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

GDI Training & Employment Partners with the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Co.

Since it began operations in early 2007, Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment (GDI T&E) has had the opportunity to be involved in a number of discussions with private industry, public organizations and non-profit corporations to explore possibilities for mutually beneficial partnerships. Many of the discussions have developed into agreements that have real benefits for Métis clients. One such partnership is with the Saskatchewan Native theatre Company (SNTC). GDI T&E recently received approval for a partnership agreement with SNTC to offer the Circle of Voices program in Saskatoon. The partnership means that up to ten Métis clients will be able to receive training supports such as income supports, daycare, and/or travel to attend the program delivered by SNTC.

The Circle of Voices program is an eight-month, full-time program for youth ages 16 to 26. "This personal

empowerment program provides valuable skills and knowledge in the areas of culture, life skills and career to help youth reach their personal and career goals" (SNTC website, 2008). The program's focus on personal and career goals compliments the mandate of GDI Training & Employment to help prepare Métis individuals for meaningful careers. Through the Circle of Voices program participants "gain confidence, pride, self-esteem and a foundation for future growth and skills development" (SNTC website, 2008).

The participants in the Circle of Voices program work with professional mentors to create a live theatrical performance. The performance is created from inception to through development and finally presentation. The final product is created based on themes and issues important to the participants themselves. "Universal themes are cultural identity and the

intergenerational impact of residential schools. Past programs have addressed issues of gangs, homelessness, family and relationships" (SNTC website, 2008).

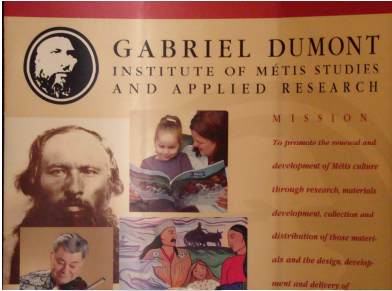
Drama 20 and Drama 30 credits are available to participants who complete the program. Credits are granted through Joe Duquette High School and Saskatchewan Learning.

The Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company is based in Saskatoon and "works to promote authentic and positive images of Aboriginal peoples and to create cultural understandings that strengthen the spirit of our communities. We strive to enhance the spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual development of individuals and communities through the arts" (SNTC website 2008).

Full admission criteria for the Circle of Voices program can be found on the SNTC website at www.sntc.ca.



Gabriel Dumont Institute Act Update



The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Strategic Plan places the goal of achieving a *GDI Act* as a top priority. At GDI's Annual General Meeting in 2005, the concept of a Métis Education Act was presented to the membership. Such legislation is standard for all other post-secondary training institutions in the province. For instance, the Regional Colleges are governed by the *Regional Colleges Act*, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies is governed under the *Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Act*, and SIAST operates under the *Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology Act*. GDI, on the other hand, operates under a contract with the provincial government.

With its successful twenty-eight year history of

providing quality education and training programs to Métis people and communities across the province, the Institute is in a strong position to have a similar governing act. Legislation recognizing the Institute as the province's Métis post-secondary education provider would positively impact GDI in terms of long-term stability and security, while recognizing our successful history.

The concept was put on hold in 2005 because of the political upheaval emerging from the 2004 Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) election. While the 2004 MN—S election was in dispute, the Métis' political voice was largely absent, making this objective unrealistic in the political climate at the time. In light of the new MN—S election in 2007 and renewed confidence in

Métis governance, a member of the present provincial government expressed an interest to establish legislation that would provide GDI with its own legislative act. While the member was willing to bring the issue forward as a private members bill, the Institute was unable to get the bill before the House during the 2008 spring sitting, as had been hoped. At this point, a draft has been created and forwarded to two provincial departments: First Nations and Métis Relations, and Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

The Institute looks forward to the day when Métis post-secondary education in Saskatchewan will operate on par with other institutions as a legislative act of government.



Collective Bargaining Agreement

In April 2008, the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) and the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees Union ratified a three-year agreement that amends the Institute's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) which expired on March 31, 2007.

Economic adjustments included retroactive pay increases and retention bonuses for employees.

The commitment by GDI was to have all payments in the hands of employees by the May 15th pay date.

The staff in the accounting department put in a great deal of time and effort to prepare payments associated with the new collective agreement. New pay rates, retro pay and retention bonuses needed to be calculated for all Institute employees. The commitment of the

accounting staff to completing this task and to meeting the May 15th deadline was impressive. In total, approximately \$324,000 was paid out to employees by the deadline established.



