



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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GDIT&E Holds a Successful All-Staff Event

By James Oloo

GDIT&E held its annual all-staff meeting in Regina from October 7-10, 2013. The well organized event saw all members of staff from across the province arrive in Regina on schedule. Among the activities held on the first day was team building exercise led by GDIT&E Program Coordinator Tim Metz.

October 8 started with office environment yoga led by Coralie Potetz. Other events of the day included interoffice communication presented by the Director of Human Resources Jim Edmondson; scholarships presented by Amy Briley, the Scholarship Coordinator; and a presentation on online paystubs (see Page 2) by IT Coordinator Garrett Griffiths. That afternoon, Denise Urbanski, a motivational speaker and owner of Dragon 9 Training, led a session on constructing tomorrow today. Urbanski believes in 'empowering individuals and organizations by believing in and developing their worth and potential.'

Russell Fayant of SUNTEP Regina was the guest speaker on Métis history. Perhaps more than in other sessions, there was silent head nods and raised eye brows as Russell spoke and showed slides that testified to life woven with compulsions and contradictions, sacrifice and betrayals, challenges and

triumphs, fame and infamy; as well as the unrelenting determination to be free and succeed, to move forward with heads held high and shoulders back. It is perhaps, at least in part, due to the legacy of that past that the Métis can today say that they are 'Proud to be Métis.'

October 9 was a beautiful day for a tour of Regina. We visited GDI Regina building and some of us from out of town were amazed at how big and beautiful the building was. We then headed to the Legislature Building where we were given a tour by a very friendly and knowledgeable host. Because our visit was earlier in the morning and the Legislature was not in session, we basically had the building to ourselves. It was interesting to be inside the historic building where many decisions that affect the citizens of Saskatchewan are made. We then concluded our tour of Regina with a visit to the Saskatchewan Science Centre.

Afternoon session included presentations by Sylvia Moss on the art of interviewing; resume writing by Dwayne Docken and Jason DeBack; and career action plans by Brenda Fiddler and Tammy Cummins. Audrey Blondeau

led a discussion on Employment Insurance (EI).

In the evening was the SPF Banquet. Skills and Partnership Fund is a partnership involving GDIT&E, DTI, Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways, Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Commission, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and employers across the province to provide employment and apprenticeship training to Aboriginal people under the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative. Apprenticeship Coordinator Jason DeBack gave an overview and update of the initiative. He stated that GDIT&E is on course to meet or exceed the targets of the Initiative. Two employer partners were invited to share their experiences at the banquet. Wade Edin is the co-owner of Shaughnessy Electric and currently employs three GDI clients, while Patty Reinhardt is the co-founder of Reinhardt Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning Ltd and has employed four of our clients. Both were very happy with the partnership with GDI. Two SPF apprenticeship clients, Rob Parrell and Jade Ethier also spoke about their experiences.

The event ended on a high note. It was the final engagement of Tavia Laliberte as the GDIT&E Director. GDI Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey introduced Brett Vandale, the Director of DTI, as the new Interim Director of GDIT&E.



DTI Students Take a Métis Cultural Tour of Regina

By Darcie DeBruyne



Russell Fayant discussing Métis History with DTI Students in Regina
Photo by D. DeBruyne

On October 7, 2013, students, faculty and staff from the Dumont Technical Institute in Regina were treated to Métis Culture and History lesson at the city where Métis hero and icon Louis Riel was hanged almost 128 years ago. Russell Fayant, an instructor in the SUNTEP Regina program, presented a workshop on Métis history to Practical Nursing, Office Education, and Adult Basic Education students, faculty and staff. The workshop included a slide show

presentation followed by a downtown walking tour.

While many of us have heard the story of the great Métis leader before, it was remarkable to hear Russell describe Riel's life – his childhood, time in Montreal, his wife and children, his leadership skills and selflessness, as well as his sacrifice and betrayal. It was a real eye-opening presentation on the side of Riel and the Métis community in general that you seldom hear in the

mainstream media – such as their role in bringing the Province of Manitoba into the Canadian federation.

