



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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'In the Nick of Time ...'

By Michelle Suteau

I have an Early Childhood Education (ECE) Orientation program running from October 1st to December 21st in Pinehouse, SK. The ECE class hours are 5:00-9:00 p.m. to accommodate people who work or are in school during the day. Originally I scheduled a First Aid and CPR course for October 2nd and 3rd 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. but had to reschedule it because it was too short notice for some of the students. I rescheduled it for October 15th and 16th but had to postpone it again because SaskPower was in Pinehouse and had booked all the accommodations.

We finally rescheduled the class for Thursday October 25th and Friday, the 26th. The Global Safety instructor Cheryl Brulier was due to travel to Pinehouse on Wednesday October 24th but there was a storm and the RCMP turned all the vehicles around at Green Lake. I received a phone call from Global Safety's Lisa McCallum Wednesday evening to let me know the instructor was unable to continue traveling to Pinehouse and the course would have to be rescheduled again.

I phoned the ECE instructor in Pinehouse to request her to contact the students and inform them that the class had been postponed.


All hotels were booked in Meadow Lake so Cheryl drove to Dorintosh and got a room for the night. In the morning she decided to continue her journey to Pinehouse and teach the program. I received a phone call at 8:30 Thursday morning that the Cheryl was on her way up. I frantically phoned the students and asked them to be at the classroom by 1:00 for the First Aid and CPR class. They all showed up and waited for Cheryl who didn't arrive until 2:30 due to the treacherous road conditions. I contracted Global Safety to teach Infant CPR which adds 2 hours to the course. Students had to complete 18 hours of instruction to become certified and that meant putting in 2 long days. I ordered pizza both days so they didn't need to take meal breaks.

On October 26th, after 3 postponements, a winter storm and 2 long days of class, all the students were successful in receiving their First Aid/CPR certificates. On October 27th, one of the students, Jenna (Tinker) Natomagan, was at home with her 11 month old son Keethan. He was getting into her mop and pail and she took it away which made him cry quite heavily as any 11 month old who is not getting his way would. But this was much more

serious. Keethan cried until he stopped breathing and lost consciousness. He turned white and blue.

Jenna recalls how her entire family panicked. But she remembered her First Aid/CPR training and began to perform infant CPR on her son. She did 10 compressions and 2 breaths and was about to do a 3rd breath when he took a breath on his own. Throughout this process she kept tapping his chest and calling his name. Once he was conscious and breathing, she sat him up and began to comfort him.

In a subsequent visit to the doctor, Jenna was told she had saved her baby's life. Prior to October 26th, Jenna didn't have the skills to save a baby's life. Had she not taken the First Aid/CPR class, had Cheryl chosen to go home rather than brave the storm, and had we not added the Infant CPR to the course, Jenna didn't think she would have known what to do. For her quick thinking and caring action, Jenna will be receiving a 'Life saving' Award from St John's Ambulance.

Of all years I taught and worked as a Program Coordinator, this serendipitous situation has made every moment meaningful to me. 



Cecile O'Neil retires after 15 years with GDI

By Cecile O'Neil and James Oloo



Cecile O'Neil
Photo by Angie Yew

Cecile O'Neil joined DTI in 1998 as an Employment Counselor in La Loche. She served in the same position in Duck Lake, North Battleford, and Prince Albert.

In 2006, Cecile took advantage of growth opportunities that GDI is well known for and became a Program Coordinator for GDIT&E Prince Albert Office and later became the Acting Director (maternity leave position) of GDIT&E. Cecile then served as the Partnership Coordinator in Saskatoon until she returned to the Prince Albert GDIT&E office in 2010 as Program Coordinator where she has been an anchor in our Apprenticeship Initiative.

Cecile expresses her gratitude to GDI for the opportunity to serve Métis people. "Special thanks to Geordy, Lisa Wilson, Tavia Laliberte, and Brett

Vandale for believing in me." Cecile says that she has many fond memories of GDI as a rewarding place to work and she would highly recommend GDI to anyone seeking employment within a Métis Organization.

