjoy the winter issue of *The New Nation: La noovel naasyoon*.

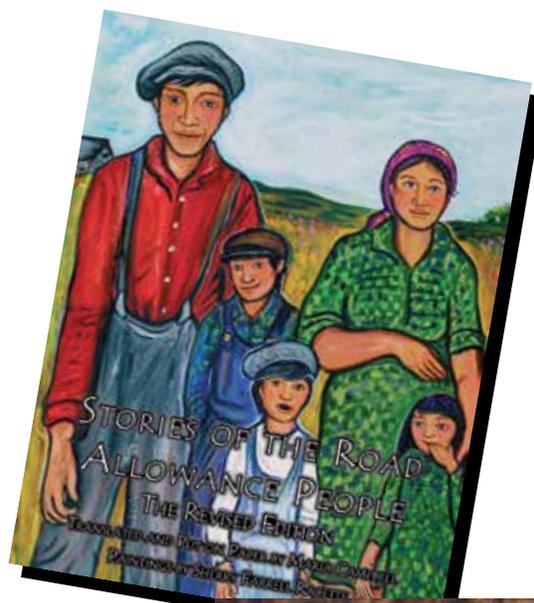
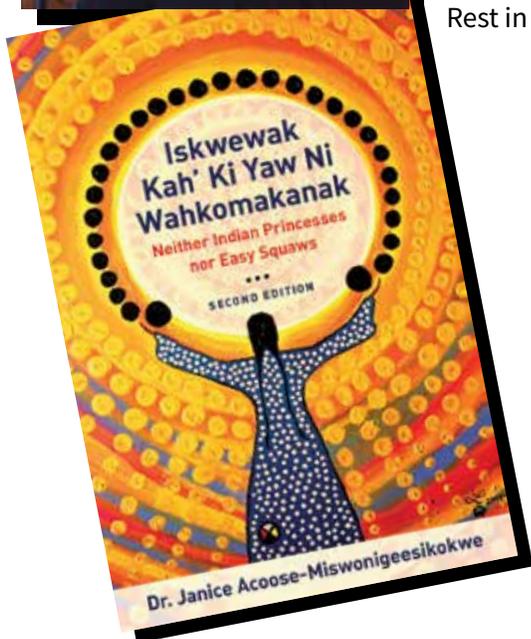
maarsii,  
**Geordy McCaffrey**  
Executive Director  
Gabriel Dumont Institute

## Janice Acoose



Janice Acoose, Ph.D. (1954-2020) was an author, newspaper columnist, and professor of Indigenous and English Literature at the First Nations University of Canada. Her cultural roots are in the Broadview area as part of the Ninankawe Marival Métis community and Zagime Anishinabek First Nation. She was Saskatchewan's first Indigenous affairs columnist for *The Saskatoon Star Phoenix*. Janice Acoose was a residential school survivor. In a 1992 interview on the *Virtual Museum of Métis Culture and History*, she said, "The place where I went to residential school was in the middle of the two places that I called my homes. The Marival Métis Community and the Sakimay Reserve were on both sides of the residential school." She notes that even though she was so close to her family, she was rarely allowed to go home.

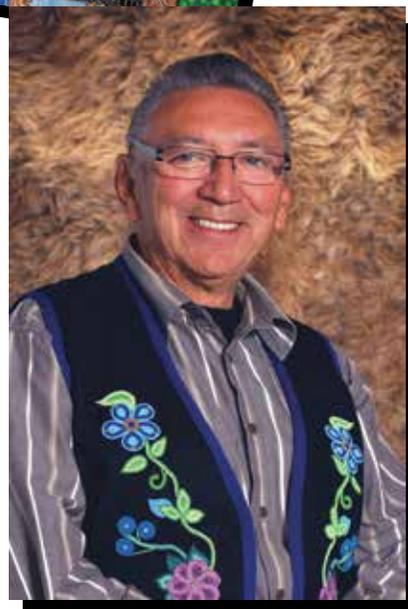
Rest in peace Janice Acoose.



## Roy Poitras

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is very saddened to learn of the passing of Roy Poitras (1939-2021) and our deepest and heartfelt condolences go to his family and loved ones. The Institute greatly appreciates Roy's contributions to preserving our heritage, especially our language, Michif. Roy attended many gatherings, where he shared the language and where it was common to hear him tell a story or share a joke. Besides our fond memories of Roy's friendship and storytelling, we are pleased to have a number of artefacts that made their way from his collectibles and antique store in his hometown of Lebrét to the Institute. We will also have the pleasure of listening to Roy's narration of "La Beau Sha Shoo" in Maria Campbell's, *Stories of the Road Allowance People*, a book often deemed the quintessential collection of traditional Michif stories.

Maarsii, Roy, gee meeyo pimawtshinawn, it was a good life.



# Order of Gabriel Dumont 2021

Thursday,  
March 4,  
at 7 pm CST



*Tune in to the virtual presentation to the recipients of the Order of Gabriel Dumont gold and silver medals.*

The Order of Gabriel Dumont is awarded by the Gabriel Dumont Institute to persons who have served the Métis of Canada with distinction. Recipients of the Order of Gabriel Dumont need not be Métis.

The silver awards honour those who have made a significant contribution to the Métis.

The gold awards recognize those who have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the Métis. In past practice the gold medal has been awarded based on lifetime achievements and service.

*Watch our website, Facebook page, and other social media for the livestream link. The names of the 2021 inductees will be announced publicly on February 15, 2021.*

***“The strongest  
tool you have  
is your vote.”***

***Buckley Belanger, MLA for Athabasca,  
encourages all Métis to get out and vote.***

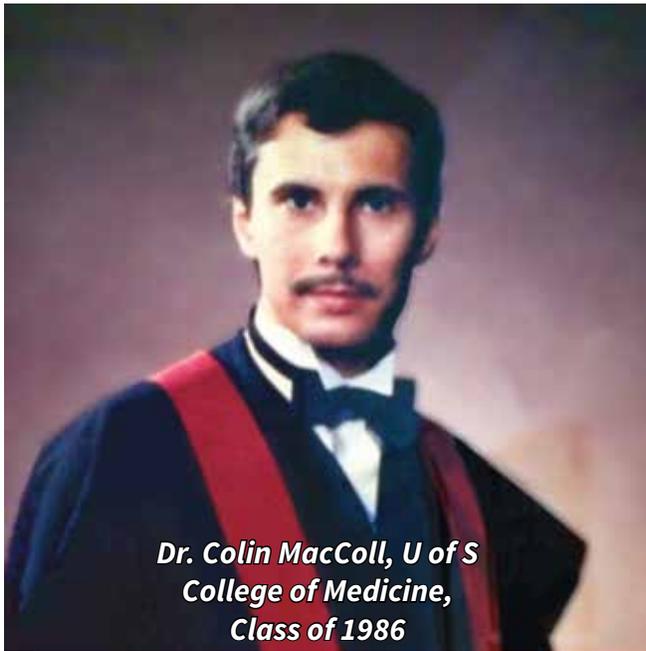
# First Métis Physician in Saskatchewan Reflects on His Career

by Lisa Bird-Wilson

Dr. Colin MacColl is at a point in his long career as a general surgeon where he's ready to reflect both on where he's been and what he still hopes to accomplish.

MacColl grew up in northern Saskatchewan with his HBC-employed Scottish father, Colin MacColl Sr., and his Métis mother, Freda MacColl (née Sahyes), living for a time in the communities of Pinehouse

first Métis physician in Saskatchewan wasn't easy. Before being accepted into medical school, MacColl studied anatomy, ended up cutting his hair, and was advised to lose his Cree accent. Upon entering the College of Medicine in 1981, he became the first Métis person to do so. He says, "I can tell you it was difficult to hold that mantle." He nearly turned around and left the first day because he felt like he didn't belong.



*Dr. Colin MacColl, U of S  
College of Medicine,  
Class of 1986*

"I could give a dissertation about the barriers I dealt with as a student from northern Saskatchewan entering the University of Saskatchewan with no mentors," Dr. MacColl states. "There are many students in this position who are experiencing similar struggles. They don't need me to tell them what they are going through. What they need to see is that many of us have gone through these struggles and emerged."

Continued and ongoing systemic and institutional racism in the healthcare system is not lost on Dr. MacColl. In Canada, we only have to look at the largest headline cases to know this is true. For instance, Brian Sinclair, who died of a treatable condition in 2008 after waiting 34 hours in a Winnipeg emergency waiting room without any healthcare professional seeing or talking to him and despite strangers imploring nurses to help him. Or the recent case of Joyce Echaquan in Joliette, Quebec who live-streamed a video from her hospital bed, showing herself being ridiculed, berated, and subjected to slurs rather than being helped, as she suffered, obviously in pain. She died shortly after transmitting the live video. In early 2019, a report came to light of healthcare workers at a British Columbia hospital playing a "game" where they would bet on the blood alcohol content of incoming Indigenous patients. Study after study has demonstrated that Indigenous people disproportionately suffer poor health outcomes based on racism within the same system on which we rely for care.

and Stanley Mission before settling down in his home community of Sakitawak, or Île-à-la-Crosse.

By high school, MacColl was taking his science courses by correspondence because there were often no teachers for those subjects. "In effect, I taught myself these courses," he notes. For his grade 12 year, the Île-à-la-Crosse school board sent him to Athol Murray College of Notre Dame in Wilcox, Saskatchewan for 1977-78. He says the experience was difficult, but he took it as a challenge and completed the year with an award for the highest academic achievement for grade 12.

MacColl graduated from the University of Saskatchewan College of Medicine in 1986 with great distinction, but his journey to become the

With no Indigenous mentors to look to in medical school, MacColl was nevertheless able to find trusted advisors who helped him. He says, "There

were many in the College of Medicine who helped guide me in my studies. Dr. Wayne Chappell helped guide me during medical school. Dr. Danny McFadden was a wonderful mentor at St. Paul's Hospital during my internship. Dr. Wally Mydland was a defining mentor in Calgary. These mentors truly changed the course of my life."