We had a nice walk around downtown and Victoria Park. The students and staff were surprised to find out the ties that Louis Riel had to Regina, from the small plaque about his trial to the spot where the church once stood where his body was temporarily concealed in the floor boards. We all learned a little more about the sacrifices and gains that our ancestors made for us.



Online Payslip Implementation

By Jim Edmondson

As detailed in the *Communicator* over the past few months, Gabriel Dumont Institute is implementing an online payslip system to replace the current paper versions. The Institute is currently running both the online payslips and a paper version for staff to practice with the new version.

Institute website since August of 2013 and will continue to be sent to employees in a paper based format up to and including the December 31, 2013 pay period when the paper option will cease and only the online version will be available.

If you have not already accessed your payslip online, we strongly encourage every employee to go on the website and access it prior to the January 1, 2014 end of the paper based option.

If you have any difficulty accessing the online payslip or want clarification regarding the payslip or any other aspect of the intranet site, please contact the IT department at

support@gdins.org 

Payslips have been available online at the

Payslips are available on the Institute website at <http://services.gdins.org>. The website has safeguards in place to protect your privacy.

Jail-N-Bail Fundraiser: GDI T&E's J. Halliday 'Jailed'

By James Oloo

Jacqueline Halliday, a Program Coordinator at GDI Training & Employment Regina office, laughs when she talks about October 22, 2013. That morning, Jacqueline was 'arrested' at her office and sent to 'jail' at the Cornwall Centre in the Annual Canadian Cancer Society Jail-N-Bail fundraiser.

Saskatchewan each fall. They get arrested and go before a 'judge' who sends them to spend time in 'jail' while raising 'bail' in donations for the fight against cancer.

\$800 for the Cancer Society, an organization that aims to win the battle against cancer and enhance quality of life for people living with cancer.

Jacqueline was turned in by an anonymous person and was happy to give up her freedom for a few hours by donating her time – and help raise funds for an important cause. She raised

While Jacqueline still doesn't know who nominated her to be sent to 'jail,' she says it was a great experience and a fun way to raise money for a great cause. For more information on the Cancer Society Jail-N-Bail fundraiser please visit

<http://www.cancer.ca> 



Jacqueline Halliday
Employment Counsellor, GDIT&E



Jacqueline Halliday spent time in 'jail' for a worthy cause
Photos courtesy of Sharon Hoedel

Many upstanding citizens of our province participate in the Jail-N-Bail across



Success Story: Keegan Cote

By Dwayne Docken and James Oloo

Keegan Cote is a first year apprentice electrician in the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative. Keegan works at the Alliance Energy Industrial and completed his pre-employment training at SIAST in 2012. His Employment Counsellor Dwayne Docken arranged an interview with him to discuss his progress.

Keegan first heard about GDI from a SIAST Employment

Counsellor when he was applying to get into SIAST's pre-employment training. He then got in touch with GDIT&E and is glad that he did. By the time Keegan visited GDIT&E he already knew that he wanted to become an electrician. He is happy that GDIT&E was able to answer his questions, give him advice, and connect him with Alliance Energy Industrial.

Keegan credits his pre-employment training for such important skills as problem solving, good work ethic, and the motivation to succeed in his apprenticeship program. Keegan enjoys his work which includes filling out safety information, working on energized equipments – usually from heights on scaffold or elevated work platform, and installing cables.
Continued on Page 4

GDI Apprenticeship Client Speaks at T&E All Staff

By Robert Parrell (Edited by James Oloo)

Robert Parrell, a Métis client in the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative, has just successfully completed his first year of training as apprentice plumber at Reinhardt Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning Ltd in Regina and will be going for his first technical training at SIAST in the coming days. Rob was invited to the GDIT&E All Staff meeting this month by his Employment Counsellor Ashley Hayden-Ross to talk about his experience. Here is his speech.

“Good evening and thanks for the opportunity to speak to you today. I never expected to find myself in this position. For more than 20 years, I was a production technician in the film and television industry. In 2012, the funding structure for film industry changed in Saskatchewan and it became clear that I needed a career change if I was to remain in the province.