"It has been an honour to witness the success and achievement of many students and clients and it is such a phenomenal experience." Cecile continues, "I like to believe that my role at GDI has made a positive impact on many students and clients as evidenced by many a positive contact I have maintained with students over the years."

Over the past 15 years, GDI has touched many lives across the Province and beyond, and Cecile has been an integral part of our growth, prosperity, and service to generations of

Métis people. It is GDI staff like Cecile who with a constant smile and willingness to help others, make our students, clients, and stakeholders happy and understand that we always have to keep reaching out and improving our services to the Métis Nation.

November 9th was Cecile's last workday. She will be using her holiday time until December 31, 2012 when she will be officially retired.

It is a bittersweet moment to say goodbye to a friend and colleague who has meant so much, brought joy, positive energy and encouragement. But it is nice that Cecile will have time to kick back, pursue new dreams and enjoy her grandchildren. Thanks and best wishes Cecile. 🌟

2012 Louis Riel Day Celebrations

By James Oloo

On November 15, 2011, history was made when Regina became the first city in Canada to fly the Métis flag in its city square. The flag symbolized a powerful way to increase awareness of Métis culture, history and inspirations of a unique people whose homeland occupies a special place in Canada's history. Raising of the Métis flag was an important way of celebrating the life of Louis Riel, a Métis leader who was executed in the same city 126 years earlier.

Every year, Métis people commemorate the anniversary of the November 16, 1885 execution of Riel. While the day marks a tragic moment in Canadian history, it is also a day to celebrate Métis culture and the continuing progress the Métis

Métis people are making in fulfilling Riel's dream of the Métis taking their rightful place within Confederation.

As Riel once said, "We must cherish our inheritance. We must preserve our nationality for the youth of our future. The story should be written down to pass on." GDI has continued to heed Riel's wise counsel.

SUNTEP students held the Annual Louis Riel Day celebrations in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina. In Regina, Russell Fayant, a SUNTEP faculty member led a discussion on Louis Riel and his contributions. On that day, we witnessed Riel's prophesy that "My people

will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back" came to life as attested by many accomplished Métis artists, elders, thinkers, volunteers and proud Métis citizens.

We remembered the man who was elected to the House of Commons three times but denied his seat. A man who initiated dialogue that established Manitoba as a province, and gave voice to the Métis.

While celebrating on November 16, perhaps we should also rejoice on October 22, Riel's birthday, and take courage in our continued struggle for Métis education rights. 🌟



Photo by Cory McDougall



Reflections on DTI's 20th Anniversary

By Tony Blacklock and DTI Staff

DTI is GDI's Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Skills Training arm. Established in 1992, DTI celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2012. From its humble beginnings with four staff (May Hendersen, Lorna Docken, Morley Norton, and Marlene Laliberte) and the first principal (Anne Dorion) with deep conviction that Métis education is an essential building block to a better future for our people, DTI today has over 56 full time staff, which includes Marlene Laliberte. It has been able to fulfill its vision of 'Helping Build Brighter Futures' by following its philosophy of 'Learners Come First'.

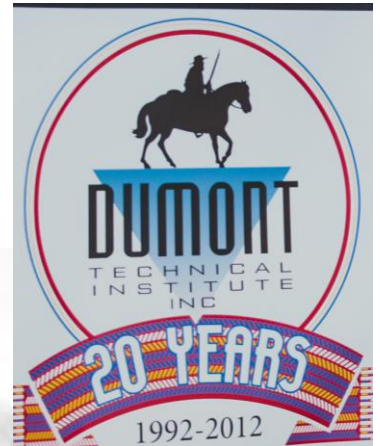
In 2011-2012 program year, DTI delivered or partnered in 34 programs (15 ABE and

19 Skills Training programs) to over 549 students across Saskatchewan. Of these 549 students, 297 were enrolled in ABE programs and 252 were in Skills Training programs. Of the 297 students in ABE, 173 completed/graduated (58% rate of completion). For the Skills Training program, 233 students completed/graduated their program (92% completion rate).