Upon finishing his medical degree, Dr. MacColl followed up with an anatomy degree in '87 as well as an internship at St. Paul's Hospital. From there, the young physician completed a general surgery residency in Calgary and a laparoscopic fellowship at McGill University in Montreal. He then returned to Calgary to start his surgical practice.

After returning to Calgary and starting his surgical practice, healthcare in Alberta faced a number of hurdles, including changes to the structure of the health authorities, massive budget cuts, and hospital closures implemented under Ralph Klein's government with little input from physicians. Under those circumstances, many physicians ended up leaving the province, and Canada altogether, including Dr. MacColl, who moved to North Dakota. "It is sad to see that this is happening again in Alberta," Dr. MacColl says. "History is repeating itself."

Dr. MacColl's pride in his Métis heritage and drive to assist others led him to be active in various programs that support Indigenous people to enter and succeed in medicine. During his time in Saskatchewan and Calgary, Dr. MacColl helped to develop programs for Indigenous people in medicine, but lack of resources made the task particularly difficult. While in North Dakota, Dr. MacColl worked with medical students in the INMED program, a program designed for Indigenous students in medicine at the University of North Dakota. He also worked with medical students and surgical residents from the University of North Dakota.

In 2009, he and his wife Alice MacColl (née Lee), a Métis from Saskatchewan whom he met in 1986 at an Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNSIS) meeting, received their

American citizenship. Dr. MacColl and his family made the move to Oregon where he was tasked to stabilize and grow the bariatric program at Sacred Heart Medical Centre in Springfield, Oregon, where he is currently the Chief of Bariatric and General Surgery for the PeaceHealth Medical Group.

Dr. MacColl is aware that he is in a position to shine a light on the problems within the healthcare system and within medical training for Indigenous people, and to be part of the solution. And he has additional



*Dr. Colin MacColl, Chief of  
Bariatric and General Surgery,  
2020*

vested interests in the matter—his daughter, Amber works as a Licenced Practical Nurse in Saskatoon. His daughter Amy graduated from the University of Saskatchewan and is an advocate for Crohn's disease patients. His daughter, Cailean graduated from the University of Oregon with two degrees and is applying to Medicine and his granddaughter, Angelina, who recently entered University in Oregon, aspires toward medicine. Dr. MacColl's desire is to help make entering and working in healthcare better for them.

# A Métis Jazz Band: The Crescent Lake Rascals

reprint by Wilmar Shingoose

This picture of our Métis School band, shown below, was taken against the north wall of Allary School in 1953. After an encouraging visit from Premier Tommy Douglas, we started to learn to play the instruments and read music in the fall of 1951.

Our dress code was a white shirt, black trousers and maroon bow ties, for the boys, and a white shirt and black skirt for the girls. Our teacher and mentor, John Hirsch, would buy a sheet of music for the piano, and we would have to copy every note on blank staff. For me, playing melody, it was three notes lower than the piano music. I do not know how the others copied their music, as I had my hands full with mine.

We played Big Band music, such as “In the Good Old Summertime,” “Who’s Sorry Now,” “Side By Side,” “Five Foot Two,” “In The Mood,” “Dark Town Strutters’ Ball,” and many more.

In the band were: Dorothy Azure on piano, Dorothy Delorme on banjo, Joe Flamont on accordion, Alex Pelletier on drums, Lionel McKenzie on “B” Flat Tenor Saxophone, Delmar Delorme on “E” Flat Alto Saxophone, and myself playing melody on the “E” Flat Saxophone. Joe and I went harvesting to buy our instruments—my sax cost \$100. Also in the band were Rose Azure, who played piano and banjo, and Philip Langan on drums. Rose and Philip left the band to go to work. The banjo and drums were donated by the local Ladies Auxiliary.

All the players in this picture were Métis students of Allary School, which was located south of Yorkton. At the time of the picture, Joe, Delmar, and I were sixteen years old. The two Dorothys and Lionel were fifteen, and Alex was fourteen. Also joining the band from time to time were two young musicians from neighbouring communities. They were Eddie Beck on the accordion and Henry Napora on banjo.

We played for dances and other functions in the area, being asked to return many, many times. The band was paid \$4.00 a night to entertain. One of our biggest concerts was the Farmer’s Bonspiel in Yorkton. We even traveled as far away as Willow Bunch to perform.

This story shows what a bit of compassion and consideration can do for a community that was downtrodden many times. As I am writing this, we have lost Joe, Alex and Lionel—all too young, but great guys who are not forgotten.

This article is in memory of our “Crescent Lake Métis Community,” for all who lived there and sacrificed so much for us to have a better life.

WILMAR SHINGOOSE and his wife Ruth currently live in Lloydminster. They have two sets of twin girls and two sons. One son builds Pratt & Whitney engines while the other son is a commercial pilot. Mr. Shingoose has retired after 35 years of driving long distance truck. He also drove in the “Ben Hur Chariot” category in Chuckwagon racing.

This article originally appeared in the Summer 2020 edition of the Saskatchewan History and Folklore (SHFS) magazine, *Folklore*. Reprinted with permission from the SHFS.



Wilmar Shingoose  
Photo courtesy of author.

# A Métis Jazz Band: The Crescent Lake Rascals



Jazz Band at Crescent Lake School. Dorothy Azure on piano, Dorothy Delorme on banjo, Joe Flamont on accordion, Alex Pelletier on drums, Lionel McKenzie on “B” Flat Tenor Saxophone, Delmar Delorme on “E” Flat Alto Saxophone, and Wilmar Shingoose playing melody on the “E” Flat Saxophone.  
*Photo courtesy of the author.*



Orchestra singers from Crescent Lake School, likely in Yorkton, ca. 1954. *From left:* Mary (Shingoose) Pelletier (*author’s sister*), Connie Allary (*author’s cousin*), Isadore “Buck” Shingoose (*author’s brother*), Yvonne Pelletier; teacher John Hirsch (*back to audience*), Phillip Langan (*bow tie, standing behind the drummer*), Lionel McKenzie (*bow tie, right of Phillip*), Joe Flamont (*on accordion*), Dorothy Azure (*standing, black hat*), Dorothy Delorme, Claude Langan (*brother to Phillip*), Eula Pelletier (*sister to Yvonne*).  
*Photo courtesy of Gabriel Dumont Institute/Nancy Leake.*



Crescent Lake School choir or square dance group at Yorkton Music Festival, ca. 1950s. *From left:* John Hirsch, teacher; Dorothy Azure, Alex Pelletier, Ralph Azure (*back*), Linda Brazeau, Bruce Flamont, Rose Henry, Lester Shingoose (*author’s brother*), Mary (Shingoose) Pelletier (*author’s sister*), Roy Brazeau (*brother to Linda*), Eula Pelletier, Isadore “Buck” Shingoose (*author’s brother*), Claude Langan. Claude was the square dance caller, Dorothy Azure played piano, Ralph Azure played guitar, and Alex Pelletier played drums.  
*Photo courtesy of Gabriel Dumont Institute/Nancy Leake.*

# New Titles From Gabriel Dumont Institute Press!



## Road to La Prairie Ronde

Cort Dogniez's *Road to La Prairie Ronde*, takes the reader on an imagined journey of his ancestor, Frederick Dumont, from his home in Batoche to the Métis settlement of La Prairie Ronde, known today as Round Prairie. Frederick was a relative of the famous Métis leader, Gabriel Dumont. Frederick's journey takes place just a few years prior to the tragic events of the 1885 Resistance.

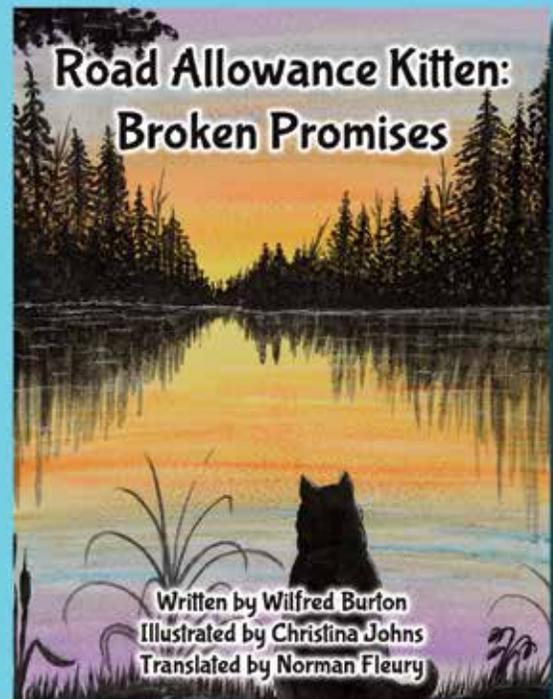
Elegantly illustrated by Jade McDougall, *Road to La Prairie Ronde* is complemented with a Michif glossary, a teachers' guide, and suggested learning activities. This comprehensive learning package gives readers and educators an opportunity to learn more about traditional Métis lifeways and history.

## Road Allowance Kitten: Broken Promises

*Road Allowance Kitten: Broken Promises* shares more of the adventures of the main characters, Rosie and Madeline, and their pet kitten. Their adventure began in *Road Allowance Kitten*, which has become a very popular and widely-acclaimed book within the canon of Métis children's literature. Readers urged author Wilfred Burton to share what happens next.

The stories shared in these books blend the experiences of Métis families who were forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to an unfamiliar part of the province, where they found so little of what was promised to them.

Award-winning children's author Wilfred Burton skillfully shares this story through the eyes of the children involved. Christina Johns' vibrant illustrations are the perfect accompaniment to this authentic vignette of a little-known part of Prairie history.