GDI Publishing Department Update

The GDI Publishing Department Staff are Darren Prefontaine, Curriculum Developer; David Morin Curriculum Developer; Christa Nicholat, Research Officer; Lori Perkins, Information Officer; Karon Shmon, Coordinator. The Publishing department is pleased to have SUNTEP graduates Amy Gallagher and Amaranta Sokol join the department as Curriculum Developers as of May 1, 2008. They also welcome summer students Brad Brown and Jennifer Kastrukoff.

GDI Publishing co-hosted National Aboriginal Day events June 20 and June 21 at Batoche National Historic Site as part of the Institute's on-going

partnership with the park. A highlight of the day was the re-naming of Fish Creek to Tourond's Coulee/Fish Creek. This renaming is a direct result of advocacy done for the change through the partnership. Other highlights included readings from Métis poets, authors, and Elders: Rita Bouvier, Greg Scofield, Anne Acco, Rita Flamand, and Harriet Oaks.

Other recent events include the *Métis Women's History of Resistance and Survival: Tourond's Coulee/Fish Creek and Batoche Symposium*, April 24 and May 9, 2008. The focus of the symposium was to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of Métis

women and children relating to community life, particularly the events leading up to, during, and after the 1885 Resistance. The symposium also focussed on the different ways to share these important stories. The symposium was videotaped by GDI for archival and resource production purposes.

The Publishing Department is currently updating the content of the GDI website. The Virtual Museum continues to grow in content and usage. The catalogue of resources was distributed to schools across Canada, sparking an increase in interest and sales in GDI resources.



Expanded Role for GDI in Language Preservation

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Publishing department will take on an expanded role with Michif language preservation and promotion. The Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) of Canadian Heritage has recognized GDI as a national leader in Michif initiatives and is providing the Institute with the opportunity to lead the Critically Endangered Language (CEL) strand aimed at safe-guarding Michif nationally. The Institute's National Michif Language Speakers Association will guide the

process. The steering committee for the Association will advise on the work being done in this area which will consist primarily of community based visits to preserve Michif and digitally bank the language.

A second strand will be to showcase Michif in 2010 when the 125th anniversary of the 1885 Resistance is observed. For more information on these initiatives please contact Karon Shmon, Coordinator, Publishing Department at 657-5710.



GDI All-Staff Meeting

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) All-Staff Meeting is an opportunity for Institute staff to meet, share ideas, exchange information, and build collegial relationships.

This year, the GDI All-Staff Meeting will be held **September 25 and 26, 2008** in Saskatoon (please note the correction in dates).

For more information please contact one of the planning committee members: Donna Ross, Amy Gallagher, or Rhonda Pilon.



SUNTEP Graduates 46 New Teachers

GDI graduates become role models and leaders who have a positive influence on other members of the Métis community.



SUNTEP Regina graduating class, 2008

May and June are graduation time for the SUNTEP programs. This year there are 46 SUNTEP grads from the three centres in the province, bringing the total number of SUNTEP graduates to 883 since the program graduated its first group in 1984.

The SUNTEP program started when GDI was born, some 28 years ago. It is considered to be the “flagship” of GDI. SUNTEP is the first and possibly most well-known of GDI’s programs. SUNTEP is often held up as a model for other TEP programs.

In a recent evaluation of GDI, former students said their reasons for attending SUNTEP were because they wanted to teach and wanted the Aboriginal component, but their primary reason for attending was because they had heard such good things about the program. The Evaluation notes, “GDI’s programs such as ...SUNTEP offer a distinctive and welcoming approach to ...post-secondary education that includes both sound substantive content and a cultural component that is widely perceived to contribute to student success—[SUNTEP is] a ‘program plus’”.

SUNTEP graduates are in good company—many of SUNTEP’s grads have gone on to become leaders in the community, the province, and beyond. SUNTEP alumni fill such

important roles as School Principals, Board Members, Senior Government officials, CEO’s, Entrepreneurs, and MLA’s—in short, SUNTEP grads are influential and important leaders. The GDI Evaluation report notes that “the most often mentioned unanticipated impact of GDI programs has been the ‘ripple effect’ of successful GDI graduates on their families and on their communities.” GDI graduates become role models and leaders who have a positive influence on other members of the Métis community.

SUNTEP graduates also have an important impact on students in schools. Imagine 883 SUNTEP grads who interact with 15 students each day—that’s more than 13,000 students impacted by SUNTEP graduates each and every day.

