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Pride Perseverance Possibilities



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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Professional Development: How It Benefits All

By Jim Edmondson

As part of our mandate to remove barriers for Métis people, Gabriel Dumont Institute values education and is committed to building capacity in our employees. One of the most effective ways to realize capacity building is through employee professional development; and GDI's commitment is illustrated in our Professional Development Policy and practices.

Often, there is misunderstanding regarding the terms "education," "training," and "development." While they are sometimes used synonymously, the three are quite different. Think of education as focusing on *why*. People go to school to learn theories and concepts, and to understand why things work the way they do. Training on the other hand, focuses on *how*. For example, in the kitchen; training enables a person to cook; education enables a person to create new recipes.

Education helps develop analytical and problem solving capabilities. A person could be skilled to perform a job, but if something goes wrong, often hands-on skills will not be enough to make them right again. Education provides the ability to think things through by analyzing different variables and coming up with effective and innovative solutions. As professionals who are often faced with

situations that require rapid, logical, and well thought out decisions for client service, the skill set that education provides is very valuable to GDI in meeting its mandate and strategic goals.

Training is also a valuable commodity because it benefits the individual and the Institute by building specific skills and clarifying the correct and incorrect ways to do things. Due to how the Institute operates, our systems, reporting obligations and program requirements, specific training is a requisite for most of our employees. Training often provides the skill or knowledge to do function A& B so there is consistency in output.

Development allows an individual the opportunity to keep growing. As GDI evolves, and new exciting challenges arise, our employees need to rise to meet those challenges. That is where employee capacity building is critically important. If we have employees who can demonstrate that they have the ability to adapt and make sound decisions then we can confidently move forward to meet those challenges.

GDI encourages all employees to explore professional development opportunities, and discuss

them with their immediate supervisor. If the professional development request is relevant to what the employee does or could do for the Institute the request will be considered for approval. When an employee researches possible professional development opportunities there are a few things that should be considered. GDI Policy states a maximum professional development allotment of \$500 annually per employee. This is a guideline and can be adjusted dependant on the amount, request and benefit that it could bring to the Institute, and each request is reviewed on its own merit. Second thing to consider is that, for a professional development request to be approved it must be relevant to the role the requester plays or to the Institute overall. If the professional development entails time away from their position, coverage and the effect on students or clients must be taken into account. And lastly, if the total of the professional development program funded exceeds a set dollar amount, it will trigger an Employee Educational Assistance Agreement. GDI supports employee professional development because the knowledge and skills acquired through participation in a professional development is likely to be beneficial to the employee, the Institute, and our community. For more information please contact GDI Human Resources at hr@gdins.org.



IT: Anatomy of a Work Order

By Gareth Griffiths

For Gabriel Dumont Institute employees it is ideal that you contact IT Support if you have any IT related question and we will respond to your request as necessary. You are encouraged to give as much of a description as possible in your email (such as exactly what happened, what did you do when it happened, has anything changed, etc).



Edwin St. Pierre

IT support contact support@gdins.org is an unattended email system that is used to track support requests, and automatically replies with pertinent information about your issue. There are ways to interact with this address, and by reading the emails, you can also find out details of the work carried out to date on this issue. This will highlight what to watch out for, and also explain how you can use these emails to send a response.



Frank Tompkins

Setting up Work Order

If you need assistance, you need to contact IT. The first and easiest way is to send an email to support@gdins.org. This email is automatically received by our support system called Track-IT. This will then create a work order and assign a Work Order number. For Example, let us pretend by sending this email in:

To: support@gdins.org
 From: Me
 Subject: Coffee cup holder broken

The coffee cup holder on my computer is broken. Won't close anymore.

Reply from IT

You will then receive the following email, issued automatically by Track-IT:

*From: GDI IT Support Team support@gdins.org
 To: Me
 Subject Re: Coffee cup holder broken
 Thank you for your request.*

We have opened Work Order number 3596 in response to your request. Please quote this number in all correspondence.

This is an automated email address. Please do not reply to this email, as it will be automatically deleted. Either use the links at the bottom of this email to append information, or forward the comments you want to make to the assigned technician at the following address: it.tech@gdins.org

We will endeavor to process this order as soon as possible.

GDI IT Support Team.....

Click on this link to submit additional information related to this Work Order.

Click on this link to request an updated status for this Work Order.

Click on this link to request an updated status for all of your recent Work Orders.