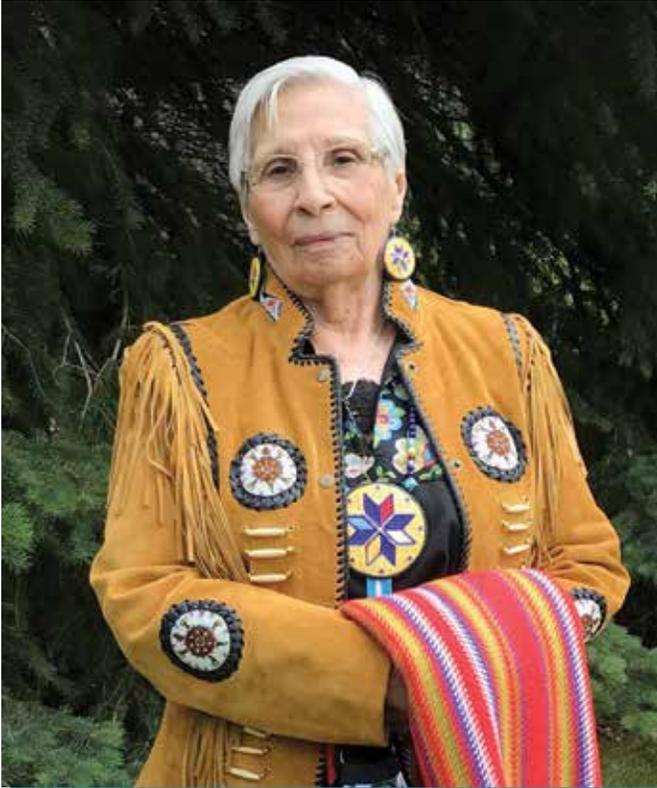
[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org) | [www.shopmetis.ca](http://www.shopmetis.ca)

# Lifetime Achievement Award Presented to Senator Nora Cummings

by Desirae Barker

In October, YWCA Saskatoon held their annual YWCA Women of Distinction Awards.® The awards are recognized nationally as one of the most prestigious awards for women. The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes a woman who has been an exemplary leader over the course of her lifetime, in one or more fields, and who is regarded as an inspirational role

city council. Although unsuccessful in her bid, she was the only Aboriginal person who had ever done so. In November of 1975, she was the only Aboriginal woman among the fifty women honored for their contribution to the community of Saskatoon as an International Women's year project by the City of Saskatoon.



She has been recognized in several ways, including the Guy Bouvier lifetime achievement award; the Queen's Golden Jubilee award for her service to Canada (2002); the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal (2005); Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal; Métis Award for Lifetime Achievement from Wiichihwayshinawn Foundation (2012); the Saskatoon Women's Hall of Fame (2019); and, the Métis National Council Achievement Award (February 2020). She was honoured at the Legislature in Regina as an outstanding woman in the province, recognizing all her achievements for Celebrate Saskatchewan.

In December of 1993, she took the Oath of Office as a Métis Senator. Since then, Nora has sat on several committees as well as community boards with the City of Saskatoon. Working with the Saskatoon Police Service, RCMP and the Legal Aid Board as well as countless other community groups and organizations. Nora remains actively involved in both the Saskatoon Gabriel Dumont Métis Local #11 and the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan.

model for the YWCA Saskatoon and for the community. This year, Senator Nora Cummings is the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Nora was born on January 1, 1938 in Saskatoon, where she was also raised. She married at an early age, raised nine children, and is a grandmother and a great-grandmother.

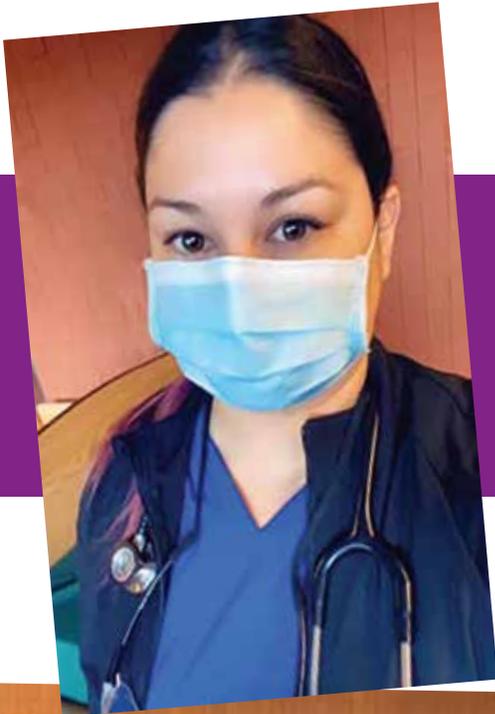
She became a founding member of the Saskatoon Métis Society Local #11, she was the founder of the Saskatchewan Native Women's Association, and, she was later a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). At the age of 35, she ran as a candidate for Saskatoon

She has helped to establish, through the Saskatoon Native Women's Association, Women's Referral Centers in eight locations across the province. She has worked to encourage Aboriginal women to become aware of their rights in society. She has been an Elder for group homes, where she provided support for young teens and unwed teen mothers whose children have been apprehended by Social Services. She is currently involved with the Aboriginal Kokom and Moshom group in Saskatoon.

*This biography is a reprint originally published online at <https://www.ywcaskatoon.com/about-the-ywca/women-of-distinction/2019-women-of-distinction-recipients>.*

# Practical Nursing Students Adapt to the COVID-19 Experience

by Chantelle Julé



Living in a pandemic has created additional challenges and stress for everyone in some way, but for those in education it has changed or drastically altered their path.

In March 2020, the familiar face-to-face teaching model that our students had come to know came to an abrupt halt. Instructors and students were moved from their classrooms into the virtual realm of online education by the global COVID-19 pandemic. For Practical Nursing students, this drastic switch took place in a matter of only a couple of days as tight schedules meant there was no time to lose. Being able to adapt and adjust was not easy.

The previously established “norms” were gone and it was almost like starting something brand new. Classes were held on Zoom, assignments and exams were re-evaluated, or were removed to ensure the workload was manageable, while still ensuring that the program quality was maintained. The real challenges became clear in the weeks to follow as some of our students or their spouses had lost their jobs. Some had family members become ill or they could no longer visit and provide support to them. Many students not only had to teach themselves, but also their children—all with increased anxiety and fear of the unknown. There were questions about whether they would graduate on time, or be able to go to the required clinical training to be able to complete the course. There were many fears and stresses, including going into clinical training and being exposed to COVID-19, or what it would be like to transition into a workforce that was exhausted and overwhelmed.

While COVID-19 has presented negative experiences or made things more difficult, it has also taught us a lot. COVID-19 forced us to implement new ideas and teaching strategies that we may have never considered before; some of these things worked so well that we will continue to use them even when the pandemic is over.

We are very proud of our upcoming graduating class, and while we feel saddened that we cannot celebrate their success the way we would like to, we will certainly send our virtual hugs and congratulations as they begin their exciting new career.

# Dennis Fisher – It was a wonderful life

by Karon Shmon

It was a wonderful life.

News of the passing of Dennis Fisher on October 1, 2020 was no surprise. It was expected. It was heartbreaking and it was profoundly sorrowful to learn of Dennis's passing. Knowledge about the "usual course of life" doesn't really soften the blow or lessen the grief. Some comfort came from the beautiful tribute by his son David and by viewing the photos he shared of Dennis. I cannot think of a more loving tribute than the masterful words crafted by David on behalf of the family. Any other version would create a redundancy that is certain to fall short. Instead, I will take a personal approach by sharing some of the memories I have of Dennis. These are memories that take some of the sting out of such a great loss.

Even during the last few times I had the pleasure of seeing Dennis with his wife Jean, he lamented that, "you know, people get old." This was his way of saying he knew he was blessed to be in his eighties and that he also knew his life on earth was coming to an end. Despite this solemn observation, Dennis would change the subject, eager to share his latest adventure or an anecdote that came to mind. These stories were always of interest and there were few details omitted because he could remember so many. Over the years, particularly in the later years when Dennis would experience some frustration in recalling a story, I watched in admiration at the way Jean would respectfully wait and give Dennis time to remember a detail before she helped him with a word or cue that brought a detail back to him so he could finish his story. The remarkable relationship between Dennis and Jean was a love story of epic proportions. The love and mutual respect was so evident that it was easy to see that they were truly a great team. I recall



thinking to myself, *I want to be like them when I am their age.* It only took a few seconds for me to revise my thinking to, *I want to be like them now.* Why would I want to wait to try to emulate people who were so genuine and kind?

Dennis and Jean are two of my role models for citizenship, for marriage, and for simply being human.

I knew Dennis as a public figure for years and I was always touched that he remembered me, even when a few years had passed between our chance meetings. I grew to know him more personally when he and Jean approached the Gabriel Dumont Institute about donating their collection of artefacts and ephemera related to the Northwest

Resistance, Batoche, Gabriel Dumont, and Louis Riel. Their foresight in creating the collection for over half a century of their lives was a true act of reconciliation, long before this word came to have prominent significance. Dennis and Jean focused on preserving a part of Canadian history, the Métis part, that has been of less interest and importance to the mainstream narrative. This is easily proven by news accounts and historical records focusing on the government perspective of this tragic time in history. The donation of this collection was one of the early steps to healing for the Métis. We were accurately called "Canada's Forgotten People" because we lacked federal recognition as an Indigenous people of Canada until 1982. Through the Fishers' generosity, we came to know non-Indigenous people who cared; who valued all the perspectives on our shared history; and who spent their time, money, and family time ensuring significant pieces of our past would not be lost. The collection was even more valuable because each piece was carefully documented by Dennis's

## Dennis Fisher *-continued*

meticulous drawing (he was trained as a draftsman), his field notes, his follow-up research, his photos, and his diary. As David Fisher has so eloquently shared, Dennis's love of this area of history was keen and it had a far-reaching impact that included bringing the statue of Gabriel Dumont to Saskatoon and having a founder's role in the Louis Riel Relay Race, to name just a few examples.

Dennis and Jean became friends of the Gabriel Dumont Institute and they were invited to many celebrations. It was through these gatherings that our friendship deepened. Dennis and Jean would often pop by the Institute to donate one more piece, to visit, and to tell us another story. I came to know that they felt the collection was in good hands, was well cared for, and was protected. It was important to them that it is available for all to see and enjoy. I also feel certain that when they came by the office, they were visiting both their old friends that had lived in their home for decades as well as their GDI new friends. Those gatherings in which music was played really brightened Dennis's experience and it was on one of these occasions that we learned of Dennis's musical background, and the Johnny Cash story. Now both Johnny and Dennis are legends.