The thought of starting a new career at age 45 was daunting. I had no work experience outside of film.

Although I was interested in plumbing, I did not know where to start. One of the things I did was contact GDI.

In September 2012, I was fortunate to be invited for an interview with Ashley Hayden-Ross. She was very knowledgeable, encouraging, and helpful. Ashley connected me with a number of employers. Within a week my initial meeting with Ashley, I met with Dale and Patty Reinhardt for the first time and started working as apprentice plumber at Reinhardt Plumbing and Heating days later. The GDI program likely gave Dale and Patty the confidence to take a chance on a 45 year old candidate with no plumbing experience, but with the desire and commitment to take on a new challenge.

I have benefitted from regular meetings with Ashley and I am grateful for her on-going support. Retraining can be a very difficult transition, and it has been made much easier because of Ashley and my supervisors and colleagues at Reinhardt Plumbing and Heating.

Although I considered returning to university, the cost and loss of income was not the most attractive option. My work in film was hands-on and very enjoyable. Working in an office environment was not my first choice. So, opportunity to enrol in an apprenticeship trade seemed like a great fit. I get training and paycheque, and Ashley keeps encouraging me and checking if there is anything that she and GDI can do to make the apprenticeship experience more effective. As a result, the challenges I was facing as part of the retraining process have been minimized.

At this great company and I have been exposed to a diverse field of skills as I work with talented and committed journeypersons who have generously shared their skills and expertise with me. I sincerely thank Dale and Patty for giving me the opportunity and Ashley and GDI for supporting me on the path to achieving my journeyperson certification in plumbing. I do not even want to think of where I would be now if there was no organization like GDI to help Métis people. Thank you so much.”



Rob Parrell
First Year Apprentice Plumber,
GDI Apprenticeship Initiative
Photo by James Oloo



Ashley Hayden-Ross
GDIT&E Employment Counsellor
Photo by James Oloo



Employer Partner Speaks at GDIT&E SPF Banquet

By Patty Reinhardt (Edited by James Oloo)



Patty Reinhardt, co-owner
Reinhardt Plumbing & Heating

Reinhardt Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning Ltd is a successful Regina-based company that speaks to the Saskatchewan Dream. Started out of a kitchen in Lumsden, SK, 25 years ago, the company has over 50 employees including four GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative clients. The four are all clients of Employment Counsellor Ashley Hayden-Ross. Ashley invited Patty Reinhardt, a co-owner of the company to share the company's experience as an employer partner at the GDIT&E All Staff Skills and Partnership Fund Banquet this month. Below is Patty's speech.

"I would like to thank Ashley Hayden-Ross for the invitation to join you here today. Thank you to GDI for partnering with us to enhance Aboriginal apprenticeship in our province.

My husband Dale and I started Reinhardt Plumbing and Heating in 1988 with one employee from our acreage near Lumsden. About 10 years ago, we added a shop and office in Regina having outgrown the acreage. We are a family owned and operated business and both our sons are involved as well. They worked their way through Saskatchewan apprenticeship and understand what it takes to make it in the trades.

Keegan Cote ... *Continued from Page 4*

Asked about his career goals, Keegan says that he would like to learn as much as possible from his supervisors and mentors at his current workplace and get his journeyman certification. He hopes to be a self-employed electrician in the future. It is this hope that keeps him motivated to do his best at work. Keegan

One of the biggest challenges to small businesses in Saskatchewan today is attracting and retaining quality employees. The GDI apprenticeship Initiative has enabled us to hire hardworking and dedicated apprentices.

I was first contacted by representative of GDI in early 2012. In September, we struck gold when we interviewed and hired Rob Parrell. Rob has received rave reviews from all of his direct supervisors and is considered one of our best apprentices. We are going to miss him while he is away for his first technical training at SIAST for eight weeks.

