



THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE COMMUNICATOR



Lucille Scott and Elder Doris McDougall reading *Stinky Sock Jam* photos by David Morin

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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LEGEND

DTI—Dumont Technical Institute
GDC—Gabriel Dumont College
GDI—Gabriel Dumont Institute
GDI TE—Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment
GDSF—Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation
NSITEP—Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous Teacher Education Program
SUNTEP—Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program

READING ON THE ROAD: GDI PRESS HOSTS COMMUNITY BOOK READINGS

By Bethani Groat, Communications Coordinator

GDI Press toured some rural Métis communities to celebrate the launch of two new children's books, *Road Allowance Kitten: Full Circle* by Wilfred Burton and *Stinky Sock Jam* by Doris McDougall. Winter is traditionally a time to gather and share stories to pass down histories, cultural teachings, and raise our spirits in the cold dark months. Authors had the chance to read from their books in these Métis communities, which informed the stories, and GDI Press was able to strengthen cultural connections with rural readers.

The first book reading was held Sunday, November 30, 2025, at Trwaa Lee Vyay Cafe in Lebret, Saskatchewan. Wilfred Burton read from *Road Allowance Kitten: Full Circle*, and illustrator Christina Johns was also in attendance. This third installment in the *Road Allowance Kitten* series completes

Rosie, Madeleine, and Kitten's journey back south to live on the Road Allowance near the Fort Qu'Appelle Sanatorium (known as "Fort San"). The first two books in the series have become popular with educators and children alike. This third installment explores a new aspect of Michif life in the early 20th century. GDI Press is grateful for the financial support from SK Arts, Sask Lotteries, and BHP Canada to complete this latest installment.

On Sunday, December 14, 2025, GDI Press visited St. Joseph Seniors Club Bowling & Recreation Hall in St. Louis, Saskatchewan to celebrate the release of *Stinky Sock Jam* by Elder Doris McDougall, with illustrations by Lucille Scott. This was the first time GDI Press has had an author read in the original Michif-French, and the event was well attended with over 40 community members.

Story continues on page 5...



UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR FALL 2026



Northern
Saskatchewan
Indigenous Teacher
Education Program
(NSITEP)

La Ronge

Feb 15



Saskatchewan
Urban Native
Teacher Education
Program (SUNTEP)

Saskatoon, Regina,
Prince Albert

Feb 15



Indigenous
Community-Based
Master of
Education

Saskatoon

Mar 15



GDC
Gabe Dumont College

Apply early to ensure your spot in these popular programs!

WWW.GDINS.ORG/UNIVERSITY

MICHIF WORDS OF THE MONTH

PIIHTIKWAHIWAYHK
Accommodate

BOON MAARSHII
Bargain

LII PAABINAAN
Cranberries

TAYHKAY
Direction

2025 GDI STAFF SERVICE AWARDS

by **Bethani Groat**, GDI Communications Coordinator

The heart and soul of GDI are our people, and the Staff Service Awards are a chance to celebrate the contributions of long-serving staff members. The GDI Staff Service Awards are generally presented at the Annual Christmas Luncheons around the province. The Human Resources Department and Métis Culture & Heritage Department work together to coordinate the awards on behalf of the Institute. In 2025, GDI recognized 13 staff for their dedication and hard work on behalf of our clients and students.

The Five-Year Service Award was presented to Bernadette Aubichon (Prince Albert), Deanna Johnson (Prince Albert), Jennifer Mahlberg (Saskatoon), Shondelle Munro (Prince Albert), Bonnie Noels (Regina), and Dale Vinish (Saskatoon). Recipients were presented with a plaque recognizing their years of service and a custom GDI Métis sash and pin.

The Ten-Year Service Award was presented to Jody Corrigal (Ile-a-la-Crosse), Trisha Hume (Regina), Brock Pederson (Prince Albert), and Jaime Watier (Saskatoon). Alongside their updated plaque, recipients received a commemorative watch and pin.

Dennis Warkentine (Prince Albert) was presented with the Fifteen-Year Service Award, and Gareth Griffiths

(Regina) and Ernestine McNeil (La Loche) were each presented with the Twenty-Year Service Award this year. These three staff members were presented with a beautiful piece of Métis art selected by the Culture & Heritage Department alongside their plaque and pin.