I remember taking them a small bison Christmas ornament a few years back. They invited me into their home to see their remarkable revolving Christmas tree, and to hear stories, old and new, as we got caught up on one another's lives and enjoyed the pfeffernuesse common to the Fisher home at Christmas.

The other opportunity to experience their gracious hospitality was at their summer chili luncheon—an opportunity to gather their friends and enjoy life, and especially to hear one more story. I marvelled at the apparent ease of our hosts at this event.

After reading David's tribute to Dennis and reviewing the photos, I thought of the basic theme of the movie "It's a Wonderful Life" in which the main character, played by Jimmy Stewart, is shown what life would have been like without him. This made me review both the way David had captured Dennis's legacy and my own personal remembrances of him. I am

grateful that some disastrous catalytic event did not take place in order for me to be conscious of what we would never have experienced. So many lives would have missed out on the vibrant presence and impact of Dennis Fisher had he not been born or if he had not lived a full life. What if the wonderful family he and Jean created through their great love story never came to be? What music would have been missed? How might broadcast journalism be different? Would Saskatoon have known less about the Métis and the 1885 Resistance? What types of entertainment would have come instead, if at all? Would friends and family have experienced a less rich life, untouched by Dennis Fisher? Certainly.

Dennis Fisher made the world brighter, more interesting, and richer for all who knew him. When "It's a Wonderful Life" ends, we hear a child say, "Look daddy, teacher says, every time a bell rings an angel gets his wings." I cannot help but think those wings were already waiting for Dennis, he had done so much good throughout his life. It was a wonderful life, well lived by a man well loved.



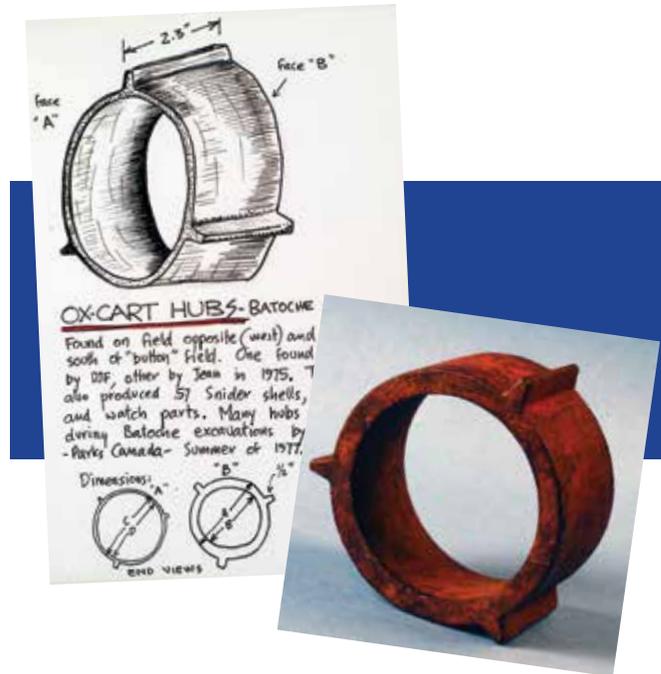
# Dennis Fisher Collection

On September 19, 2011, Dennis and Jean Fisher and the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) formally signed a “Deed of Gift,” which formally transferred their large collection of 1885-related and Métis artefacts to the Institute.

The Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection, which contains several hundred Métis-specific artefacts, documents, photographs, ephemera, and books, is proudly displayed at GDI’s Métis Culture and Heritage Department in Saskatoon. This gracious donation forms an integral component of GDI’s Métis Centre of Excellence.

Throughout the late 1960s and early ‘70s, the Fishers, assisted by their three sons—Dennis Jr., Darwin, and David—found 1885 Resistance-related artefacts at Gabriel’s Crossing, Tourond’s Coulee (Fish Creek), Batoche, and Clark’s Crossing. This was done before the mid-1970s when Parks Canada bought the farmlands on which the battles of Batoche and Tourond’s Coulee were fought. After obtaining permission from area farmers to search for artefacts, the items were diligently analyzed, documented, photographed, and sketched by Dennis (who is a trained draftsman).

Some of the more interesting items collected by the Fisher family, and now in GDI’s possession include a piece of Gabriel Dumont’s cast-iron stove; a partial white porcelain doorknob; items from Xavier Letendre’s home at Batoche; various used gun cartridges from Batoche and Tourond’s Coulee; and a nine pounder cannon shell, which was used by the North West Field Force during the 1885 Resistance.



Other artefacts in this collection include two pieces of the steamer Northcote (which Gabriel Dumont’s forces disabled during the 1885 Resistance) obtained from an excavation in Cumberland House in 1971; fur trade items such as trade beads and clay pipe stems from Fort Carlton and Fort Pitt; and artefacts collected at St. Peter’s Mission, Montana—where Louis Riel taught school. In 1884, Gabriel Dumont, Michel Dumas, and James Isbister went to St. Peter’s Mission to ask Louis Riel to come back to Batoche to advocate for Métis rights.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is very grateful to Dennis and Jean Fisher for their donation of such a unique and precious collection.



# Dennis Fisher—The Making of Kohkum’s Cabin

Kohkum’s Cabin is a true to life diorama of what life was like for many of our ancestors. Once space became available, items collected over the last 15 years for this purpose came out of storage. The items were placed beautifully by Guest Curator, Gregory Scofield, who was helped by the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) curatorial team consisting of Ryan Nordmarken, Amy Briley, George Gingras, David Morin, Darren Préfontaine, Bonnie Hrycuik, and Karon Shmon, curatorial director of the Institute’s museum, gallery, and special collections.

As we proceeded with the planning, Dennis Fisher, a dear friend to GDI, learned that Xavier Letendre dit Batoche, for whom the village was named, had homesteaded near the town of Alvena after 1885 and that the building was still on the land. In an effort to preserve it, at least in pictures, Dennis took photos of what was left at the site. While there, Terry Yuzik, the farmer who owned and worked the land, met Dennis who shared his knowledge of the building in the engaging storytelling style so characteristic of him. Mr. Yuzik informed Dennis that the building had become unsafe and that

he would be burning it in the fall. Knowing of our plans to recreate a Métis cabin, Dennis asked Terry if GDI could have the wood for the diorama. With Mr. Yuzik’s gracious approval, an extraction team was formed to undertake the task. Among the players were, Karon Shmon, coordinating the logistics, Dennis Fisher, who knew the location and liaised with Mr. Yuzik, GDI Publishing staff, Ryan Nordmarken and George Gingras, and carpenter, Darryl Fidler, who has direct ancestry to Batoche through the Caron and Fidler lines. The trip was a huge success and enough wood was salvaged to create the majority of what you see before you. Of interest, it did not go unnoticed that our team was similar in composition to the players involved in the 1885 Resistance at Batoche — French Métis like Darryl and George, Halfbreed Métis like Ryan and Karon, and non-Aboriginal people with ancestry from afar, like Dennis and Terry. What was heartening to us all was that, unlike the conflict which occurred in 1885, a mere 128 years later, we were all working together to achieve the same goal, something we imagine would have made each of our ancestors very proud.



*Carpenter Darryl Fidler on site with Dennis Fisher to collect wood.*

*Photo by Ryan Nordmarken, © Gabriel Dumont Institute*

*Hazen Pocha with her grandfather, Kim Pocha, examining a capote in Kohkum’s Cabin.*

*Photo by Peter Beszterda, © Gabriel Dumont Institute*



## Métis Entrepreneur Wins Saskatchewan Tourism Award

by Lisa Bird-Wilson

Michela Carrière, Métis entrepreneur, business owner, and guide owns and operates Aski Holistic Adventures on the Saskatchewan River Delta 60 kilometres northwest of Cumberland House. Launched in 2018, Carrière's business won a 2020 Tourism Saskatchewan Award of Excellence in the Indigenous Tourism Experience category. The award was presented at a virtual ceremony held in mid-November.

Aski Holistic Adventures offers year-round off-grid experiences which include, depending on the season, wilderness retreats, canoeing, plant gathering, tipi camping, winter camping, wilderness survival, berry picking, bird watching, ice fishing, snowshoeing, winter biking, and Indigenous cultural activities. At a young age, Carrière learned to canoe, hunt, and trap. She is also a certified wilderness first responder, herbalist, and horticulturalist. Her father is famed marathon paddler Solomon Carrière.

2020 has been a difficult year for tourism and Carrière's business is no exception. Forced to shut down in March 2020, she anticipates opening again in February 2021.

Of the award, Carrière says, "It's really important to win this award, especially this year. My business took a big hit with COVID-19. This award gives me a lot of hope for the future."

Carrière has many other interests and businesses. She is an author; her story, "The Moth and the Fox," published in *Grain Magazine's* Indigenous Writers and Storytellers issue (46.5) was longlisted for the 2020 Journey Prize. She also operates Delta Beadworks, making clothing, jewelry, and art. Her beadwork is inspired by her grandmother's designs. Carrière presented an informative and interesting session about her journey as an entrepreneur at the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI)'s 40th anniversary culture conference in February 2020. She is a past-participant in the GDI Pathways for Entrepreneurship program, taking workshops and certification. Carrière is clearly a multi-talented woman to keep watching.



# Elder Michael Maurice

by Karon Shmon

Michel Maurice, who also went by Michael, as well as being affectionately referred to as “Mooshom Mike” by so many of the young people who knew him, passed away in November 2020. He was a well-known Elder and cultural knowledge keeper who helped countless organizations and individuals during his many years of service to the community and the province. He was honoured to be appointed as a Senator of the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan.

The following interview was conducted by David Morin of the Gabriel Dumont Institute seven years ago. It really captures who Mike was and why he was so respected and loved. He was a great role model and his leadership and influence remains his legacy.

## *Could you please tell me your name and your home community?*

I was born and raised in Green Lake, Saskatchewan, but my grandparents were from Île-à-la-Crosse. All my relatives are from over there. I didn't realize that myself when I was growing up, but people would come to the house and would come and camp. I wondered, “Well then we must have a lot of friends!” Same thing happened when we moved to Meadow Lake and Green Lake. I didn't realize they were relatives of ours.

