



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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## An Explanation and Guide to Notification of Absence

By Jim Edmondson

At some point, many employees will miss work for various reasons. When this happens, employees are expected to notify their employer of their inability to be at work. The process of notification of absence from work has caused unnecessary confusion for the Gabriel Dumont Institute staff over the past few months. This article explains what an employee should do when he/she is absent from work.

If an Institute employee is requesting for any type of leave other than sick leave, or adjustment to the RDOs, there is a Request for Leave form that can be accessed on the Institute website. This form must be filled out by the employee and authorized by the employee's immediate supervisor. Assuming the employee has sufficient accruals and it does not adversely affect the operations of the Institute, these requests are normally approved.

There is an established protocol in place regarding when and how the Institute staff ought to provide notification of absence, "call in sick". Prior notification of absence (as far in advance as possible prior to work commencement that day is preferred) is crucial because it enables the Institute or program to act promptly in providing coverage. This goes

a long way to ensure that an absence does not adversely affect the normal operations of the Institute or the services we provide. At the Gabriel Dumont Institute, we value our employees and recognize that there are times when extenuating circumstances may make it impossible for an employee to call in prior to work. This should, however, be the exception and not the rule.


The reason that employees need notify the Institute in person and to actually speak to their supervisor, or another manager, is a matter of safety. If we (the Institute management) do not actually speak with the employee, we cannot be sure that something has not happened to them. If, for example, notification is called in by another person or is texted or emailed, we would have no reason to look for the employee or be concerned until days later and then it may be too late! This is the same premise behind prior authorization to travel, if the Institute does not know an employee is on the road we likely would not begin searching for them until it is potentially too late. Below is the protocol for notifying the Institute when an employee is unable to come to work:

Call your immediate supervisor as soon as you

know you will not be able to be in at work. If the phone is not answered, please leave a message indicating that you will not be in and that you will proceed with the protocol and make secondary calls to other managers until you actually speak to someone.

The next individual to call is a manager in your area. If that individual is also unavailable, then move to another manager. This process should, at most, include three different managers before starting at the top once again with your direct supervisor. Please indicate if you have a doctor's note and whether the absence is expected to last more than that day.

Upon your return, if you have a doctor's note or one is required, please take the note or any other required documentation to your immediate supervisor.

The Institute cares about the well-being of its employees and encourages all employees to stay away if they are unwell. Just make sure you notify your supervisor if you are going to miss work. This will enable us to continue serving our students, clients, and the community in general without interruption. I trust this information clears up any confusion that is out there. However, should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (306) 242-60670 or [jim.edmondson@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:jim.edmondson@gdi.gdins.org). Have a happy and safe Easter weekend. 



## GED Students Attend Masonry Workshop

By James Oloo and Cheng Teh



Robin Ernst, GED student at A bricklaying workshop



Melissa Paskimin  
Photos by P. Beszterda

Following the success of the federally-funded GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative in 2014, the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment submitted a proposal for funding in response to growing demand for apprenticeship training for Aboriginal people. The funding application was approved by the federal Western Economic Diversification Canada. The announcement for the funding was made in February by Ms. Kelly Block, the MP for Saskatoon-Rosetown-Biggar.

The new General Educational Development (GED) program is intended to provide the students with the knowledge and skills they need to earn their GED credentials and be able to enter the GDI Apprenticeship Project. The program is offered through partnership between GDI Training and Employment and Dumont Technical Institute. It is unique in that besides offering classes to help our clients to prepare for their GED examinations, an academic qualification required by a lot of trades, there are also invited guest speakers who give talks

and inspire students. The program also encourages self-exploration and discovery sessions to help the students to understand themselves better. As well, there are various safety ticket sessions to help the students gain the knowledge and skills required to ensure workplace safety, and also some essential skills workshops for our clients to have some hands-on experiences to explore the trades they may be interested to pursue.