Please note the three links at the bottom of the email. These links allow you to automatically add more information to the Work Order or request a status update for this issue or for all issues related to yourself.

Work Order Modification

While this is in process, a technician who is handing your Work Order will keep you updated. As new entries are added, an email will be sent to you with the technician notes, like this:

*From: GDI IT Support Team support@gdins.org
 To: Me*

Subject: Modified Work Order 3596, Coffee cup holder broken

This is an automated email message. Please send comments to it.tech@gdins.org or follow the links at the bottom of this email.

This Work Order has changed: Technician Notes

*Thursday, January 23, 2014 11:53:46 AM by Gareth
 In progress. Called to try and resolve. Left a message.*

Work Order Completion

When work is completed, this is marked as closed by the technician and the following email is sent:

*From: GDI IT Support Team
 To: Me*

Subject: Work Order 3596 Closed, Coffee cup holder broken

Work Order 3596 you opened January 23, 2014 11:44:05 AM has been completed by IT - Gareth Griffiths.

This is an automated email address. Please do not reply to this email, as it will be automatically deleted.

Technician Notes

*Thursday, January 23, 2014 11:53:46 AM by Gareth
 In Progress*

Called to try and resolve. Left a message.

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Jim Durocher
 Métis Veterans
 Canadian Armed Forces
 Photos by Envogue Photography.ca



GDI Publishing and Writers Shortlisted for 8 Awards

By James Oloo

On February 14, 2014, the Saskatchewan Book Awards announced the books shortlisted for the 2014 Saskatchewan Book Awards. The 21st Saskatchewan Book Awards gala will take place on April 26, 2014 at the Conexus Arts Centre, Regina. The awards are grouped into two broad categories: Awards for writers and awards for publishers. Gabriel Dumont Institute is a finalist in both categories.

GDI Director Lisa Bird-Wilson's book, *Just Pretending* (published by Coteau Books), has been shortlisted for four awards: University of Regina Book of the Year; SaskPower Fiction Award; Rasmussen, Rasmussen & Charowsky Aboriginal Peoples' Writing Award; and the City of Saskatoon and Public Library Saskatoon Book Award.

Métis Soldiers of Saskatchewan: 1914-1953 (Gabriel Dumont Institute Publishing) by Métis historian and GDI author Dr. Cathy Littlejohn has been shortlisted for University of Regina Book of the Year Award. SUNTEP Prince Albert Instructor and award-winning GDI author Leah Marie Dorion's *The Diamond Willow Walking Stick: A Traditional Métis Story About Generosity* with Michif translation by Norman Fleury is a finalist for the SaskEnergy Children's Literature Award.

Gabriel Dumont Institute Publishing Department has been shortlisted for the First Nations University of Canada Aboriginal Peoples' Publishing Award for Cathy Littlejohn's book *Métis Soldiers of Saskatchewan: 1914-1953*. Coteau Books is also in the running for the Aboriginal Peoples' Publishing Award for Lisa Bird-Wilson's *Just Pretending*.

Readings by authors of shortlisted books will take place at McNally Robinson Bookstore in Saskatoon on March 11. This will be followed by another reading at a brunch hosted by Bill Robertson on March 23, 2014 at Bessborough Hotel, Saskatoon. The Legislative Library in Regina will host a reading by authors of Saskatchewan Book Awards winning books on May 8, 2014.

The Saskatchewan Book Awards recognizes and celebrates Saskatchewan authors and publishers in a number of ways. These include an awards gala, province-wide Shortlist Readings, Salon Readings throughout the year, and displays of shortlisted and award winning Saskatchewan books. Congratulations and best wishes to Lisa, Cathy, Norman, Leah, the GDI Publishing Department, and other nominees. 🌍



Métis Historian Cathy Littlejohn's *Métis Soldiers of Saskatchewan: 1914-1953* Has been shortlisted for the 2014 Sask Book Award

A Review of GDI Sask Book Award Finalists

By James Oloo

The best of Saskatchewan writers and publishers shortlisted for the 2014 Saskatchewan Book Awards have been announced. They include GDI author Cathy Littlejohn's *Métis Soldiers of Saskatchewan: 1914-1953*; Norman Fleury's Michif Translation of SUNTEP Prince Albert Instructor Leah Marie Dorion's *The Diamond Willow Walking Stick: A Traditional Métis Story About Generosity*; and Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Director Lisa Bird-Wilson's *Just Pretending*. This article presents a brief overview of the three books.