## *Where did you grow up?*

I grew up in Green Lake. I got my education over there. I went to school from when I was about 7-years-old, and started to just about I was 14 and partially completed Grade 8. At age 15, you were finished school. That was your education. They said, “Go to work!” “Where? There is no work.” That was the deal. We moved to Meadow Lake area. I had my 15th birthday there that spring. I couldn't even go into the pool hall because they had a rule of 16 over, so I did a lot of babysitting for my aunt Millie. She had kids of her own. I just basically hung around and stayed home, and I got to know a bunch of people from the reserve; people that were my own age. That's where I found out about residential school. I didn't know what it was about. We had nothing like that in Green Lake, which had a day school.

## *Who were/are your parents and grandparents?*

### *Where were they from?*

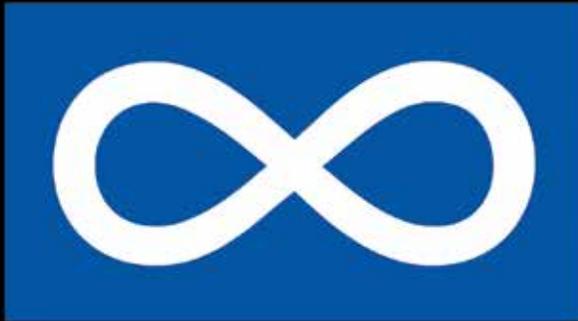
My grandparents' names were Marie Kipling. She was feisty and small, but she had a mind of her own, and she thought her way of thinking was right. That's what she'd fight for. My Mooshum was Harry Maurice from Île-à-la-Crosse and he was a trapper and a hunter. I was his buddy. I was maybe five-years-old and he took me all over the north country and the bush. We slept under pine trees in the winter time when it was -30 or 40 below out and made a little bed. That's where we camped. We were fortunate that we had a team of horses because my Mooshum and my Kohkum and the whole family worked for a farmer all summer and that was our pay, a team of horses, a wagon, and a sleigh. It helped out a lot because the community of Green Lake itself maybe had five or six teams of horses. There were maybe 200-300 people there. So it helped a lot of people out. My Mooshum and Kohkom actually raised me. My mom was a young mom, and they took over my upbringing. They were very nice and kind people. And they said, “I was the boss when I walked in there and when I grew up.” I have aunts that laugh about that. They said, “When you came, we were lost. We were put aside.” (*laughs*). I believe it! It was good. It was nice. I try to tell the kids that we never had any candy of any kind. When I grew up, I didn't know what pop was. I didn't know what ice cream was. Then, when we moved to Meadow Lake, I realized what there was out there. There was nothing like that in Green Lake. We had a restaurant, but we were too poor. We had just the necessities. That's all it was. Just for living because there were lots in the family who had to eat. There was no work. I had bigger uncles that were men already, and they had little families of their own, too. I had one brother and one sister. My brother lives in Edmonton and my sister has passed away.

## *What do you enjoy about being Métis?*

Everything! I enjoy life. The thing I enjoy really is kids. That's what I look for. They come to me and I go to them; just as simple as that. In our community, it breaks my heart when people don't get along. I am a Senator for this region. When I go to the meetings and I see people squabbling, I just walk away. What is the

*A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove ... but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.*

Forest E. Witcraft



Maarsii, Mooshom Mike, for making us so rich with your kindness, your wisdom, and your laughter. Maarsii for making us feel at home in your presence. Maarsii, for inviting us on your journey and showing us how to make a difference in the lives of others.

use of telling them anything? They know it all, but they should know that you need to get along to accomplish anything. Listening and learning from one another is better.

***What has been the most challenging thing about being Métis?***

I enjoy life. The main challenge is with our little ones, our kids. We have to get them into education. I see a young man like you sitting there and I enjoy that. I thank you for being here for us. I always tell young people, "You are not only doing this for yourself. You're doing it for the community and you're doing it for the children you are going to have." I have met a lot of very young First Nations and Métis people, and I tell them, "You can make things happen for yourself and for the people that you care for. Never, ever think that you're better than anybody else. You should be equal to everybody. If somebody is lacking try to help them out. Have patience with people." That's the key right there.

***What is the most important thing that you want others to know about the Métis?***

We're the same as anybody else. We want the same thing as anybody else. We want our kids to be successful. We want them to have a good education. We want them to be proud of who they are and where they come from. We are all human beings and we should take care of each other. Be kind to each other all the time.

***If you were advising yourself as a Métis youth, knowing what you know now, what would you tell yourself in a sentence or two?***

Be patient, definitely for sure. Don't think you are better than anybody else. That's very hard for a young person. You think you're number one all of the time. That comes with living as you realize that you're not number one and you're not that important after all. You can be gone and life will go on.

# Métis Education Pays in Many Ways

by Desirae Barker

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) is a Saskatchewan-based educational, employment, and cultural institute serving Métis across the province. Since incorporation in 1980, GDI has worked with thousands of Métis citizens to provide access to quality education and resources. Reducing the Indigenous education gap in Saskatchewan is a priority for GDI and is beneficial not only to the Métis residents but also to the province as a whole. In 2011, GDI reached out to Professor Eric Howe, a well-respected Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Saskatchewan, to conduct research and develop a report which analyzes the benefits of education for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan. The report is named *Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap in Saskatchewan*.

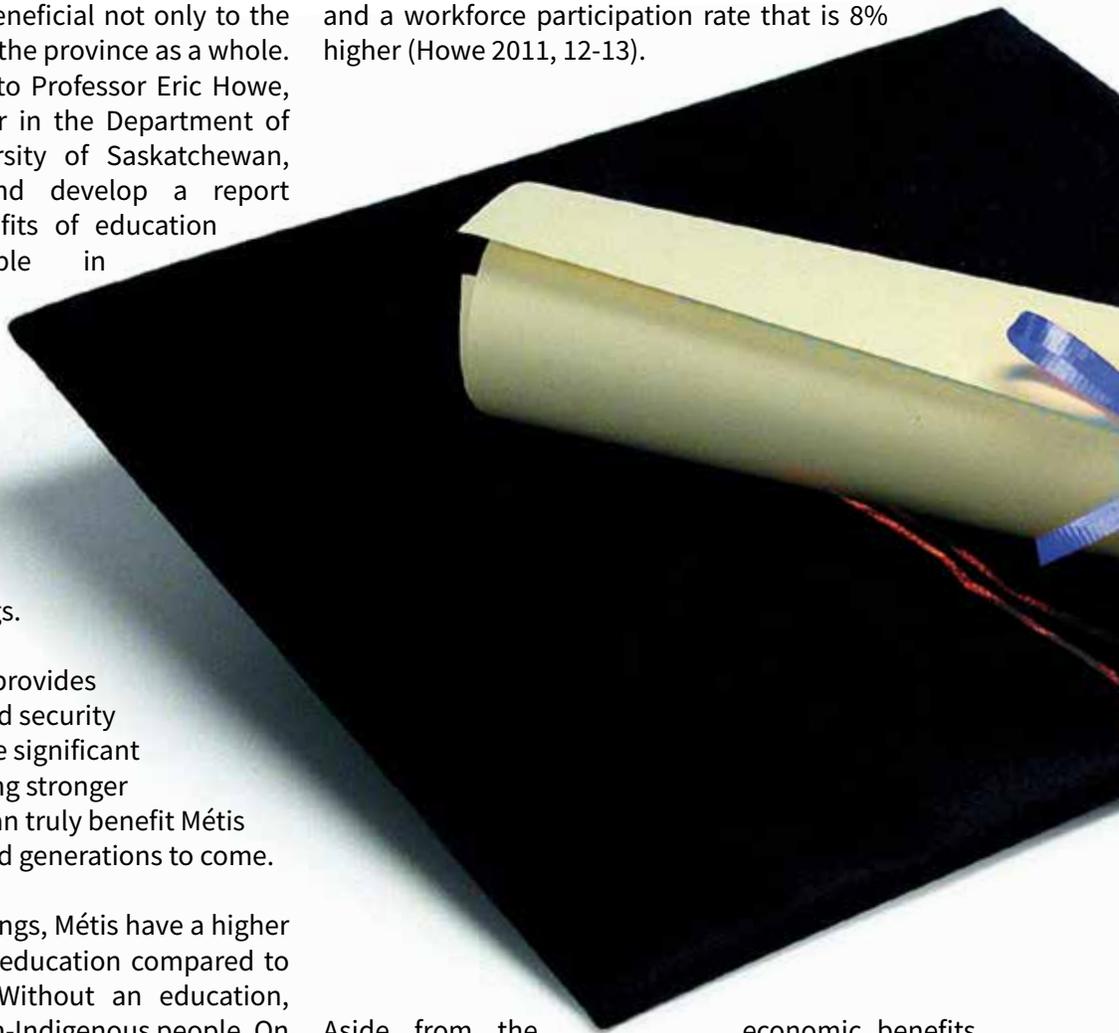
The report demonstrates that the value of education extends beyond the increase in lifetime earnings. For Indigenous people in Saskatchewan, education provides greater access to health and security and has also shown to have significant societal value; thus, building stronger communities. Education can truly benefit Métis people for their lifetime and generations to come.

In terms of increased earnings, Métis have a higher financial rate of return to education compared to the general population. Without an education, Métis earn far less than non-Indigenous people. On average, Saskatchewan Métis residents who leave high school early earn 49% less than Métis high school graduates. As Métis people move on to post-secondary education, the benefits increase. Those who complete a technical school trade or university program will earn an average of \$611,000 and \$1,187,000 more in lifetime earnings respectively.

With more education comes more participation in the Saskatchewan workforce. Education beyond

high school has made jobs more readily available for graduates. Métis people who complete education from a technical school have an unemployment rate 14% lower than the provincial average and a workforce participation rate 6% higher than average. Métis who complete university-level education have an unemployment rate that is 31% lower than average and a workforce participation rate that is 8% higher (Howe 2011, 12-13).

