



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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Community Profile: Western Region IA

By James Oloo

Since January 2012, we have been featuring each of the 12 Métis Nation-Saskatchewan regions in the monthly edition of the *GDI Communicator*. This month we explore the socioeconomic and demographic profiles for Western Region IA (WRIA). The purpose of this series is to highlight the performance of the Métis population against such indicators. The article uses 2006 Canada Census data.

Each of the 12 regions has an elected Regional Director who is also a member of the MN-S Provincial Métis Council. Billy Kennedy is the Regional Director for WRIA. Region office is in North Battleford with local offices at Battleford, Lloydminster, and North Battleford. The Region is represented at the GDI Board of Governors by Jackie Kennedy.

WRIA has a Métis population of 3,030, about 40% of whom are below age 20 years. Half (50%) of the WRIA Métis population aged between 15-24 years did not have high school diploma, while the other half had completed Grade 12 or equivalent. Of those with high school diploma, 72% had Grade 12 as their

highest level of education and 28% had completed postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree. Among the general population of Saskatchewan in the same age group, 48% had not completed high school while 52% had high school diploma. Of those with high school diploma, 32% had completed postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.


There are 1,425 Métis people in WRIA aged between 25-64 years. Of this, 32% had no high school diploma (compared to 19% of the general population in the same age group) and 68% had Grade 12 or higher. Of those with Grade 12, 39% had Grade 12 as their highest level of education (compared to 26% for Saskatchewan); 25% had a postsecondary diploma or certificate in apprenticeship or trade (versus 14% for Saskatchewan); 22% had a non-university certificate or diploma from a college (versus 18% for Saskatchewan); and 13% had a university certificate, diploma or degree compared to 22% for the general population in the same age cohort in Saskatchewan.

Thus, among those in the 25-64 years age group, proportionately more WRIA

Métis population had postsecondary diploma or certificate in apprenticeship or trades and in non-university postsecondary training than did the general population in Saskatchewan at 25% versus 14% and 22% versus 18% respectively.

The relatively better performance by the WRIA Métis population is perhaps due in part to the work of Aboriginal-focused institutions such as GDIT&E and DTI. Such efforts should be enhanced even as we strive for improved performance in other areas.

Labour force activities for the WRIA Métis and non-Métis populations were similar. Among the WRIA Métis population aged 15-24 years, 65% were in the labour force and 35% were not. Of those in the labour force, 90% were employed while 10% had no job. For the general population in the same age group, 66% were in the labour force while 34% were not. And of those in the labour force, 88% were employed and 12% were not.

For the WRIA Métis aged 25 years and over, 73% were in the labour force while 27% were not. Of those in the labour force, 91% were employed. Among the general population in the same age cohort, 69% were in the labour force and 31% were not. Of those in the labour force, 95% were employed. 



Canadian Heritage River Nomination

By Lisa Wilson



St. Mary's School Jiggers perform at the GDI-MVA announcement. Photo credit: Bonnie Hryciuk

GDI and Meewasin Valley Authority have partnered to nominate the Saskatchewan and South Saskatchewan rivers for national heritage status. The rivers have been nominated for Canadian Heritage River designation, a national recognition given to rivers with extraordinary natural, cultural, and recreational significance. It promotes, preserves, and enhances Canada's river heritage, and ensures Canada's leading rivers are managed in a sustainable way.



SUNTEP Saskatoon Class of 2012. Photo credit: Ruth Daniels

"I'm pleased to recognize the rich cultural history of the South Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Rivers by approving their nomination to the Canadian Heritage River System," said the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada. Hon. Kent posited that "This

nomination is a testament to the hard work of community groups, Métis, First Nations, and the federal and provincial governments joining together to celebrate and conserve Canada's river heritage." Mr. Bill Hutchinson, the Saskatchewan Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport, described the successful nomination as "an exciting development for Saskatchewan."

In her remarks, Karon Shmon, GDI Publishing Director, highlighted the importance of the Saskatchewan and South Saskatchewan Rivers to Métis and First Nations peoples and the many communities each inhabited along the rivers. The rivers played a key role in the lifestyles and livelihoods of each. "We have heard of the role of Chief Whitecap and John Lake from our earlier speakers," Karon noted. "This area was traditional Métis buffalo hunting known as the

Bois de flèche or 'Arrow Woods,'" she said.

