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GDI 30th Anniversary
1980-2010



GDI Communicator

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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Report Release: Bridging the Aboriginal Education Gap

By Lisa Wilson

On November 9, 2011 Gabriel Dumont Institute along with economist Eric Howe held a public event for the release of a new report by Howe on bridging the Aboriginal education gap in Saskatchewan.

According to the report, Saskatchewan's economy is foregoing \$90 billion by not closing the Aboriginal education gap. The lost benefits are greater than all sales of potash in the history of Saskatchewan. In a province where our greatest natural resource is thought to be potash, this research sheds new light on what we thought we knew to be true. An even greater resource is Aboriginal people—and this is a resource that we have not developed. By closing the Aboriginal education gap, Professor Howe notes, we could be looking at a first-ever made-in-Saskatchewan economic boom with greater impact and permanence than the natural resource or technological booms of the past.

"Closing Saskatchewan's Aboriginal education gap would have the direct

effect of yielding \$90 billion in benefits," said Howe. "To put this into context, the potash industry is universally understood to be critical to the economy of our province. However, the total production of potash in Saskatchewan back to the start of the industry is...four-fifths of \$90 billion."

In the three-part report, Professor Howe notes that without an education Aboriginal people earn dramatically less than non-Aboriginal people, but education causes earnings to catch up. Thus, Aboriginal earnings increase more with education than for non-Aboriginals. Not only are there benefits to the individual, but also significant benefits to society. Howe combines the benefits of bridging the Aboriginal education gap to come up with the \$90 billion figure.

"This report is an eye opener," said Glenn Lafleur, Vice Chair of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Board of Governors. "Most people do understand the

importance of education to earnings in a general sort of way. What this report does is to show just how much, in dollar figures, that benefit is worth."

Professor Howe also examines the socioeconomic benefit of Saskatchewan's only Métis professional degree program, the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). He concludes that although the size of the Aboriginal education gap is large and will take decades to bridge, it would have been larger without the contributions that SUNTEP has made with its 975 Aboriginal graduates.

The full report is available for download at www.gdins.org

Eric Howe is a Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Saskatchewan whose specialties include Aboriginal social policy research and the economy of the Canadian prairies. GDI engaged Dr. Howe to conduct the research.

For further information, please contact Lisa Wilson at (306) 657-2249 or lisa.wilson@gdi.gdins.org



Collective Bargaining Update

By Geordy McCaffrey



At GDI we work with the employees to foster and create a productive and positive work environment. This work environment has developed over our 30-year history and is nurtured, in part, by our common purpose and background as Métis people and as those interested in advancing the interests of the Métis. We can also be proud of our record of positive union-management relations.

As many of you are aware, the institute and its union have been busy negotiating

a new collective agreement for the period of April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2013. Some of the more significant items that the negotiating committees have made progress on include:

- Deferred salary leave plan;
- Streamlined language around article 11 – Probation;
- Enhanced article 20 surrounding dispute resolution;
- Replacement of the current four increment dates per year to 12;
- Matching pension

increase of 0.5 percent; and -Wage increases at 1.5 percent, two percent, and two percent over the three years.

Both the GDI Board of Governors and the Union need to approve the work of the respective negotiating committees.

Our last discussion with the Union bargaining committee resulted in a commitment from both sides to take the agreement to our respective parties and seek approval. We are awaiting the results of that process. 🌐

GDI Opens Fisher Collection

By Lisa Wilson



On November 15, 2011 GDI hosted the official opening of the Dennis and Jean Fisher Collection at GDI Publishing building in Saskatoon. Dennis and Jean Fisher donated their collection of artifacts related to Batoche and the 1885 Northwest Resistance to GDI.

The Fishers were present at the opening, as GDI acknowledged and celebrated their gift to the Institute. Geordy McCaffrey, GDI Executive Director, who introduced the Fishers, said that “In the history of GDI, we have never received such a generous donation from a private donor.” He noted that “The various artifacts represent a key part of Métis, Saskatchewan, and Canadian history. They include artifacts belonging to Gabriel Dumont, the steamer Northcote, and the Canadian Militia, to name a few.”