Aside from the economic benefits of education are the nonmonetary advantages. Howe states that “higher levels of education result in improved health and greater longevity.” This is partially due to the fact that Métis people with higher levels of education have increased job satisfaction, positive social interactions, and greater access to health benefits. Typically, employers that require educated employees can offer paid vacation days, paid sick leave, pension plans, dental care, and many more benefits that ultimately contribute to healthy



employees. These benefits will not only support the educated Métis individual but also their family.

For Saskatchewan as a province, the education of Indigenous peoples is significant. In Howe's report, he calculates that educating the Indigenous population of Saskatchewan would increase the present value of lifetime earnings for the population by \$24.7 billion. Saskatchewan's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019, the most recent year for which we have data, equaled \$81.5 billion. So the monetary benefit of bridging the education gap for Indigenous peoples equals about a third of the total value of annual provincial GDP. And these numbers only take into account earnings, it does not also look into the nonmonetary benefits.

These would include lower government expenditures on income support and social programming due to the higher workforce participation rates. Economic growth due to increased rates of human capital. Increases to civic-mindedness as educated individuals are more likely to be better informed and politically active. Although the list of benefits is not exhaustive, it is clear that educated Indigenous

peoples can contribute much to the province's economic and social prosperity.

To further the points of Professor Howe, GDI discussed the impact of education with a GDI Training & Employment (T&E) Métis client, Brian Thomas. Brian approached GDI for assistance with education and employment in 2015. Prior to, Brian was undecided about which field he wanted to pursue and sought assistance in securing long-term employment. After meeting with GDI employment counselor, Sheena Yew, Brian secured a position as an apprentice plumber with Metro Mechanical Inc. in Saskatoon. T&E assisted with school fees and a wage subsidy for the employer. These program benefits combined with Brian's hard work and dedication enabled him to become a Journeyman Plumber this year. He has now worked with this company for over five years. He has goals of continuing his education in Mechanical Engineering and potentially investing in the company. With a child on the way, Brian has successfully used his education to create a better future for himself and his family.

As depicted above, it is undeniable that education pays in many ways. Especially for Métis people, where the benefit of education doubles that of a non-Indigenous person. The full version of Professor Eric Howe's report *Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap in Saskatchewan* is available for free online. Note that the report is from 2011 and this article used the most recent figures updated from Professor Eric Howe's 2017 report named *SUNTEP: An Investment in Saskatchewan's Prosperity*.

Both reports can be found here:  
<https://gdins.org/about/reports/research>.



# Terminology in Transition: What does Indigenous mean?

by Karon Shmon

I hope the usage of the term “Métis and Indigenous,” seen at times as “Indigenous and Métis” or “Indigenous/Métis,” will cease being used because it is creating and reinforcing a misconception about to whom this refers. Métis are Indigenous! The Métis are recognized in Canada’s Constitution as being Indigenous, along with the Inuit and the First Nations peoples. This recognition was achieved after a long, hard legal battle, led by Harry Daniels, which resulted in the change to the constitution in 1982. Adding us on with “and” or the backslash is like saying “humans and women.” What comes after “and” is already part of what comes before it.

We are running into this problem frequently as most people think that, for Canada, “Indigenous” means only First Nations, which leaves the Inuit and Métis out of their thinking and mindset. Less frequently, they think it means First Nations and Inuit. Outside the environments where this is well known, primarily in government and education, people assume Indigenous does not include Métis. I even surmise that a survey of the public would prove this. Now, using Indigenous alone does not work as it reinforces a mistake by omission, not telling to whom this refers. Using “and” or worse, the “/” backslash, also reinforces a mistake, this time by signalling that we are outside the term. The way to solve this problem is not to reinforce it by adding on either the Inuit or Métis, but to use a comma the first time the term is used and say “Indigenous, the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit of Canada,” and keep going. After that, people reading the rest of the copy will have that in mind. Using a footnote may also work but is at risk of being ignored and a footnote does not suit all types of writing.

Further to this, I am of the opinion that Indigenous is not a good term because it takes us back to the time when a global, or pan, terminology was acceptable, such as “Native” or “Aboriginal.” I even see these terms as a lazy copout to think no further. There are very specific times when global terms are appropriately used. A rule of thumb is to use as specific terminology as possible. For example, if one was to speak specifically about the nations under Treaty 6, they should be named but the people living on what is considered Treaty 6 Territory includes us Métis because this is “the traditional homeland of

*Unlike Status Indians and the Inuit who had their Indigenous rights affirmed in 1867 and 1939, respectively, Non-Status Indians and Métis did not have their Indigenous rights recognized by the federal government. During the process to have the Métis included in the constitution, in the early 1980s, a government official asked Harry Daniels (1940-2005), then President of the Native Council of Canada: “Who are the Métis?” Daniel’s defiant and much-quoted response was: “We know who we are; we know the generations of discrimination that we have endured; we don’t need anybody to tell us who we are ... we self-identify, just like everybody else in this country.” The Métis’ constitutional status changed in 1982 when, largely because of Daniels’s successful efforts, the Métis were included as one of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples in The Constitution Act. Section 35(2) of the 1982 Constitutional Act lists the Aboriginal peoples of Canada as Indian, Inuit, and Métis while guaranteeing the existing “treaty” and “Aboriginal rights” of Canada’s Indigenous peoples. Harry Daniels shares with Louis Riel, (who achieved this through The Manitoba Act), the distinction of putting the Métis in the Constitution.*

the Métis.” At present, this territory also includes the Dakota, specifically those First Nations displaced to Saskatchewan, such as Whitecap, Wahpeton, Standing Buffalo, and Wood Mountain First Nation (Lakota). All these nations were here early and certainly have a right to say they are Indigenous peoples of this land. Some do not pre-date the Métis presence. This is why saying we are on “Treaty 6 Territory” only acknowledges those groups that took Treaty under Treaty 6 so it is not inclusive of the other Indigenous peoples who also are from/live here and did not take Treaty.

For any group or organization that has education as its mandate, this is an essential function as this is where people look to have the terminology validated and verified. We cannot stop the wave of people using “Indigenous” which is the same inclusive and ambiguous term as “Aboriginal” in that only well-informed people understand to whom these terms refer. Since we are in transition with terminology, and because we frequently find people who do not know to whom “Indigenous” refers, further specifying and educating one another through adding a paraphrase is required until this no longer occurs. We will know we have arrived when people start saying, “Yah, yah. We know Indigenous includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.” That will be a happy situation.

## Taanishi kischi aen shaakiihiyen

Valentine's Day, February 14, is a relatively new concept for the Métis and not one of our traditional celebrations. However, expressing our love and affection to one another is one of our traditions.

Here are some Michif phrases romantic partners often exchange.  
Enjoy these as you make a valentine or decorate cakes and cookies, or a beaded heart.

These, and over forty categories of phrases, are available on the Institute's *Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture* at [http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif\\_lessons/index.php](http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif_lessons/index.php).

**Ki kischi shaakiihitin ♥ I love you**

**Moon keur mooshkinew avik l'amoor ♥ My heart is full of love**

**Enn bel joornii di keur ♥ Have a happy Valentine's Day**

**Niyya ooshchi ♥ From me ...**

**Kishchiitaymitin taapitow ♥ I adore you always**

**Kiyya pikoo poor niyya ♥ You're the only one for me**

**Taanishi kischi aen shaakiihiyen ♥ Which way to your heart?**

**Poor kiiya moon amoor ♥ For you my sweetheart**



*beaded heart and photo © Connie Kulhavy*

# Bois de flèche, or as some say, Saskatoon

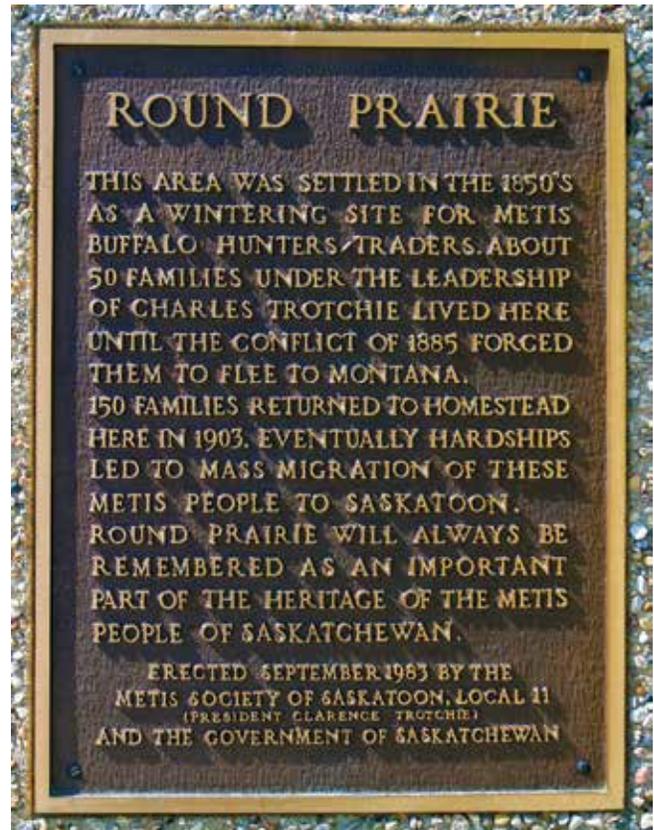
by Darren Préfontaine

The dominant historical narrative indicates that Saskatoon was “founded” as a temperance colony by Ontario Protestants in 1882. However, the site of Saskatoon was occupied by the Métis prior to 1882. In 1924, Patrice Fleury, a Métis leader during the 1885 Resistance, recounted assisting in an organized bison hunt in the spring of 1858 in the Saskatoon area. He recalled meeting Gabriel Dumont, then a young man renowned for being a great shot and for being perfectly fearless. The Métis frequently hunted in the bison-feeding grounds of the plains east, west, and south of present-day Saskatoon, where “buffalo grass” was plentiful and the river accessible. The vast herds made these plains a permanent summer pasture.

