



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

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## ASTSIF Partnership Announcement

By Lisa Wilson

On January 15, 2010, the Federal and Provincial governments and GDI formally announced their partnership for the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF) programming at a media event in Saskatoon. The ASTSIF programs developed by GDI include a large Health Sector Training initiative and a partnership project aimed at small to medium sized employers.

Ms. Kelly Block, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon-Rosetown-Biggar, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, announced the funding for the two projects that GDI will undertake.

“Our government is dedicated to creating the best educated, the most skilled and the most flexible workforce in the world,” said Ms. Block. “Through the advanced training and partnerships provided by the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Métis people in Saskatchewan will gain the skills they need to participate in the labour market today and prepare for the jobs of the future.”

Gabe Lafond, MN—S Minister of Education and GDI's Chair, noted, “These innovative and exciting new projects offer benefits to both parties: employers and Métis workers. Métis individuals benefit by gaining practical work experience, exposure to the labour market, and a chance to utilize and enhance their skills. Small to medium sized employers will receive assistance to prepare ready workplaces for Aboriginal employees and then find and retain skilled Aboriginal workers.”

GDI's Health Sector Aboriginal Human Resources Initiative and its Strategic Partnership Development Initiative will together receive more than \$5 million to provide job planning assistance and training to about 250 individuals. A recent amendment to the Health Sector Initiative added training programs for Health Unit Clerks and increased the funding to accommodate the change.

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour (AEEL) is contributing more than \$450,000 over two years to the project in Provincial Training Allowance

support for students in entry level programs. DTI will be offering up to 6 entry level health programs across Saskatchewan which will be eligible for Provincial Training Allowance support. The Honourable Rob Norris, Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour noted the significant role Métis and First Nations people play in the labour market. “This investment by the provincial government signifies our commitment to ensuring Saskatchewan people have the opportunity to participate fully in our labour market.”

The Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund is part of Canada's Economic Action Plan investment of \$200 million over three years to provide Aboriginal Canadians with training and skills development opportunities that create jobs in their communities. In total, the Economic Action Plan has committed \$1.4 billion for training, on-reserve housing, infrastructure and health.

Source: HRSDC News Release, January 15, 2010



## Policy Update

By Lisa Wilson




In December, the GDI Board of Governors passed a new Professional Development Policy for the Institute. The intent of the new policy is to enhance professional and program development opportunities for staff by supporting participation in professional conferences and educational activities relevant to post-secondary continuing education and program development practice, and by encouraging the sharing of knowledge gained through PD activities.

The general types of activities supported are Métis cultural activities, professional conferences and special events relevant to continuing education, and educational programs including such programs as seminars, workshops, certificate programs, and undergraduate and graduate study, to name a few. Training activities must be relevant to the programming strategy or assist in preparation for other employment opportunities within the Institute.

Academic and support staff actively employed in a continuing position are

eligible to apply for professional development support; a target of \$500 has been set per employee per fiscal year. Staff are solely responsible for determining what professional development they pursue and must submit all requests and pertinent details to their immediate supervisor for approval.

This article provides only a brief summary of the policy. A copy of the complete policy document and PD Request form are available by contacting Jim Edmondson at 657-2272 or [jim.edmondson@gdi.gdin.s.org](mailto:jim.edmondson@gdi.gdin.s.org). 

## Board Update

By Lisa Wilson



(Photo credit Meredith Penner)

A number of changes to the GDI Board of Governors are imminent, including pending new members and a new Board Chair. Following a Métis Nation—Saskatchewan cabinet shuffle on January 21<sup>st</sup>, the new MN—S Minister of Education is Karen Larocque. Ms. Larocque is the Area Director for Western Region III. Appointment as GDI Chair is pending approval from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. GDI Senior Management looks forward to working with Ms. Larocque in her capacity as MN—S Education Minister.

Furthermore, three new members will soon join the GDI Board of Governors pending final approval by the

Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. The new members are Collette Robertson from Western Region III; Shirley Ross from Western Region IIA; and Paul Trotchie from Eastern Region I. Governor orientation and training took place January 20, 2010 in Saskatoon, led by Irene Seiferling of Board Dynamics.

Upon final approval by AEEL, the GDI Governors will be as follows: Karen Larocque, Chair and Métis Nation—Saskatchewan Minister of Education; Glenn Laffleur, Secretary, Northern Region I; Kathy Palidwar, Treasurer, Eastern Region II; Paul Trotchie, Eastern

Region I; Bernice Aramenko, Northern Region III; Michael Bell, Western Region I; Jackie Kennedy, Western Region IA; Tammy Mah, Western Region II; Gerald St. Pierre, Eastern Region IIA; Collette Robertson, Western Region III; and Shirley Ross, Western Region IIA  
Guy Blondeau, Eastern Region III  
Vacant, Northern Region II

GDI senior management wish to acknowledge the good work done by outgoing Chair Gabe Lafond. Gabe's efforts and commitment as GDI's Board Chair helped move many items on the GDI agenda forward.



## Basic Education Scholarships Available

By Lisa Wilson

The Gabriel Dumont Institute has established the Basic Education Scholarship to support Métis Basic Education students. The Basic Education Scholarships are available to successful Métis Basic Education students to support the transition from school to work and/or further training.

The scholarships are available to DTI BE students who are enrolled in Level 3 (ABE 10) and Level 4 (Adult 12) programs. Students must apply for the scholarship by the application period prior to program completion. There are two application deadlines per year, May 1 and October 1. BE students who will complete their program in June this year should

apply for the May 1 deadline. Likewise, students who anticipate completion in January 2011 must apply by the October 1, 2010 deadline.

To be eligible, students must demonstrate an overall 90% attendance rate in the three months preceding their application; applicants must demonstrate academic ability; applicants must self-declare as Métis, and applicants must provide a one-page essay about their cultural roots.