Forty-one percent of employees have been with GDI for ten years or more, and six percent of employees have served twenty years or more! This strong staff retention rate is a sign that the Institute continues to be a respected employer and invested in creating stable jobs in the province.

The GDI Board and leadership team wish to extend deep gratitude to all those recognized for their years of service. The Institute would not be able to serve the Métis people of Saskatchewan without your hard work and dedication to our clients and students. Every department delivers exceptional results for the size of our organization, and that is because the staff really care about supporting our clients and students. We appreciate the extra hours and attention you put in to ensure that we can continue to provide exceptional Métis-specific education and educational resources, preserve Métis culture and heritage, and support a thriving Métis workforce.



Photos of Dale Vinish (left) and Jennifer Mahlberg (right) with Brett Vandale and Laura Burnouf photos by Celine Grimard





UPCOMING DTI PROGRAM DEADLINES



Practical Nursing
Saskatoon or P.A.

Feb 15



Heavy Equipment and Truck and Transport Technician Program
Prince Albert

Feb 28



Adult Basic Education - Semester 2
Various

Ongoing



Continuing Care Assistant
P.A., Regina, or Saskatoon

March 15



Business Certificate Hybrid

Online

Ongoing



Office Administration

Regina

April 15



For a full listing of all current programs and to apply online visit

WWW.GDINS.ORG/PROGRAMS

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE, REPURPOSE, RECLAIM, REVITALIZE

by Karon Shmon, GDI Cultural Advisor

Although Earth Day occurs every April, every day was earth day for our ancestors. We are now seeing a shift back to land-based learning as the impact of global warming and our desire to reclaim our cultural values both increase. We can be proud that the environmental footprint left by the Métis on the road allowances was minimal because those who lived on them were in tune with sustainable harvesting practices and protocols and our long-held value to avoid making waste. Even looking back as far as the bison hunt, we can see that every part of the bison was utilized, a value that went hand-in-hand with the value to share and to ensure everyone in the community was looked after.

After the 1885 Resistance, our people were forced to relocate and start over. This, coupled with the disdain that resulted from the one-sided account of what the victors called a rebellion, meant many Métis experienced subsistence living for generations afterwards.

Fortunately, the value to avoid making waste remained. This was important during the rough times when our people did so out of necessity. Besides the value to make something from what was available, we also valued making it aesthetically pleasing, or beautiful. In combination, our ancestors were proud of these two values. They made the most of things and they did so with creativity and style.

We are primarily aware of this because of the material culture that has withstood the test of time. I marvel at the beaded and embroidered items, such as clothing, footwear, household items, and quilts. These were made from what was available and not from what was desired. Today, we can get exactly what we want because we have the means and because there are so many readily available sources. I remain in awe of these gorgeous pieces made by our ancestors while I wonder when they found the time to do this after a hard day's work and conditions that were less than optimal. Catching or growing your food, preserving it, cutting wood for fuel and shelter, making your clothing, and doing laundry by hand are consuming tasks that would leave one with little time or energy. We must keep this in mind as we appreciate the beauty and ingenuity of items literally made from scrap.

While we no longer must be thrifty, we can reclaim the values espoused by those who came before us out of respect for their efforts. It also makes good sense in contemporary times that call for us to be acutely aware of what is harming Mother Earth. Reduce, reuse, recycle, and repurpose aren't new terms. They are reminders of the values and lifestyles of our ancestors, both of which are key components to reclaiming and revitalizing Métis ways of knowing, living, and being.





DTI NURSING STUDENTS BUSY IN THE SASKATOON LAB

"In the lab today, we learned how to insert an IV to provide fluid replacement and medication administration for patients in future practice. This is a very important skill to have as it is very common for hospitalized patients to receive an IV. The lab simulations allow us to practice in a forgiving environment where we are encouraged to make mistakes to help further our learning and practice the skills properly without judgement. Our instructors guide us with their firsthand knowledge of each skill and demonstrate it to us prior to completing the skill while allowing for questions and assistance. This ensures that we are prepared and practicing to the best of our abilities once we are in clinical settings and after we graduate."