A 1927 memoir by Archie Brown tells of a bison hunt in what is now Saskatoon, which Gabriel Dumont related to him:

*During the first snowfall a party of them (Dumont and his bison-hunting party) were running buffalo on the flats where Saskatoon now stands. He had shot a buffalo and, getting off his horse straddled the buffalo intending to cut its throat. The buffalo rose to its feet and started with him on its back or neck. He soon fell off, however, and the buffalo went a short distance and fell again. He then finished him and he had a ride on a wild buffalo.*

By the 1870s, present-day Saskatoon was part of a larger Métis community that included the Southbranch Settlements—St. Louis, St. Laurent, Batoche, Petite Ville, and Toround’s Coulee (Fish Creek)—to the north and the La Prairie Rond settlement (Round Prairie, near Dundurn) to the south. During this time, the Métis also used a Red River cart trail from Batoche to Moose Woods (the present-day Whitecap Dakota First Nation) which went through what is now Saskatoon. Saskatoon also had a Métis name. As late as 1889, Gabriel Dumont called Saskatoon “Bois de flèche” or Arrow Woods. For the Métis, the area in and around Saskatoon was more than a hunting ground, they also had the beginnings of a permanent settlement here. They had riverlots in the Saskatoon region that they wanted to ensure their title to, but the Temperance Society’s leader John Lake worked with the federal government to take this land away from them in the early 1880s.



Commemorative plaque at Round Prairie, SK  
Photo by Peter Beszterda, © Gabriel Dumont Institute

Before it was incorporated as a city, Saskatoon had a significant Métis presence, including various nearby Road Allowance communities, such as “Frenchmen’s Flats” and Round Prairie. Métis Road Allowance communities, largely residents from Round Prairie, existed in Saskatoon’s Nutana and Exhibition areas well into the 1950s. Members of the Saskatoon Métis community were active in Métis politics and activism from the 1940s, but especially during the 1960s and ‘70s, when they established a number of Métis Society of Saskatchewan Locals and were involved in developing social programs to benefit community members. In 1980, the Gabriel Dumont Institute began operations in Saskatoon, providing the city’s Métis residents with educational, technical, vocational, and cultural programming while establishing a provincial presence to meet its mission. Today, Saskatoon is home to a large vibrant Métis community of over 15,000.

# The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Students

by Desirae Barker

Since March, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted operational changes at the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), with a focus on safely facilitating the continuity of education for all students. By upgrading classroom technology, launching new online platforms, and providing access to remote learning tools, such as laptops and printers, the Institute has been able to pivot to distance-learning programs.

With fall programming well underway, students have now been studying from home for months. To understand the impact of COVID-19 and distance learning, GDI surveyed 25 current students.

A majority of the students that responded to the survey said the impact has been substantial, with many stating challenges with mental health. The lack of social interaction, face-to-face learning, and communication overall have negatively affected their ability to be successful academically. Many state that the extended periods of time at home create a lack of motivation and make it difficult to find a balance.

In contrast, some survey respondents have had a positive experience with online learning. These

respondents have found ways to explore new independent activities, such as reading, praying, smudging, and meditating. They also enjoy the flexibility of online learning and the fact that they no longer need to commute daily to university, which has given them more time for studying and assignments.

Shayla Landrie, a first-year Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program student, responded to the survey with great advice for future students and those enrolled in education during a pandemic. She states, “Make space in your house that is quiet; have a desk, and a well-managed schedule written out! Take time in your day to de-stress and get away from electronic devices. Meditation is also critical in my schedule to de-stress, along with staying active!”

Respondents cited that GDI faculty and staff have been great resources during this time. They are very pleased with the financial support available, sharing circles, group study sessions, and the online library. These resources are ongoing and further information can be found online at <https://gdins.org/covid-19>.



# Métis Nation University Sponsorship Program Update

by Audrey Hestand

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) received \$5.65 million from the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) to deliver direct financial support to Métis students for the 2020-21 academic year, and secured an additional \$600,000 from other sources to support additional students. In total, 734 students were approved for funding for the 2020-21 academic year.

Bachelor of Education is the most common program in the Métis Nation University Sponsorship Program (MNU) students enroll in, followed by Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and Bachelor of Social Work. STEM programs (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) account for 18% of students this year, 9% are in Business and Commerce programs, and 16% are in a variety of Arts and Culture programs.

The majority of MNU students this year, 60%, are youth (defined as 29 and under); while 71% of students have no prior post-secondary credential, 19% have a certificate or diploma, and 10% of students have an existing degree. Due to the increase in funding for the 2020-21 year, GDI has been able to provide support to 28 students pursuing their Master's degree, while 13 students are in professional programs, 14 students

are earning their doctoral degrees, and one student is completing a post-graduate certificate.

Child care is a significant barrier to student parents, who often delay starting or completing their own post-secondary education until their children are in elementary school. This year, 7% of clients are single parents, and 10% of MNU students overall will receive child care support. This support ensures that the cost of daycare is not a barrier to student parents.

Access to assistive devices and academic support services is critical to ensure the success of students requiring academic accommodations for a disability. 145 (20%) of MNU students have identified as living with a disability, with 39 of those requesting disability accommodations and support. Common supports include academic strategy, tutoring, and assistive devices, such as screen readers, voice recorders, SmartPens, and noise cancelling headphones.

The MNU's impact will be seen for generations, not just in the lifetime earnings of graduates, but in the health and wellness of themselves and their families.



# The Métis Nation—Saskatchewan Citizenship Registry

by Desirae Barker

Becoming a citizen of the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) is an important part of preserving our culture and history. The MN—S registers eligible Métis individuals in the province through a comprehensive process that examines genealogy and residency.

According to the registry’s website, all four parts of the MN—S constitutional definition must be met in order to receive a citizenship card. The definition reads, “Métis means a person, who self identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry and is accepted by the Métis Nation.” Additionally, a successful applicant must be a resident of Saskatchewan for the last six months. Since beginning operations in 2009, the citizenship registry has welcomed approximately 13,000 citizens. Citizenship allows access to Métis-specific opportunities and services, such as housing, employment, harvesting, business, education, sports, and addiction services. On top of these tangible benefits, citizenship can also provide ancestry information, a sense of cultural belonging, and extended kinship. It also improves the collection of statistical data regarding Saskatchewan’s Métis citizens, especially the number of registered students, which helps to create a basis for meaningful

discussions on Métis rights and issues, ultimately helping to improve the quality of life for all Métis people in the province.

In 2019, the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly, which serves as the governing body of the Métis Nation government across the province, passed a motion that requires MN—S election voters and candidates to prove citizenship. The MN—S represents the political, socioeconomic, cultural, and educational interests of over 58,000 Métis citizens (according to the last Canadian census in 2016) divided into 12 regions. These elections are important to express opinions on issues and decisions that impact your life as a Métis while preserving the continuity of democracy. Geordy McCaffrey, Gabriel Dumont Institute Executive Director, adds, “A hallmark of a strong democracy is the number of citizens who participate in the election system and help guide the Nation.” The next MN—S election is scheduled to take place in the spring of 2021.

As the pandemic prompted closures of the MN—S Citizenship Registry offices across Saskatchewan, detailed application information and forms can be found online at <https://metisnationsk.com/citizenship>.



# An Interview with Métis Entrepreneur Chad Berg of Saskatoon Clayworks

by Brendon Demerais

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) reached out to a current client, Chad Berg, to visit his business and ask him some one-on-one questions about his journey to be an entrepreneur. We also talked about the challenges, successes, and adaptations he has made to make his business dream a reality.

## Interview Background:

In 2017, Chad Berg began planning the business concept of Saskatoon Clayworks. In 2018, Saskatoon Clayworks became a reality. Saskatoon Clayworks is a teaching studio that focuses on many different types of ceramic art. Along with classes, Saskatoon Clayworks specializes in custom manufactured ceramics and tile work. Chad's goal is to create a fun atmosphere that is both welcoming and supportive. Saskatoon Clayworks' full range of classes cater to both beginner and advanced potters and has managed to successfully adapt, despite the challenges faced from COVID-19 restrictions.



**GDI:** At what age or stage of life did you decide to become an entrepreneur?

**Chad:** I was about 35. It was being in a job that wasn't really satisfying and looking at some people

who were 10-20 years my senior and they didn't seem to be satisfied either. I needed something different.

**GDI:** Did you ever face any doubts from friends or family about starting up your business?

**Chad:** For sure! I had some friends that actually said: You should stay with a good paying government job. This might not be the best idea. That was a bit tough to hear. But that was a minority, there was definitely more that were supportive.

**GDI:** GDI always recommends gathering market research, information, and drafting up a business plan before taking the "leap of faith." Did you feel like business planning was an important tool in your start-up?

**Chad:** Oh, absolutely. That was probably the most important thing when I got the idea. How I became confident in the idea was doing a small business plan myself. Looking at the numbers, crunching the numbers, and when I saw there was an opportunity, that's when I decided I wanted to pursue it.

**GDI:** You cannot plan for everything, especially COVID. How has your plan changed or how do you anticipate moving forward and adapting?

**Chad:** Most of the people who go through classes get to a point where they want to make projects independently, and they become talented enough to do it. Having more access and options for open studio space are key for these clients. There is not enough of this space in our city and a lot of my clients can have access to this space after hours (while maintaining social distance). This has

kept my business busy.

**GDI:** What has been the most effective marketing strategy you have used?

**Chad:** Advertising in the *Saskatoon Leisure Guide* has been perfect to reach the right people. One thing that surprised me was that I tried using older media like radio ads, and I found that using Facebook ads are a lot more effective in attracting leads on a cost basis.

**GDI:** At the start of your business, you reached out to GDI and Métis lending organizations for support. How important are Métis-specific entrepreneurship supports in helping you succeed and making your dream a reality?

**Chad:** The lending part is critical. I don't think I could have done this on my own and I don't think a bank would have funded me. As far as GDI support, that support was also critical because when you start a business, there are a lot of things that are unexpected, and several delays ended up costing way more money than I ever thought was possible. That put me in a really difficult position. The transitional allowance and professional services support were a life saver.