The value of each Basic Education Scholarship is up to \$500. The award will be paid in a single installment in the last month of the recipient's program, or other date as determined by the Institute.

The Basic Education scholarship is one scholarship offered under the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment Scholarship Fund. The fund is based on an investment of \$1.3 million; interest accrued on the initial investment will be allocated as scholarships.

Priority for Basic Education Scholarship awards will be given to Dumont Technical Institute students.

**Deadlines** for applications are **May 1<sup>st</sup>** and **October 1<sup>st</sup>** annually.

Applications will be available on the GDI website:  
**[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)**



(Photo credit Meredith Penner)

## GDI Chair Olympic Torchbearer

By Lisa Wilson

GDI's Chair, Gabe Lafond, participated as an Olympic Torchbearer in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Torch Relay that passed through Saskatchewan earlier this month. Gabe ran with the torch through North Battleford as it made its way from Prince Albert to Lloydminster on January 12<sup>th</sup>.

The 2010 Olympic Torch Relay is the longest Olympic Torch Relay in history to be contained within the host country.

The Olympic Torch Relay is over 100 days in length and will involve over 1,000 communities and places of interest where torchbearers will carry the flame. The Olympic flame will travel over 45,000 kilometers during the course of the relay, from coast to coast to coast. Gabe is one of 12,000 people will have the honour of being an Olympic Torchbearer during the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay. Most Torchbearers are selected

through public programs.

The 2010 Olympic Torch Relay began in Canada on October 30, 2009 and will conclude at the Opening Ceremony signaling the start of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games on February 12, 2010.



## Things are Rockin' in Regina

By Kristen Rutten

Dumont Technical Institute in Regina kicked off the year with a Coffee House and Métis Entertainment Night as a means to promote DTI's new programs. The event was a huge success. With pizza, Starbucks coffee, fresh bannock and beverages, the evening started off with a bang.

We were entertained by amazing local Métis talent included John Corrigan, whose fiddling was previously featured on Voices of the North, Regina Reelers, a fantastic jigging group, Flatland Reelers, a young energetic fiddling/guitar band, Tracey Chastis, a SUNTEP vocalist who is an alumni of the Management Studies program, and Wynter Ducharme, a guitar accompanist, also a SUNTEP student. The crowd of one hundred couldn't stop their toes from tapping.

Since our big event at the end of October, we have moved to a larger location and have continued to expand our programming options. We are currently offering GED and soon we will be offering the SaskEnergy Induction Program. We are excited to have ASTSIF programs including Continuing Care

Assistant (January intake and August intake), Medical Device Reprocessing Technician and, possibly, Health Unit Clerk/Office. Once all of these programs start running simultaneously, our new campus will sure be rockin'.

We have a superb bunch of students currently enrolled in the GED. They are full of energy and have wonderful community spirit. We have volunteered at the local Food Bank sorting products and packing hampers. They showed their enthusiasm for learning at the Saskatchewan Science Center and proved their good natured team spirit during our Annual Christmas party.

We are certainly looking forward to all that 2010 will bring to DTI in Regina.



Fiddler John Corrigan (above)



Vocalist Tracey Chastis (above) is a SUNTEP student and alumni of the DTI Management Studies program.



Regina Reelers (above)



## T&E Update

By Lisa Wilson

Institute senior management recently met with representatives of Service Canada regarding the imminent expiry of the AHRDA on March 31, 2010. Service Canada has announced that it will extend all ARHDA's across Canada for a six month period (April 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010). During that six month window, the new Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Agreements (ASETA) will

be developed and negotiated. The Métis National Council (MNC) is negotiating the Métis National Accord and it is expected that the new ASET Agreements will fall under the National Accord.

Last September the Government of Canada announced its successor strategy (ASETS) to the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS).

GDIT&E anticipates a smooth transition to the new ASETA with no delay in service or operations.

Further details are expected over the next several weeks and staff will continue to be regularly updated.



## Profile of *SaskTel Métis Scholarship* Recipients

By Lisa Wilson

In the spring of 2009, Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment (GDIT&E) and SaskTel entered into a joint partnership agreement to provide the *SaskTel Métis Scholarship*. The first deadline for applications to the scholarship was May 1<sup>st</sup>. The *SaskTel Métis Scholarship* had 34 applications. On May 26, 2009 the GDI Scholarship Selection Committee convened to review applications. Seventeen students received scholarships in the amount of \$500 each. Recipients have granted permission for the Gabriel Dumont Institute to provide their name, photo, course of study and submitted statement for publication

purposes. Profiles for some of the *SaskTel Métis Scholarship* recipients are as follows:

**Denise Blondeau** was a student in the Management Studies Program at the Dumont Technical Institute in Regina. Denise grew up in a small town and moved to Regina shortly after graduating from high school. She has worked in the hospitality industry throughout the world, which has helped shape her worldview through exposure to diverse experiences and cultures. Denise returned to school to begin a new chapter in her life.

**Kiley Sinclair** is a proud mother of two beautiful children, ages 2 and 7. In

2006, she graduated at the top of her class from Dumont Technical Institute. Kiley entered the Management Studies program to further her education so she will be more successful for herself and her family.

**Cherrie Martel** was a Management Studies student and is a single mother of two teenage daughters. She was seeking internship opportunities to pursue her goal of tax/audit expert. Keeping up with the community issues keeps this confident and experienced number-cruncher involved when she isn't giving her time to the SIIT student leadership council.



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Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

[www.metismuseum.ca/brows  
/index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/brows/index.php/833)

We're on the Web!

See us at:  
[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research

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#### GDI Mission:

*To promote the renewal and the development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection and the distribution of those materials and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.*



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research