McCaffrey expressed his gratitude to the Fishers for their donation and made the promise that GDI will hold, share, and house these important resources to the best of our ability, with hopes of someday displaying them in our dreamed-of Métis Centre of Excellence.

From the 1960s, the Fishers collected items such as shell casings, clay pipe fragments, flints, and projectiles from the farmlands that had once been the battlegrounds of the 1885 Resistance. Along with their three sons, the Fishers spent many days combing areas near Tourands Coulee (formerly known as Fish Creek), Duck Lake, and Batoche. Jean Fisher noted that the excursions were an integral part of their family life when their children were young and

that she has many fond memories from that time.

In an article in the Saskatoon Express (September 26-October 3, 2011), Ned Powers notes that some of the areas where the Fishers made the finds are “filled with so much growth today and the best sites of treasures aren’t reached without professional excavating” (p. 4). Dennis Fisher counts himself lucky that they collected what they did when they did because it is inaccessible today.

GDI is very grateful to the Fisher family for their donation. Much credit is due to Karon Shmon, GDI’s Publishing Director, and her staff, who developed the relationship with the Fishers and worked with them through the process. 🌐



DTI: 20 Years of Service

By Lisa Wilson

After 20 years of service to Saskatchewan Métis community, DTI is planning to celebrate this milestone with an anniversary event.

The establishment of DTI was a long time coming. First alluded to in the original 1980 agreement for GDI as a 'community-based adult education department,' the details of such a structure would take another 12 years to work out and become DTI. As early as 1987 there were talks about possible federation with SIAST, however, the actual federation agreement between DTI and SIAST was not signed until 1994.

In the interim, the Native

Services Division was established in 1988 to provide support to Métis students attending SIAST – then there were only a few Aboriginal students at SIAST. Meanwhile, Federal funding provided GDI with an opportunity to deliver adult training programs in communities, often in partnership with SIAST or University of Regina.

Finally, in 1990 a SIAST review committee addressed the need for a Métis owned and controlled institution to deliver adult upgrading and skills training. In September 1991, a Ministerial committee recommended that DTI be

incorporated; that the department enter into an agreement with DTI that would spell out its mandate and initiate federation with SIAST; and that DTI and SIAST negotiate a federation agreement.

DTI was incorporated on October 11, 1991. On October 14, 1992, a Master Agreement was signed between the province of Saskatchewan and DTI. The Master Agreement granted the authority for DTI to deliver adult upgrading and skills training programs.

In preparation for the 20-year celebration, a planning committee will be established at DTI to guide and direct the anniversary festivities. 🌐



Métis females and the *Aboriginal Education Gap*

By James Oloo

In December 2010, June Draude, Saskatchewan Minister responsible for Status of Women said, "As the Year of the Métis comes to a close, our government is pleased to recognize the historic and on-going contributions of Métis women to Saskatchewan and Canada." Métis women's contributions speak for themselves. This is especially more vivid if you consider the socioeconomic benefits of SUNTEP. Eighty percent or 780 of the 975 SUNTEP graduates are female.

According to the Howe Report, without a high school diploma, a Métis female has lifetime earnings of about \$260,104 (versus Métis male at \$546,671) while a non-Aboriginal

female earns about \$349,189 (versus non-Aboriginal male at \$693,273). When the Métis female gets a high school diploma, her lifetime earnings increase by over 130% to \$609,609 (versus Métis male at 78% increase to \$975,225) compared to non-Aboriginal females at 71% increase in lifetime earnings to \$597,140 and non-Aboriginal males at 42% increase to \$984,773

If there are two Métis females, one drops out of high school, while the other goes on to get a university degree, the difference in their lifetime earnings is significant. The one who drops out will earn \$260,104 while the one with university degree will earn

\$1,516,473, or 480% more. For Métis males, the one who graduates from university will earn 200% or \$1,119,361 more than his friend who drops out of high school.