After the success with Rob, we have hired three more apprentices through the GDI program and have been pleased with all of them. We are happy to have them as part of our team. GDI has been very accommodating with timing and location of the follow-up interviews. Ashley has even borrowed a hard hat and toe caps to meet with the apprentices at a job site.

The growing economy in Saskatchewan has created a shortage of skilled workers in the trades. The GDI Apprenticeship Initiative answered the challenge by creating an opportunity and

incentive for employers like us to source and hire Aboriginal apprentices and we are hopeful that these apprentices will continue in the trade and become certified journeymen. I personally would really like to see the program continue so that more potential apprentices could become more aware of the great career opportunities available in skilled trades.

The GDI apprenticeship program is a win-win opportunity for our company and for our employees. The apprentices can increase their knowledge and earning potential as they progress in the trade and we all reap the benefits of the extra skilled tradespeople that are from our province and invested in our province.

Many thanks to GDI staff for all the help with the partnership. You have been very helpful in explaining the process and really walked us through every step. This is a great program. I really cannot say enough good things about the program. Thank you." For more information on Reinhardt Plumbing and Heating visit <http://www.reinhardtplumbing.com/>

suggests that success is possible when an individual "works hard, is responsible for his/her actions, and is always punctual."

Keegan thanks GDI for the opportunity given to him and emphasizes that is it "absolutely important" to have Métis organizations such as

GDI to help Métis people get marketable skills. He talks highly of his Employment Counsellor; "Dwayne has been so helpful. He is patient and knowledgeable ... I have benefitted from his guidance." We wish you the best, Keegan and know that GDIT&E will always be here for you.



Brett Vandale, Director of DTI,
is the new Interim Director
of GDI Training & Employment



Keegan Cote
First year apprentice electrician
at Alliance Energy Industrial

Photos by James Oloo



Mayor Val Deschambeault: An Inspiring Story

By John Klyne and James Oloo

GDI has come a long way in the last 33 years. Today, Métis people who took part in the 1976 conference that laid the foundations of GDI can look back with pride as the Institute continues to expand the active roles it plays in health care service, apprenticeship and trades, basic education, and many other services to Métis people.

The impact of GDI is felt on every part of Saskatchewan and beyond as our alumni make positive contributions to the society. Some of GDI alumni hold positions where their decisions and actions ripple outward to effect other people's actions, beliefs, and aspirations. One such alumnus is Her Worship Valerie Deschambeault, Mayor of

Cumberland House, SK. Valerie sat down with her former Employment Counsellor, John Klyne, to share her experience.

Before she came to GDI, Valerie was on social welfare and "barely existing." One day she decided that she "needed to be a positive role model" for her children. And so the single mother challenged herself to "leave the life of addictions and poverty." Through GDI guidance and financial support, Valerie went back to school and successfully completed Diploma in Addictions Counselling from SIAST.

Without forgetting her roots, Valerie decided that she wanted to help her community the best way she could. And when the position of Mayor opened up, she ran for the

office and got elected. Her responsibilities include community empowerment and development. To be an effective servant leader of her community, Valerie often draws from her experience at GDI and at SIAST. She has learned to listen to her people and understand what is going on in their lives in order to empower them.

The proud Métis woman describes her secret for success in five words: "dedication, determination, and positive thinking." She thanks GDI for walking with her on the road from addictions to college graduation to serving her people as a mayor. Valerie emphasizes the importance of Métis organizations such as GDI in empowering Métis people. Congratulations Mayor Deschambeault. Best wishes as you continue to serve the people of Cumberland House. 🌟



Val Deschambeault, Mayor of Cumberland House, SK
Photo Courtesy of John Klyne



John Klyne
GDIT&E Employment Counsellor
Photo by James Oloo

Payroll Cutoff Calendar, November 2013

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Buschnyski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
					Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Nov 14 Student Payroll			A/P Cheque Run Cutoff @ 4:30 for Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Nov 14 Payday	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Remembrance Day Stat Holiday	Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student Nov 14 Direct Deposits	Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices Student Payday	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Stat Holiday Louis Riel Day			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Nov 29 Payday	Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student Nov 29 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices Student Payday	

Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.



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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