The cultural history of the two rivers dates back over 10,000 years, when they were a major trade and travel routes for Aboriginal peoples and European fur traders. They later became gateways for Canada's most famous explorers; many guided by Aboriginal peoples they met as they searched for a passage to the Western Sea; including Alexander Mackenzie, Henry Kelsey, and John Franklin. South Saskatchewan River was also the focal point of the Northwest Resistance of 1885, and includes national historic sites like Batoche, which remains sacred for the Métis people (Parks Canada News Release).

Official announcement of the nomination was made at the River Landing in Saskatoon on May 18, 2012 and was attended by numerous federal, provincial, and civic dignitaries who enjoyed the St. Mary's Jiggers to the accompaniment of John and Vicki Arcand, and a special appearance and song from Métis singer Donny Parenteau.



SUNTEP PA Class of 2012. Photo credit: Tyler Clarke

SUNTEP Graduations

By Lisa Wilson

Photos of SUNTEP Regina Class of 2012 were not available at the time of going to press.

It is the month for graduations at GDI's three SUNTEP centres. SUNTEP Saskatoon kicked off the festivities with graduation on April 28, 2012 where 11 student teachers were conferred Bachelor of Education (BEd) degrees. The Saskatoon graduates are: Kaylie Bell, Nicole Currie, Sarah Clements, Shane Cook-Laliberte, Amanda Goller, Dayna Inkster, Stephanie McLean, Nicole Pambrun, Danielle Piecowye,

Kelsi Pilon, and Justin Wiebe. Regina had their graduation on May 4, 2012 where nine SUNTEP students were awarded BEd degrees. They are: Jolie Brewer, Mandi Elles, Christine Morrisette, Karla Parisian, Robyn Pennington, Joni Racette, Megan Shiplack, Teresa Thrun, and Anita Uhl.

graduates were conferred BEd degrees. These are: Jessie Banks, Jennifer Brown, Katherine Burak, Joshua Depeel, Millissa Henry, Taryn Henry, Kayla Kaponyas, Destiny Martin, Lauren Tessier, Audrey McCallum, Troy Parenteau, Alisha Radke, Karen Rondeau, Ashley Stalwick, and Brittany Walker.

The SUNTEP Prince Albert held its graduation ceremony on May 18th during which 15

Congratulations and best wishes as you transition to the next stage of your career.



GDI Author Wins Top Saskatchewan Book Award

By Lisa Wilson

Author Darren Prefontaine was honoured with the top prize at the 2011 Saskatchewan Book Awards. Darren's book, *Gabriel Dumont: Li Chef Michif in Images and in Words*, published by GDI Publishing, won the *Book of the Year* award at the celebration, which took place in Regina on April 28, 2012. Darren humbly accepted the award, crediting the community and his GDI colleagues as instrumental in the book's production.

The *Book of the Year* award is presented to a Saskatchewan author for the best book judged on the quality of writing and the quality of presentation including visual appeal, illustrations and photography.

Of Darren's book, the jurors remarked, "Taken together, this thorough collection of

newspaper accounts, paintings, woodcuts, cartoons and extant photographs of Le Chef Michif - all elegantly reproduced - is far more than a simple compendium. Dumont steps out of historical footnote here and regains his complex life as a family man, warrior, ferryman, helper, and elder."

Upon accepting the award, Darren remarked, "I'm sure somewhere old Gabe would be very happy too."

GDI Publishing also won the *Award for Publishing* at the Saskatchewan Book Awards for Darren's *Gabriel Dumont* book. The *Award for Publishing* is presented to the Saskatchewan publisher of the best book, based on literary or artistic value, the quality of editing, book design, production and

content. The jurors commented that Darren's book is "a grand project that has had a delightful and beguiling result. That such a comprehensive and sweeping book should be delightful and intriguing to a great many readers is a tribute to its sparkling production values and curation of the material presented. The extensive text shows how Gabriel Dumont has become part of the prairie cultural fabric."