— Mackenzie Armstrong



Photos by Céline Grimard

FUELING YOUR BUSINESS: FUNDING & GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MÉTIS ENTREPRENEURS

by **Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator**

On Thursday January 22nd, 2026, the Clarence Campeau Development Fund (CCDF), Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation (SMEDCO) and GDITE's Pathways to Entrepreneurship Program co-presented a workshop for Métis entrepreneurs and business owners called "Fueling Your Business: Funding & Grant Opportunities for Métis Entrepreneurs." Participants got a quick overview of some of the supports available to Métis citizens looking to start, expand, or purchase an existing business.

Tracey McMurchy, Kendall Horan, and Ryan Patterson presented on behalf of CCDF and SMEDCO, which used to be separate entities, but they have combined forces to offer a one stop service for Métis entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan. Now Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) citizens can access everything they need to get their business idea off the ground. Nicole Denbow presented on behalf of GDITE's Pathways to Entrepreneurship, which offers complimentary support to CCDF and SMEDCO funding programs. These programs help Métis entrepreneurs leverage the existing support available for business owners from the Saskatchewan and federal government.

The first step for any entrepreneur is the business plan. The research and planning that goes into developing a business plan is essential to secure funding. Working with a professional consultant on a business plan can be a completely covered cost for Métis entrepreneurs reducing barriers to launching a successful business. CCDF can offer seventy-five percent funding to develop a business plan up to a maximum of \$10,000, and GDITE

funds the remaining twenty-five percent to work with a business consultant one-on-one. Nicole recommends that you start by applying for the CCDF Business Plan Program before being referred to the GDITE Pathways to Entrepreneurship Program.

Next, entrepreneurs must secure the necessary business loans, grants, and investors to turn their plans operational. CCDF offers interest-free and interest-bearing loans and grants for Métis owned businesses. There are many funding programs that Métis business owners can apply for, but Ryan recommends starting by giving CCDF a call to get personalized recommendations on what programs would be the best fit for your business. Some of the programs include the Métis Entrepreneur Equity Program, Women's Business Development Program, Youth Business Development Program, and the "Ocînâs" (Community) Program to name a few. CCDF and SMEDCO contributions do not replace existing funding options like banks, and a business owner must still have equity of five to ten percent in the business depending on the program.

After your business is open, CCDF, SMEDCO, and GDITE will continue to support Métis business owners to grow and expand their business. Pathways to Entrepreneurship funds training and professional development opportunities that are either related to your industry or support developing your business management skills in general (e.g. bookkeeping). For the skills you can't learn, Métis entrepreneurs can receive GDITE funding to hire professional services like lawyers, certified professional accountants, or other specialized business professionals to reach their business goals.

Story continues on Page 5...



Photos by David Morin

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 3rd 6-7 p.m. - Virtual Info Session - SUNTEP Regina, registration required

Feb 3rd 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. - Embellish a Ribbon Shirt, registration required

Feb 7th 1-4 p.m. - Beginners Beading Workshop in Regina with Amy Briley, full

Feb 21st 1-4 p.m. - Beginners Beading Workshop in Saskatoon with Amy Briley, registration required

LET'S GET SOCIAL



Stay in touch on our socials:

Gabriel Dumont Institute
@GDINS_ORG

WWW.GDINS.ORG

READING ON THE ROAD: GDI PRESS HOSTS...

Story Continued from Page 1

Elder Doris McDougall shared memories from her childhood picking highbush cranberries to make jam and jelly for the winter months. The name of the book playfully refers to the pungent smell when cooking the cranberry jam. Lucille Scott brought her memories of St. Louis to life in original paintings that were sold at the book launch.

The community-based book launches were a great success because of the

local connections to the history and cultural teachings presented in the books. The authors also appreciated reading to the communities who have family and historical connections to the stories. GDI Press hopes to continue to have the opportunity to share stories across the province.

You can purchase both titles online at gdins.org/shopgdi.



Road Allowance Kitten: Full Circle cover art

FUELING YOUR BUSINESS: FUNDING & GRANT...

Story Continued from Page 4

CCDF also offers professional support through the Management Skills Program and Business Support Program which help clients improve their opportunities for running a successful business. No matter what stage your business is at, there is support available to help Métis businesses grow and thrive.