The four years that students spend in the SUNTEP program prepare them to be educators and individuals who will make a difference. “SUNTEP teachers bring unique skills and knowledge to their position which have a positive influence on the school system, other teachers, and on both Métis and non-Métis students” (GDI Evaluation Final Report 2008).

Regina SUNTEP Grads, 2008:

Candace Gratton
Deb Heichert
Denise Isaac

Logan Janzen
Allison LeForte
Brenna LaPlante
Megan Lefebvre
Justin McKay
Winston Montgrand
Allison Parr
Patricia Pritchard
Sylvie Roy
Deana Kempel
Brienne Spencer

Saskatoon SUNTEP Grads, 2008:

Kyle Blanchard
Melanie Chalifour
Aidan Fremont
Amy Gallagher
Alaina Gillespie-Meise
Brandie Heppner
Elvis Kambietz
Tiffany Laplante
Denis Lavergne
Alicia Lavoie
Desiree Macauley
Rhonda Neudorf
Josey Ross
Kristian Roy
Mika Settee Usiskin
Amy Sokol
Delaney Tait
Steven Vandenheuvel

Prince Albert SUNTEP Graduates, 2008:

Denise Dumais
Heather Elliot
Deanna Forbes
Kimberly Kozun
Myra LaPonsee
Wendy Linklater
Sheldon Mauvieux
Leanne Pilon
Jill Chenard
Kezia Schrader
Jennifer L. Smith
Jennifer M. Smith
Jessica Straf
Julie Tournier

Congratulations to all the graduates.



DTI Program Plan 2008-2009

The DTI Business Plan was approved by the GDI Board of Governors at the May 2008 Board meeting. The DTI business plan is based on information gathered from a number of sources including needs assessment processes that involve consultation with Métis Regions, Locals, and other stakeholders. The 2008-2009 Business Plan is presented in three phases. The first includes a cumulative list of programs that Métis communities identified as training priorities for their respective regions.

The second phase of the training plan represents those programs that DTI will be offering during the 2008-2009 delivery year. DTI will use training resources from BE, skills training resources and tuition revenue to deliver these programs. This is the list presented here (see right).

The final phase, phase three, represents the programs that DTI would deliver if additional funds were secured from other sources. The programs listed in the business plan have been identified as priorities, however, during budget forecasts and planning processes DTI was unable to identify resources to deliver the third list of programs, which includes approximately 23 additional programs. If additional resources become available, DTI will endeavour to deliver some of the programs from this third list. (The DTI 2008-2009 Business Plan is available for viewing on the GDI website at www.gdins.org).

According to its Business Plan, DTI will offer approximately 32 programs to about 500 students across the province in 2008-2009.



Location	Program	Seats	Days
Saskatoon	Sask Energy Readiness	18	50
La Loche	Literacy	12	200
La Loche	BE 5-10	20	200
La Loche	Oil Rig Prep Program	10	20
La Loche	Welding Job Prep Program	12	59
Jans Bay	Adult 12	20	200
Ile-a-la Crosse	BE 5-10	15	200
Ile-a-la Crosse	Adult 12	15	200
Pinehouse	Welding - 2nd Year	12	99
Meadow Lake	BE Program	20	200
Lloydminster	Multi Sector Safety and Employability Readiness Program	12	20
WR IA (St. Whal/Llod)	Oilfield Safety/Chainsaw	12	30
North Battleford	BE Programming	10	200
North Battleford	CSAP	20	215
Prince Albert	Literacy	12	200
Prince Albert	BE 5-10	20	200
Prince Albert	Adult 12	20	200
Prince Albert	Hvy Duty Truck and Trans. Me	12	100
Prince Albert	Hvy Duty Truck and Trans. Me Carry Over Program from 07/08	12	100
Prince Albert	LPN	14	180
Saskatoon	Literacy	12	200
Saskatoon	BE 5-10	20	200
Saskatoon	Adult 12	20	200
Saskatoon	LPN	14	180
Saskatoon	Management Studies	20	220
Regina	TBD (From wish list - Office Ed)	20	220
Regina	GED/Career Start	15	140
Cumberland House	BE Programming	20	200
Cumberland House	Industrial Mechanic	12	85
Sandy Bay	Industrial Mechanic	12	85
Yorkton	Career Path Upgrading	15	200
Distance Delivery	Métis Studies 10 (Soc. Science)	15	20



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Back issues of this newsletter
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[www.metismuseum.ca/brows
e/index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/brows
e/index.php/833)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.gdins.org



GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

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