Overall, 406 students completed their education programs which is a 74% rate of completion for DTI programs; a completion/graduation rate that is significantly better than that for comparable institutions in the province.

DTI continues to be responsive to community needs and strives to deliver programs in local communities. During the 2011/2012 year, DTI was involved in 14 different communities either through direct programming from DTI or through partnerships with other regional colleges.

In the past 20 years, DTI has delivered 510 programs in 39 communities across Saskatchewan. We have graduated 182 Practical Nurses since 1992, making us the second largest producer of Practical Nurses in the Province, and have helped 538 Métis students who had left school before graduating earn their Grade 12 diploma over the last 10 years. We aim to continue 'Helping Build Brighter Futures' for Métis people. 🌐



James Oloo (L), Research Coordinator, and Jason DeBack, Apprenticeship Coordinator
Photo by Angie Yew

GDI Apprenticeship: A Success Story

By Dwayne Docken and James Oloo

A key defining characteristic of an apprenticeship is the combination of employment and training. The GDI Apprenticeship Initiative aims to have at least 120 apprentices by the end of 2013. Thus, our employer partners play a key role in the success of the program. One such employer is Shaughnessy Electric.

Shaughnessy has been operating in Saskatoon since 1962 and currently employs a GDI client, Jade Ethier, as a first-year apprentice electrician. We recently met with Jade and his supervisor, Wade Edin.

Jade has been indentured with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trades

Certification Commission and is scheduled to go for his first year post-secondary training at SIAST in March 2013. Jade thanks T&E for guiding him towards success and says that "my employer and fellow employees are been very cooperative and the work is very enjoyable."

Jade likes the fact that his employer assigns work that enables him acquire a broad range of experience at his workplace which includes commercial and residential areas.

Monthly follow-ups with GDIT&E Employment Counselors show that Jade and his supervisor

are satisfied or very satisfied with the progress he continues to make at work. His aim is to become a journeyman electrician.

Edin, a journeyman electrician, expressed his satisfaction with the performance of our client Jade. "Jade is always very punctual and ready for work." Edin said that he "will give Jade a raise soon because of the number of hours and commendable effort he has put in his work." Good job Jade, just keep rowing, man. Victory is in sight.

For more information please contact Jason DeBack at 1.877.488.6888 or jason.deback@gdite.gdins.org



Jade Ethier (L) with his supervisor, Wade Edin at the Shaughnessy Electric Head office in Saskatoon
Photo by Dwayne Docken



Remembering Jim Sinclair

By Lisa Bird-Wilson

The news came on Friday November 9th, just as GDI staff and DTI students were gathering in celebration of DTI's 20th anniversary as well as to honour Métis veterans: Elder and statesman Jim Sinclair had died at the age of 79.

Sinclair is best known in Saskatchewan for heading the Métis Society of Saskatchewan (MSS) and later Association of Métis and Non Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNSIS) as President from 1970-1988. It was under Sinclair's leadership that many Métis institutions were established, including the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatchewan Native Economic Development Corporation, Métis Addictions Council, Urban Native Housing Corporation, and Provincial Métis Housing.

Sinclair is also nationally recognized for his role in negotiating the inclusion of the Métis in the Canadian Constitution Act, 1982. At a series of follow-up constitutional meetings between the Premiers and national Aboriginal leaders, Jim Sinclair represented the Métis interests at all the meetings that culminated in the final one in 1987. In fact, Sinclair was the only national Aboriginal leader to be present at all of the meetings—the AFN had changes, the Inuit Tapiriit had changes, but the Métis had the consistency of leadership in Jim Sinclair.