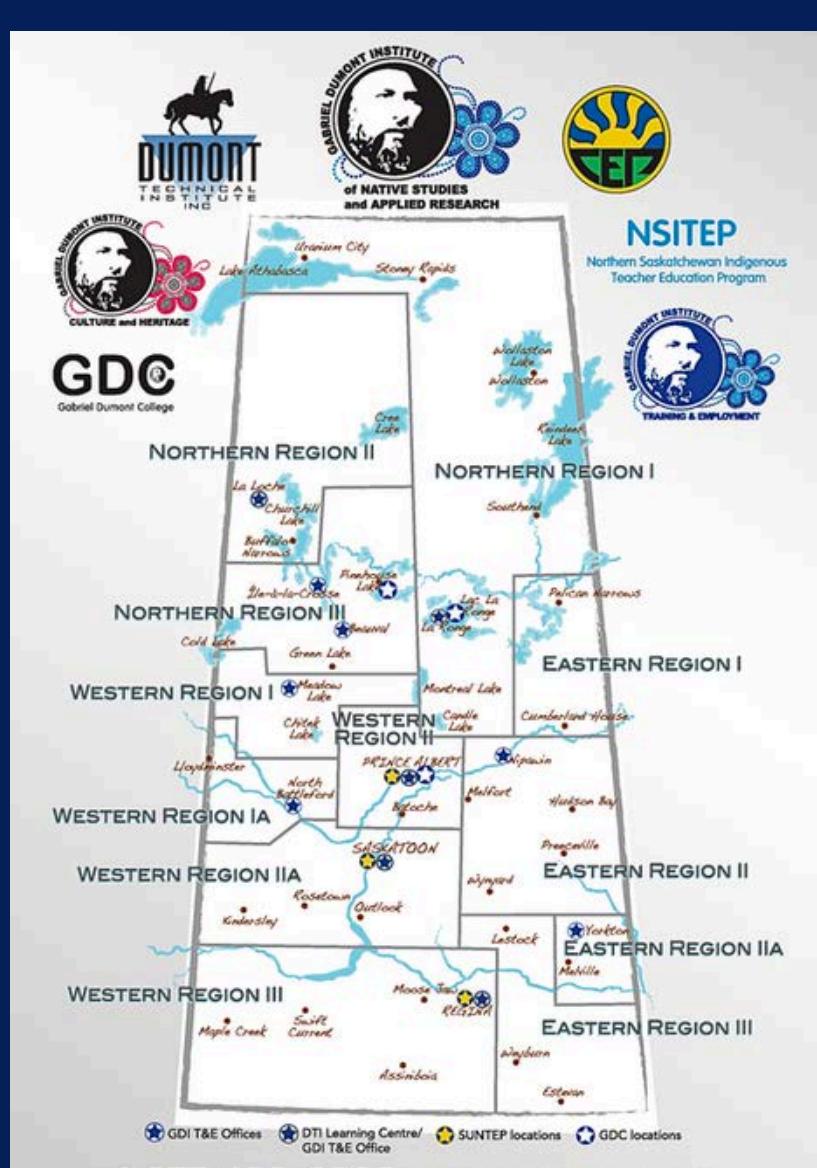
For all programs, applicants must be a registered MN-S citizen and operating, or planning to operate, a business in Saskatchewan. The business must be at least fifty percent Métis-owned and meet eligibility requirements. For more information, entrepreneurs are encouraged to call a CCDF or GDITE advisor to discuss their business needs and be matched with the program that is best for them.

FEBRUARY 2026 FINANCE & PAYROLL CUTOFF CALENDAR

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|--|---|---|--|----------|
| 1 | 2 | Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on ISETS Student Feb 6 Direct Deposits | Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts | | Cutoff @ 4:30 for Feb 13 A/P - Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Feb 13 Payday ISETS Student Payday | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on MNU Student Feb 13 Direct Deposits | Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts | | MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Feb 20 Accounts Payable Staff Payday | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | Family Day Stat Holiday | Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on ISETS Student Feb 20 Direct Deposits | Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts | Cutoff @ 4:30 for Feb 27 A/P - Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Feb 27 Payday ISETS Student Payday | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | | Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on MNU Student Feb 27 Direct Deposits | Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts | MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Mar 6 Accounts Payable Staff Payday | 28 |

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

CONTACT US



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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