Littlejohn's book fills a big gap in literature about the history of Métis and Canada's war efforts during the two World Wars and the Korean War. The Métis historian traveled across Saskatchewan and Europe to uncover Métis veteran's stories of courage, sacrifice, and perseverance. Her book, *Métis Soldiers of Saskatchewan: 1914-1953*, is the culmination of these efforts. The book contains hundreds of images of Métis service members and a detailed list of over 1,760 Métis soldiers from Saskatchewan who fought for our freedom.

In November 2009, a memorial to Métis soldiers who served in the World Wars was unveiled

at the Juno Beach Centre in France. Chuck Strahl, then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development stated, "Commemorating the achievements of Métis veterans is something we should all be committed to: today... tomorrowforever." Cathy Littlejohn has done that and then some more by giving us all the opportunity to know about contributions of the Saskatchewan Métis soldiers.

In many societies today, traditional cultures, in such forms as relationships, morality, and generosity have been radically dismembered.

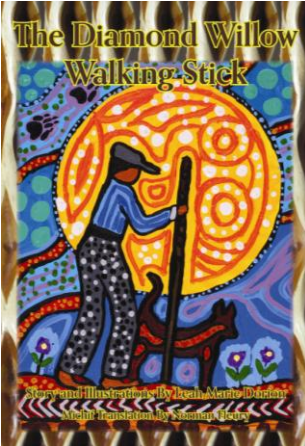
Continued on Page 4



Gabriel Dumont Institute Director Lisa Wilson's New Book *Just Pretending*



GDI Sask Book Award Finalists ... *Continued from Page 3*



Leah Marie Dorion's book
The Diamond Willow Walking Stick: A Traditional Métis Story About Generosity

What better way to re-member traditional teachings and practices than to have a grandparent tell stories about generosity that he not only heard from his grandparents but also lived. That is the theme in Leah Marie Dorion's *The Diamond Willow Walking Stick*.

These lifelong family lessons grounded on Métis culture enabled the grandparent to appreciate "how to live in a good Métis way," and taught him how to live with respect within the circle of life.

Dorion honours the importance of stories and the relationships between people, especially children and grandparents, people and the environment and spirit. *The Diamond Willow Walking Stick* is simple and beautiful. It is well illustrated in such a way that oral tradition and art join together to tell a great story that is as relevant as it is entertaining. The book includes a narration CD in English and Michif.

The book was awarded the Gelett Burgess Children's Book Award and the First Peoples' Publishing Award. Dorion's other book *The Giving Tree* has been turned in to a play script and will be performed by SUNTEP students in schools across the province.

In *Just Pretending*, Bird-Wilson brilliantly narrativizes lived experiences in a way that is both critically engaging and radically loving. The experience is both Métis and universal

across cultures. This collection of 24 short stories features many recurring themes such as identity (the search for an answer to the simple yet complex question 'who am I?' straddles across the book), belonging, regret, insecurity, and humour. Bird-Wilson also wades into rough topics such as political satire, addiction and mental health, as well as marginalization and prejudice.

The themes of family and identity construction are visible in the tension that Jerry experiences. Jerry was raised French by his white parents. When he discovers his Aboriginal roots, he feels caught between two worlds: his family that lied to him about his biological parents and his Aboriginal family that mocks him for his privileged upbringing, and accuses him of "acting white."

There is also a thread of humour that runs across the book. This includes a scene where Dominic "liberated a rotisserie chicken from a grocery store ... grabbed it in both hands and proceeded to run from the store with the steaming bird under his arm like a football."

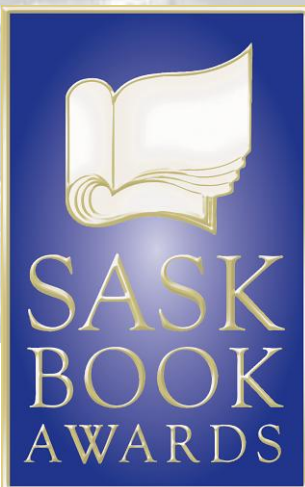
In another incident, a character named Cydric says the "good old Bill C-31 (is) making Indians out of all of us." A conversation between Cydric and his friends sheds light on their view of the *Indian Act* and its relevance. They refer to Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada

(INAC) as "Eye-nac," and "Indian Nation Abolishment Commission." One character asks, "Surely what good is it?" to which another replies "paternalistic." Réal then says "The Métis are lucky. We define ourselves."