The Saskatchewan Book Awards shines the spotlight on the best authors and publishers in Saskatchewan. This year, 233 entries were submitted to the book awards for 13 prizes. Congratulations to Darren and the GDI Publishing Department for taking home two of those awards! 🌐



Dr. Thomas Chase, U of R Provost, presents Darren Prefontaine with the 'Book of the Year' award
Photo credit: Unbound Images

Île-à-la-Crosse Program Profile

By Dylan Pelletier

Have you ever been to Île-à-la-Crosse? If not, you really should! It truly is a jewel of the North. Situated on a peninsula at the centre of the Y-shaped lake Lac Île-à-la-Crosse, Île-à-la-Crosse is known in Michif as Sakitawak, which means "where the rivers meet." Île-à-la-Crosse has been an important Métis fur trading centre for over two hundred years.

Dumont Technical Institute is proud to be offering an Adult Basic Education (ABE) Level 3 Program in this important and historic Métis community. The program has been running for several

years and is hosted at Rossignol High School in partnership with the Île-à-la-Crosse School Division. The students are learning skills that will help them find future employment or continue their education in Adult Grade 12.

Jolene Roy, the instructor for the ABE Level 3 class, has worked tirelessly for the benefit of her 15 students. Roy is a certified Class 7 driving instructor and has helped the students get their Class 5 driver's license. Driver training is a huge barrier in the North and Roy has worked hard to help her students to overcome this barrier.

The ABE Level 3 students in Île-à-la-Crosse are proud Métis and very motivated. They have been fundraising for several months to take a bus trip to Regina and Batoche next month. While in Regina, the students will go on a tour of the Provincial Legislature and they will get to meet their MLA Buckley Belanger. The students have thus far raised over \$4000 for their planned trip.

We can be sure that such ambitious, proud and energetic Métis students will be very successful in their future career and educational goals. Congratulations and best wishes Île-à-la-Crosse ABE Level 3 students. 🌐



Justine Roy, rabbit snaring as part of Métis Studies 10 class.
Photo by Jolene Roy



SaskTel Scholarship Renewed For Three More Years

By James Oloo

In March 2009, GDIT&E and SaskTel officials signed an agreement to establish a three-year SaskTel Métis Scholarship Award for 2009-2012. The award is funded by an annual donation of \$9,000 by SaskTel and matched by GDIT&E bursary under the GDI Scholarship Foundation II.

business, computer science, or any other field of study that is related to SaskTel. According to the agreement, SaskTel provides career mentorship to SaskTel Métis Scholarship Award recipients and also informs them of available summer job opportunities with SaskTel.

and GDI representatives signed an agreement in February to renew the award for another three years covering 2012-2015 with disbursements beginning May 2012. The terms of reference, including eligibility and the amount of funding remain unchanged.

Between 2009 and 2012, 24 SaskTel Métis Scholarship Awards totaling \$48,000 have been awarded to successful Métis students. And in recognition of the success of the first three years of the scholarship award, SaskTel

For more information about the SaskTel and other scholarship please contact scholarships@gdi.gdins.org call toll free 1 877 488 6888, or visit <http://www.gdins.org>



Colten Barker

The aim of the award is to recognize leadership, academic achievement, financial need and community involvement of Métis students pursuing post secondary education in engineering,



Brian Grosskleg

Profile of SaskTel Métis Scholarship Recipients

By James Oloo

In 2009, GDIT&E and SaskTel established the SaskTel Métis Scholarships Award for a three year period. During 2011-2012, the final year of the award, 25 applications for the scholarship were received by the GDI Scholarship Selection Committee which then reviewed the applications. Four Métis students were awarded scholarships. Their profiles are as follows:

Brian Grosskleg has represented Saskatchewan in both National Skills Canada Competitions and Canada Wide Science Fairs. Brian frequently dedicates his time to community involvement and volunteer activities. He is an electrical engineering student at the U of S.

Tamara Wiebe is a single mother of three who balances her time between being a mother, attending classes, and volunteering in her community. Tamara's motivation, strength, and enthusiasm for success come from her children. She strives to be a positive role model for her children and wishes to "show them that anyone, at any point in their life, can improve themselves." Tamara is studying human resources and hopes to someday have a job with government or a crown corporation.



Lacey Laliberte

Lacey Laliberte was born in Île-à-la-Crosse and raised in Buffalo Narrows. She is in the business administration program at the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) in Prince Albert. Lacey plans to attend university in the future to further her education in business administration.