Sinclair's funeral was held in Regina at the Brandt Centre arena on Thursday November 15, 2012. Messages of condolence from national and provincial leaders were read, impressing upon anyone who might not have been aware, the influence and range that Jim

Sinclair had as a politician and a national Aboriginal leader. Prime Minister Stephen Harper noted that Jim Sinclair's work to include the Métis in the Constitution would endure and form his legacy; a similar message was echoed by former Prime Ministers Paul Martin and Brian Mulroney; Premier Brad Wall declared that the flags at the Saskatchewan Legislature would fly at half-mast in Jim's honour.

Over the duration of the four-hour funeral it became apparent that above all else, a great many people considered themselves fortunate to call Jim a good friend. As a human being, he had a knack for making people feel significant and worthy. The first eulogy given by Jim's long-time friend, Wayne McKenzie, was filled with humorous stories about a man with a flair for negotiating everything, from politics to food.

AFN Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo described Sinclair as "a true giant among our people," while MNC President Clem Chartier called Jim Sinclair "the greatest First Nations and Métis leader of the 21st century." CAP Chief Betty Ann Lavallee said the enduring lesson she learnt from Jim was "humility above all else." Perhaps the strongest acknowledgement of Jim Sinclair's legacy came from FSIN Chief Perry Bellegarde. Bellegarde noted that Jim Sinclair will be remembered among our greatest leaders: "Poundmaker, Big Bear, Louis Riel, Gabriel Dumont, Jim Sinclair," he said. Chief Bellegarde then surprised

many in attendance by singing a beautiful honour song for Jim Sinclair that left many a damp eye amongst the crowd.

It is not often that a person is called many names because of his great deeds. Jim Sinclair has been called 'Fierce Métis Rights Advocate,' 'Métis Leader,' 'Pillar of the Aboriginal Movement in Canada,' and 'Treaty Rights Champion'. Many in the Métis community will probably remember him as "A Métis at Heart," another way in which Jim Sinclair was referred to. His legacy of ensuring the Métis are included in the Canadian Constitution will endure, as will his legacy of building many Métis institutions, here at home, and setting their foundations deep and true.

Gabriel Dumont Institute owes a debt of gratitude to this leader, who lobbied, advocated, organized and mobilized people, and ultimately negotiated a strong agreement for Métis education in Saskatchewan. Thirty-two years later, GDI continues to hold as the largest, most well established, and most successful Métis educational institution in Canada.

It is always important that we never cease to remember, acknowledge, and honour our builders and leaders. Jim Sinclair inspired an entire community to dream and for that, I say, *Maarsii*. 🌐



Jim Sinclair
Photo credited to menisnation.ca



Jim Sinclair
Photo credited to menisnation.ca



Jim Sinclair
Photo credited to cbc.ca



Community Profile: Eastern Region IIA

By James Oloo

This month we feature Eastern Region IIA (ERIIA) in our monthly series of socioeconomic and demographic profiles for each of the 12 Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) regions. The goal is to highlight the performance of the Métis population against such indicators. This will enable us to identify areas that need improvement. The article uses 2006 Canada Census data.

Each of the 12 MN-S regions has an elected Regional Director who is also a member of the MN-S Provincial Métis Council. The Regional Director for ERIIA is Derek Langan. The Region Office is in Yorkton with local offices at Esterhazy, Fenwood, Langenburg, and Togo. ERIIA is represented at the GDI Board of Governors by Kimberly Smith.

ERIIA has a Métis population of 1,165, just about 40% of whom are below age 15 years. 68% of the ERIIA Métis aged between 15-24 years do not have high school diploma (compared to 48% for the general population of Saskatchewan in the same age group), while the other 32% have completed Grade 12 or equivalent (versus 52% for general population). Of the ERIIA Métis aged 15-24 with high school diploma, 4% had completed a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree compared to 32% for the general population in the same age group. It is not clear why too few ERIIA

Métis aged 15-24 have completed a postsecondary credential. But it is possible that socioeconomic variables such as readily available unskilled jobs and the population structure (40% of the population is below age 15 years) could be contributing factors.