The book is also about everyday heroes. It has good people who make bad choices, as well as not so good people who do not make good decisions. For each of them, there is hope for tomorrow. Through one of the characters, Bird-Wilson makes a powerful statement: "All of us have a past and most of us have things we're not proud of. Things we're ashamed of. Things that have driven us to religion, to seek salvation or to try and find forgiveness. Things we'd like to wish away if we could."

Bird-Wilson's smooth writing style is inviting and engaging as the reader becomes part of the world she has created in her story. J. Jill Robinson, author of *More in Anger*, describes Bird-Wilson's storyteller's voice as "graceful, dark, authentic, funny, and true" while Literary Press Group of Canada calls her as "one of Canada's most exciting new Métis voices."

I enjoyed reading the three books. You may pick your copy at a bookstore, www.shopmetis.ca, Amazon.ca, Kindle, or iTunes Store. 🌐



Saskatchewan Book Awards
Celebrates excellence in
Writing and Publishing in
Saskatchewan
@SaskBookAwards

IT Work Order ... *Continued from Page 2*

Issue resolved. It's CD Drive, and not coffee cup holder. Drive replaced and tested OK.

We aim to resolve IT issues as soon as possible. Sometimes

This does not happen. If there are delays, the Work Order is escalated to the next in line. The process ensures accountability so that issues

are dealt with promptly and efficiently. Next time you experience an IT-related issue, please contact IT at support@gdins.org. 🌐



GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

Why Earning Gr. 12 Diploma is Important

By James Oloo

Many students leave school before earning their Grade 12 diploma for a variety of reasons. Whatever the reason, there are alternatives to the traditional high school environment to enable individuals earn their high school diploma or equivalent. There are many reasons why one should have Grade 12 diploma.

Completing Grade 12 is a big achievement that has real benefits both for the individuals and the society. While having earned Grade 12 diploma is not a prerequisite for all young people to achieve success in whatever field they may choose, many individuals, parents, employers, and government officials agree that Grade 12 has its advantages.

The Government of Saskatchewan stated that between 2013 and 2017 almost 90% of employment opportunities in the province will require at least a high school diploma. Thus, perhaps more than ever before, those without high school diploma may not be able to fully benefit from the province's economic growth.

According to Government of Saskatchewan data, unemployment rate is often lower for high school graduates than for young workers without Grade 12 diploma. As shown in the Gabriel Dumont Institute-commissioned Howe Report, high school graduates are more likely to earn a higher salary than non-graduates over a lifetime.

There is a strong sense of pride and accomplishment in


earning a high school diploma whether it is through K-12 or Adult Basic Education (ABE). Such an accomplishment can never be stolen nor taken away from the graduate.

A recurring phenomenon that often comes up in the success stories of Dumont Technical Institute students who finish their ABE programs is that they hope to become positive role models to their children and relatives. Earning high school diploma may influence a child to do the same, and even dream bigger dreams.

Gabriel Dumont Institute has done a commendable job in providing opportunities for Métis people without high school diploma to get their ABE. Dumont Technical Institute provides ABE education across the province and is also a certified Pearson VUE Testing Centre for Based

General Education Development (GED). Over the past 10 years, DTI delivered 209 ABE programs to 3,952 students across the province.

Dumont Technical Institute delivers provincially-accredited alternative models of schooling that are relevant, engaging, and take into account individual needs of the students irrespective of their capability. Gabriel Dumont Institute aims to empower Métis students and equip them with the skills they need to reach their full potential.

The Institute, in partnership with the community, is committed to enabling more Métis people without high school diploma to visit GDI to discuss their career and educational options. For more information, please call us Toll Free 1-877-488-6888. 

Payroll Cutoff Calendar - March 2014

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Buschnyski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student Mar 7 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Mar 21 Student Payroll & for TMS & Payroll Revisions for Mar 14 Payday			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student Mar 21 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Apr 4 Student Payroll	Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for Mar 31 Payday		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
30	31					
	Staff Payday					



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Visit us at
www.gdins.org

Back issues of this newsletter
can be obtained at:

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

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GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

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Saskatoon SK S7M 5W1
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Fax: (306) 244-0252

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Fax: (306) 683-3508

Toll Free (T&E):
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Fax: (306) 347-4119

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University of Regina
3737 Wascana Parkway
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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