Congratulations and best wishes to all the SaskTel Métis Scholarship Award recipients.

Colten Barker is from North Battleford where he completed his grade 12 with honours at John Paul II Collegiate. He is studying electrical engineering at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) and often volunteers in various community projects and sporting activities in his home town.



Tamara Wiebe

Christmas Break 2012

Here it is... only May, the weather is warming up, dandelions are springing back to life, the tulips are blooming, and we are already looking ahead to Christmas season!

At the April 20, 2012 GDI Board of Governors meeting, the board members passed a motion setting the Christmas break dates for the Institute for 2012.

The dates are: Monday December 24, 2012 to Tuesday January 1, 2013 (inclusive). So mark your calendars, but be sure to enjoy your summer first!



GDI Publishing Books on FNCR Shortlist

By James Oloo

Two books published by the GDI Publishing are among the five titles shortlisted by First Nation Communities Read (FNCR) out of 38 children's books that were submitted for the 2012-2013 title selection. The two are *The Giving Tree: A Retelling of a Traditional Métis Story* by Leah Dorion and *Call of the Fiddle* by Wilfred Burton and Anne Patton, illustrated by Sherry Farrell Racette.

The shortlisted books will be showcased on the FNCR website throughout the year and the authors will enjoy promotional opportunities, including an author-illustrator tour to First Nation communities in Ontario.

Leah Dorion has (co)authored numerous books including *Relatives*

with *Roots and Drops of Brandy*. She is an instructor in the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) in Prince Albert.

Wilfred Burton is an award winning author who has worked for many years with Regina Public Schools, as a teacher and presently, as the differentiated consultant. Burton is a former instructor in the SUNTEP program.

Anne Patton is a retired elementary school teacher and a prolific writer of children's books

Sherry Farrell Racette is a former instructor in the SUNTEP program. Her works are in a number of public collections including the Saskatchewan Arts Board, MacKenzie Art

Gallery and the Canada Council's Art Bank. She is currently a professor at the University of Manitoba.

Founded in 2003 by the First Nations public library community in Ontario, the FNCR is an annual reading program that encourages intergenerational storytelling and information sharing, and family literacy, and is written by or involves the participation of an Aboriginal person. The program aims to enhance awareness of the relevance and importance of Aboriginal writing, illustration, and publishing.

The FNCR title selection winner for 2012-2013 will be announced in late May. For more information about the FNCR please visit <http://www.sols.org>. Congratulations and best wishes to GDI authors. 🌐



Wilfred Burton

Photo credit: <http://drlmhanna.rbe.sk.ca>



Leah Dorion

Photo by Sarah Rolles

IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

Website

During April 2012, the GDI website received over 141,000 page hits. Excluding the RSS news feeds, the highest activity was on the Home Page, SUNTEP, DTI Programs, DTI Application Form, and Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation pages

IT Support System

In April 2012, we received 42 new requests to the support system. 36 of the requests are already completed and closed (85% closure rate). There are currently 28 open Work Orders that we are working on.

Sophos Anti-Virus

The Anti-Virus upgrade to v10 has begun. This is being piloted in the DTI Regina office and so far has been rolled out without any major incidents. This version offers enhanced Spyware protection and a web filtering interface with the Web Appliance we recently acquired.

Web Filter

As part of the Anti-Virus renewal, we were able to negotiate a good price on a Web Filtering Appliance. This Sophos Web Appliance can block viruses and malicious software attached to websites at source; and is able to log and monitor web

browsing usage, as well as block any sites that do not conform to GDI Acceptable Use Policy. This is currently being piloted at DTI Regina with a view to a full rollout over the coming months.

IT Network Upgrades

As part of the ongoing improvements to IT Equipment, we have just completed an extensive network infrastructure upgrade on the Saskatoon sites. This included installation of new network switches, IT Cabinets and interconnecting parts. This will significantly improve the look and performance of the IT functions in the 917 and 1001 22nd Street buildings. Next up will be a cabinet and switching upgrade for Prince Albert and a server upgrade for Regina. 🌐



Anne Patton

Photo credit: www.willowawards.ca



Sherry Farrell Racette

Photo credit: www.willowawards.ca



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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



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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