Thus, there is a positive correlation between earnings and education for everyone. However, Aboriginal peoples have a higher rate of financial return to education than non-Aboriginal Canadians. Without an education, Aboriginal peoples earn significantly less than non-Aboriginal people. However, with education, the gap in earnings closes and largely catches up to non-Aboriginal earnings. Similarly, as Howe found, females have a higher financial return to education than males, and Aboriginal females have higher returns to education than Aboriginal males and non-Aboriginal Canadians because

of the gender earning differences at lower levels of education and the catch up factor with increase in educational attainment.

According to Professor Howe's calculations, individual and social monetary and non-monetary benefits of SUNTEP, such as higher incomes, better health, greater job satisfaction, and positive influence on both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, are worth about \$4.7 billion.

Assuming that 80% of the \$4.7 billion is due to the 780 female SUNTEP graduates, the female contribution is thus about \$3.5 billion. Note that Métis females also excel in other GDI programs besides SUNTEP, and most of Métis female contributions referred to by the Honourable Draude are priceless. 🌐



IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

Website

Between October 15 and November 14, 2011, the website received over 69,000 page hits. The Home page had 6,500 hits, Howe Report got 1,200 visits, Programs had over 1,200 hits, while Job opportunities had 3,800 hits. Recently added to the site is an Events section, where upcoming events are listed by date. The Louis Riel celebrations and the Fisher Collection launch were the first events listed here.

IT Support System

We received 54 requests to the support system between October 15 and November 14, 2011. Fifty requests are already completed and closed (a 92% closure rate). Overall, we have closed 65 calls in this period. Once again, I would like to thank Gordon Holtslander for his efforts in responding to the requests.

Service Level Agreement

A brief reminder of the main Service Level Agreements for the IT Department: When a Work Order is created, the main service targets we will adhere to are as follows: Within one working hour of a support email being received,

an automatic email is sent to the requestor and the IT Coordinator.

Within two hours, this is allocated to the assigned technician and the priority level is set. Priorities are set to either urgent (three days) or two weeks. By the end of the next working day, a response by email or telephone will be received by the requestor. This does not guarantee resolution.

Once the expected completion date is met, the Work Order is escalated to the IT Coordinator who will reevaluate it, and if necessary, assign a new expected completion date and reassign. If a request for information from the requestor is not provided after seven working days, the call is assumed to be resolved and closed. It is the responsibility of the requestor to request this call be reopened with a new expected completion date.

Intranet Usernames

We have been developing the Intranet site. Ready to launch are some Asset Disposal requests, Policies and Procedures and the

internal job vacancies. We will be assigning Intranet access to staff and will send an email to each staff member with a temporary password and a link to allow this to be changed when the account is created.

Anti-Virus

We have just negotiated a new 4 year deal for corporate Anti-virus with Sophos. In the New Year, version 10 will be rolled out, allowing new features, such as basic web filtering and access control directly from the virus client.

Web filtering

We have bought a web content filtering appliance through Sophos. This will help us to block undesirable sites at source, especially sites with viruses or malicious software and downloads attached. Thus, we will be able to manage real time Internet usage for the organization, giving us a sophisticated reporting function for staff and clients. Implementation will commence in December.




DTI New Program Offerings

By Lisa Wilson

Dumont Technical Institute has been approved to add four new programs to its 2011-2012 offerings. The new programs are Truck Driver Training in Yorkton, Security Officer training in Saskatoon, Medical Device Reprocessing in Regina, and GED in Beauval

(in partnership with Northlands College).

The cancellation of two skills programs that were originally on DTI's program plan led to available funds for three of the four new programs. The GED program is being added

based on uncommitted basic education funding. Labour market information for Saskatchewan supports the employment prospects for those who train in the three skilled job areas. DTI anticipates and responds to market demand for its skills programs. 



Career Counsellor Corner News

By Delaney Tait, Darcie DeBruyne, & Shelley Bellanger

Career Counsellors at DTI extends a warm season greetings to everyone. There are three DTI Career Counsellors in Saskatchewan: Shelley Bellanger looks after the Northern area, Darcie DeBruyne is in charge of the Southern Region while Delaney Tait is in the Central area.

In the Central area we have had two successful Lunch & Learns in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. We have also attended four career fairs, the Saskatoon Ex and Back to Batoche Days. Currently, we are planning on having some more networking sessions for the students and attending the SIEF conference in November.