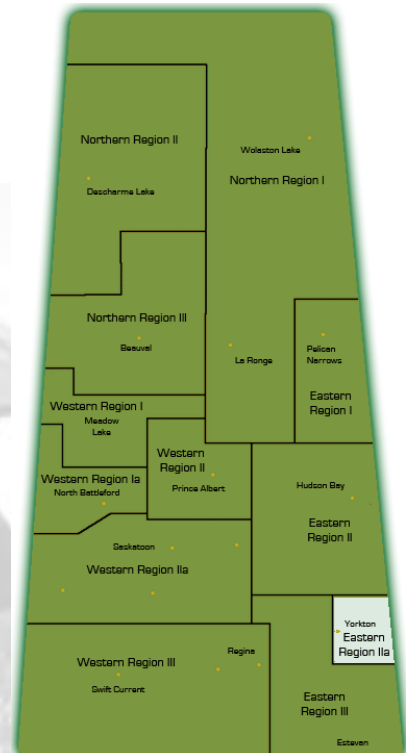
ERIIA has 525 Métis people aged between 25-64 years. Of this, 29% do not have high school diploma (compared to 19% of the general population of Saskatchewan in the same age group) and 71% have at least high school diploma. Of those with Grade 12, 31% had Grade 12 as their highest level of education (compared to 26% for Saskatchewan); 15% had a postsecondary certificate or diploma in apprenticeship or trade (versus 14% for Saskatchewan); 40% 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 group.

Thus, among those aged 25-64 years, relatively more ERIIA Métis do not have high school diploma compared to the general population at 29% versus 19% respectively. Slightly more ERIIA Métis have postsecondary diploma or certificate in apprenticeship or trades (15%) than does the general population (14%). Also, significantly more ERIIA Métis have non-university postsecondary training than

the general population in Saskatchewan at 40% versus 18% respectively. Further, relatively more ERIIA Métis aged 25-64 years (31%) have Grade 12 as their highest level of education compared to the general population (26%). This is a group that can be empowered through training to acquire skills that are needed in the labour market.

Labour force activity for the ERIIA Métis was as follows. Of those aged 15-24 years, 64% were in the labour force while 36% were not. 75% of those in the labour force were employed while 25% had no job. For the general population, 66% were in the labour force while 34% were not. And of those in the labour force, 88% were employed. Thus, relatively more ERIIA Métis aged between 15-24 years in the labour market were unable to get employment – at 25% compared to 12% of the general population.

For the ERIIA Métis aged 25 years and over, 61% were in the labour force while 39% were not. Of those in the labour force, 92% were employed and 8% were not. Among the general population in the same age group, 69% were in the labour force and 31% were not. Of those in the labour force, 95% had jobs. While there is a relatively small difference between the proportion of the ERIIA Métis and the general population aged 25 years and over in terms of labour force participation and employment rates, the gap could be bridged by providing relevant knowledge and skills training for this group of the ERIIA Métis population. 🌐



Karon Shmon, Director of GDI Publishing
Photo by P. Beszterda



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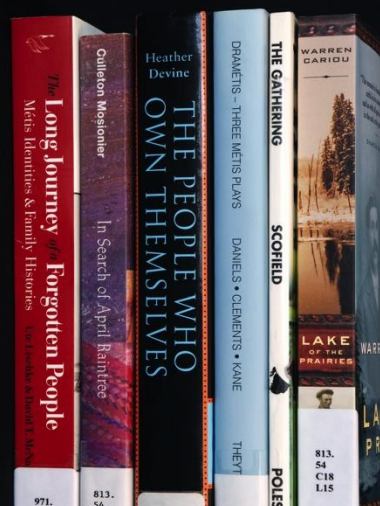
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GDI Mission:

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.



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