**GDI:** How did you overcome the anxiety of starting up a business?

**Chad:** I think that starting your own business plan and then getting a professional to help perfect that plan is key. Without that, you can't have confidence and you have no way of knowing if the plan is realistic.



**GDI:** What has been your most satisfying moment as an entrepreneur?

**Chad:** Every day I wake up excited about what I do and I'm content. I never had that feeling before, or when I did, it was never consistent. The second thing that is really rewarding is that all of

my clients really enjoy being here and they really enjoy creating. Whether its brand new students or people who have access to studio space, people really seem to appreciate it and it's nice to be a part of that.

**GDI:** Thank you for the opportunity and interview Chad!

[www.saskatoonclayworks.com](http://www.saskatoonclayworks.com)



## Kimberly Parent wins SABEX Entrepreneur of the Year Award

by Desirae Barker

This past fall, Kimberly Parent was named the 2020 Entrepreneur of the Year for her business Saskatoon Salsa Dance Company. The Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce announces the recipients annually at the Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence (SABEX) awards.

The SABEX Awards is a celebration of the exceptional businesses growing and operating in the Saskatoon region. The SABEX Entrepreneur of the Year is awarded to a person who has established or expanded a business and demonstrated signs of success and viability in the venture.

Kimberly is a Saskatchewan Métis businesswoman who became an entrepreneur 15 years ago, building

her business, Saskatoon Salsa Dance Co., from the ground up. She spent a year overseas learning and teaching Cuban dance and once she returned to Saskatoon, realized that there were no lessons being offered beyond ballroom-style dance. With that, Kimberly began teaching Salsa and working on starting her own company.

In the early years of her company, Kimberly also worked for the Dumont Technical Institute. With experience in Indigenous research she was able to gain funding for her business through organizations, such as the Clarence Campeau Development Fund, the Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation, and the Gabriel Dumont Institute Pathways for Entrepreneurship Program.



Saskatoon Salsa Dance Co. was established in 2005 and offers lessons for every age and demographic in the globe-trotting dance styles of Salsa, Bachata, Rueda de Casino, and Kizomba. Kimberly and her team of instructors are happy to provide Saskatoon with a unique atmosphere that features both instruction and ample practice time to create a fun learning experience.

Operating a business during the COVID-19 pandemic can be challenging to say the least; however, Kimberly has used it as an opportunity to adjust her business model. She states, “I love what I do, I don’t want to lose that, so [the pandemic] gave me a renewed spirit to find a new way to run my business and keep going no matter what.”

Kimberly and the Saskatoon Salsa Dance Co. have contributed to the community in a very positive way. Her continued love for Salsa dancing and entrepreneurship is an inspiration to all Métis entrepreneurs. Find out more about the Saskatoon Salsa Dance Co. online at: <https://www.saskatoonsalsa.com/about-saskatoon-salsa>.

# Family Searching for Megan Gallagher

by Desirae Barker

Megan Michelle Gallagher was last seen by her friends and family on September 19, 2020. In the early morning of September 20, she was captured on a surveillance video at a convenience store on Diefenbaker Drive in Saskatoon. This was the last known location of Megan.

Megan is a resident of Saskatoon, with community connections to Île-à-la-Crosse and Cumberland House. She was also a former Dumont Technical Institute ABE Saskatoon student. Brian Gallagher, the father of Megan, said it is unlike his daughter to be without contact with either family or friends for so long. “Megan is a daughter. Megan is a mom. Megan is a sister. Megan is a fantastic relative and an amazing friend to so many people; she is a remarkable human being. So many things just don’t make sense. We so desperately want to find Megan,” said her father, while standing alongside family members and supporters at the Wicanhpi Duta Win, or “Red Star Woman” statue outside the Saskatoon Police Service headquarters on October 14.

The group involved with Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls have contacted the family and began a billboard campaign to help locate Megan. For months the police, friends, and family members from all over Saskatchewan have been canvassing Saskatoon in hopes to locate Megan.

The Saskatoon Police Service Missing Person’s report details Megan as a 30-year-old female, 5’10 tall, approximately 180 lbs., with shoulder-length brown hair and brown eyes. She has several tattoos, described as a half sleeve tattoo with a large owl from shoulder to the elbow, cross tattoo behind her ear, rainbow-colored feather on her ankle, the names “Jake” and “Adam” beneath her arm, and #13 on her hand.

In a statement released January 22, the Saskatoon Police Service announced that Megan’s disappearance is now being investigated as a homicide. They are requesting that anyone who was in contact with Megan—either in person or by phone, text, or social media between September 19 and September 30 contact them immediately.

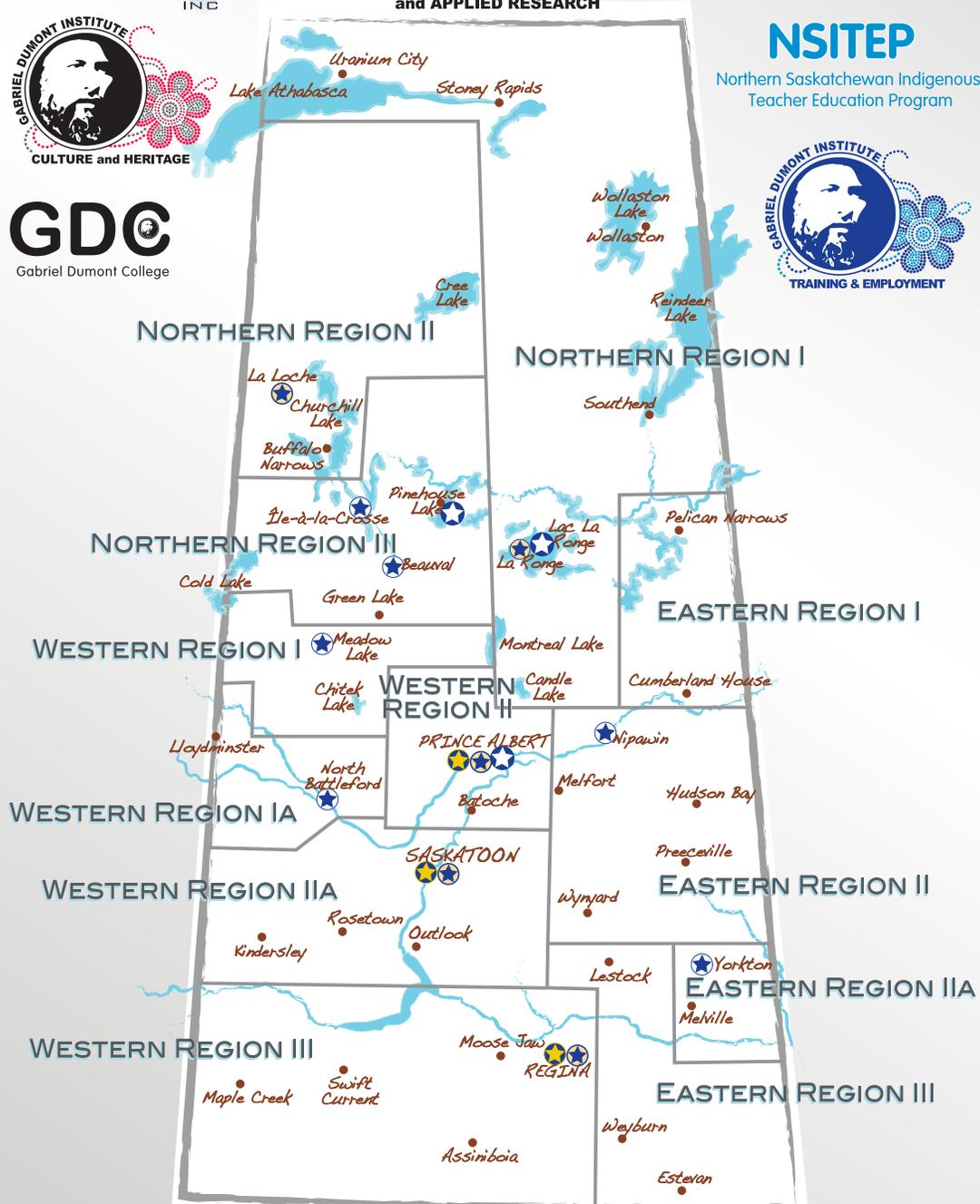
***The Saskatoon Police Service can be reached at 306.975.8300 and Crime Stoppers at 1.800.222.8477.***





**NSITEP**  
Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous  
Teacher Education Program

**GDC**  
Gabriel Dumont College



★ GDI T&E Offices   
 ★ DTI Learning Centre/ GDI T&E Office   
 ★ SUNTEP locations   
 ★ GDC locations

1-877-488-6888    [WWW.GDINS.ORG](http://WWW.GDINS.ORG)

# WINTER/SPRING PROGRAMS

**Helping Build Brighter Futures**

Aen ooshihtaahk mitooni kaykway poor li taan kaa payaamakuhk



**Practical Nursing**  
- Regina

**Workplace 101: Intro to Early Childhood Education**  
- Regina, Buffalo Narrows, Île-à-la-Crosse

**Safety Tickets**  
- Porcupine Plain, La Loche

**Enhanced Intro to Carpentry & Solar Panel Installation**  
- La Loche, Nipawin

**Essential Skills for the Workplace**  
- Yorkton

**GED/Trades**  
- Prince Albert

**Class 5 Driver Training**  
- Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Prince Albert, Yorkton, Regina, and Cumberland House



**DUMONT**  
TECHNICAL  
INSTITUTE  
INC

Apply online at [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)  
For more information call 1-877-488-6888

follow us on *Twitter* - @gdins\_org  
on *Facebook* - [www.facebook.com/gabriel Dumont Institute](http://www.facebook.com/gabriel Dumont Institute)

“schoolhouse during winter storm”  
Armand Paquette



*“My Mooshum was Harry Maurice from Île-à-la-Crosse and he was a trapper and a hunter. I was his buddy. I was maybe five-years-old and he took me all over the north country and the bush. We slept under pine trees in the winter time when it was 30 or 40 below out and made a little bed. That’s where we camped.”*

Michael Maurice