We are happy to report that all of the students have a completed action plan and are working towards their summer employment goals. Community networking has also begun and we hope to establish some lifelong connections with organizations in our area.

In the Northern area, Shelly has spent time creating action plans and Essential Skills assessments. Resume writing, cover letters, and mock interview skills are also an important

part of our time in both the academic and trades classrooms. Also included are a variety of workshops on multiple topics. Shelly is looking forward to doing a new workshop that includes housing and housing needs within Saskatchewan. We are also calling former, current and future DTI students to find out if we can be of help to them in their search for jobs or further education. Shelly has taken a special interest in teaching Drivers Education to our students as this poses a huge obstacle to their employment.

In the Southern Region, we have been busy completing Career Action Plans, trying some journaling, and will be working on SMART goals. We have been fortunate enough to be invited by SGI to participate in their Mock Interview training session. Six of the students will be going to SGI in December to gain firsthand experience in employment interviewing with the SGI hiring committee. This is a good opportunity for the students. Darcie would like to extend a big vote of thanks to SGI for their support and for sharing their knowledge with the

students.

We have teamed up with GDIT&E Regina office for monthly presentations at the Regina Correctional Center. We have also done presentations at Four Directions. The goal is to create linkages in the community and promote Dumont Technical Institute Career Fairs and Expo's are an important and great way to cover many areas while only going to one location. There have been many attended this year with great results. Networking, promoting and being visible alongside other accredited universities and Institutes speaks volumes to the public about what Dumont Technical Institute has to offer.

This has been a year of discovery, challenge and growth for us. With our roles falling into place and the ideas and expectations starting to flow, we are confident that we will become more and more integrated into the student programming. We look forward to expanding our roles to ensure that we all work to the best of our abilities, and come together, to give our students the tools they need to achieve the ultimate goal of successful employment and a healthy life for themselves and their families. 🌐



Christmas Break Reminder

By Lisa Wilson

This is to remind all Gabriel Dumont Institute employees about this year's Christmas break dates as set by the GDI Board of Governors for the

Institute employees. The Christmas break will be from Friday December 23, 2011 to Monday January 2, 2012 inclusive. GDI will reopen on

January 3, 2012. These dates were passed by a Board of Governors motion on March 10, 2011. Plan a safe and fun-filled holiday season. 🌐



Gabriel Dumont Institute/Dumont Technical Institute

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK
S7M 0R9

PHONE:
(306) 242-6070

FAX:
(306) 242-0002

E-MAIL:
general@gdi.gdins.org

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GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

GDI Locations

GDI Head Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9
Phone: (306) 242-6070
Fax: (306) 242-0002

GDI Publishing Saskatoon

2—604 22nd Street West
Saskatoon SK S7M 5W1
Phone: (306) 934-4941
Fax: (306) 244-0252

GDI Finance and Operations

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9
Phone: (306) 242-6070
Fax: (306) 975-0903

DTI Head Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9
Phone: (306) 242-6070
Fax: (306) 242-0002

Toll Free (DTI):
1-877-488-6888

SUNTEP Prince Albert

48 12th Street East
Prince Albert, SK
S6V 1B2
Phone: (306) 764-1797
Fax: (306) 764-3995

SUNTEP Saskatoon

Room 7 McLean Hall
University of
Saskatchewan
106 Wiggins Road
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5E6
Phone: (306) 975-7095
Fax: (306) 975-1108

SUNTEP Regina

Room 227 College West
University of Regina
3737 Wascana Parkway
Regina, S4S 0A2
Phone: (306) 347-4110
Fax: (306) 347-4119

GDI Training and Employment Head Office

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9
Phone: (306) 242-6070
Fax: (306) 683-3508

Toll Free (T&E):
1-877-488-6888

GDI Library Regina

Room 218 College West
University of Regina
3737 Wascana Parkway
Regina, S4S 0A2
Phone: (306) 347-4124
Fax: (306) 565-0809

<http://gdi.voyager.uregina.ca/>

GDI Library Prince Albert

48 12th Street East
Prince Albert, SK
S6V 1B2
Phone: (306) 922-6466
Fax: (306) 763-4834



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