On March 20, 2015, 19 of the students under this apprenticeship program went for a day of masonry and bricklaying workshop at the Trade and Skills Centre, Mount Royal Collegiate, in Saskatoon. The feedback from the students was very positive.

Max Wilson noted that he found the session “very inspiring. I appreciate the time and effort put forth by those who instructed us.” Dale Campbell appreciated the workshop and felt that “the bricklaying technique was a positive experience for me,

and will be useful in the future.” Joshua Dressler said, “I’m glad we get to do these types of workshops because they give me a better idea of what I may or may not like to get into. If we could (also) do a welding workshop that would be awesome.”

Dayna Sanderson found the workshop relevant to her trade of interest because she “will be doing carpentry, and the finishing for the outlet of the house, applying the stone with stucco or with siding, or even with some landscaping.” Corey Castel also found the workshop was useful as it helped him to learn better skills in building a cabin in future for his family. The visit to the Trade and Skills Centre underscored the fact that our GED students have different abilities and experiences.

Terance Quewezance said, “I have experience in bricklaying. I have done it for eight months. The teachings were step by step, so I noticed it was easy to catch on.” For Melissa Paskimin, “I like the hands-on experience. The instructor didn’t rush us. It was fun.”

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## GDI Celebrates Sharon’s and Muriel’s Retirement

By James Oloo

Retirement is a big deal for many people. Careers come to an end, and a new chapter opens. Colleagues are happy for their retiring coworker, but are also sad at the thought of not being able to have daily interactions. Still, it is a moment to reminisce at what has been with appreciation and laughter.

On March 26, 2015, several GDI employees gathered at the Woody’s BBQ in Prince Albert to celebrate the retirement of

Sharon Wood and Muriel Luther. Together, Sharon and Muriel have been at GDI for a total of 28 years.

Sharon has worked at the GDI Prince Albert location for 20 years with the last 14 as the Librarian. However, her relationship with GDI goes longer than that. Sharon is a graduate of GDI’s Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP).

Kim Kovacs and Marilyn E. Belhumeur of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Regina Library were at hand to offer their appreciation and best wishes to Sharon. Kim stated that “Sharon will be remembered for her dedication to students and staff.” Reading a quote by a GDI student in Prince Albert, Kim said, “Our Librarian is awesome. She helps you get whatever you need.”

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Muriel Luther  
Photo by James Oloo



## SUNTEP Regina Represented at Teaching Conference

By Jennifer Reid-Vandevord

The Saskatchewan school curriculum from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 offers many opportunities to authentically integrate purposeful First Nations, Métis and Inuit content and perspectives. On February 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, three second year Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) Regina students, Elsa Ramos-McKenzie, Doug Jarvis, and Crystal Norris, together with a member of faculty Jennifer Reid-Vandevord had the opportunity to attend and present at the WestCAST (Western Canadian Association for Student Teaching) conference hosted by the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

Often, as teachers, we are uncomfortable or unaware of how to integrate Métis, First Nations, or Inuit content beyond the

stereotypical and historical topics. As much as the intentions are good, sometimes (non-Aboriginal) teachers unknowingly reinforce stereotypes and inaccuracies in their classrooms.

Our presentation was titled "Indigenizing the Saskatchewan Curriculum Workshop." Throughout the conference we provided hands on opportunity for participants to work in small, common graded groups to indigenize each subject.

As pre-service teachers, each of the SUNTEP Regina student presenters had examined the Kindergarten to Grade Eight cross-curricular outcomes as defined by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. We shared ideas on how to more effectively indigenize various curriculum subject areas by going beyond the stereotypical beads, bannock, and buckskin to encompass a broader perspective of Aboriginal

experiences and ways of knowing.

Our presentation employed collaborative and reflective learning strategies with participants from diverse backgrounds to better appreciate the importance of including Aboriginal content, tackling racism, and enhancing awareness to others in the education field. Each participant walked away with indigenized cross curricular outcomes and the ability to not only introduce it as a professional development opportunity for their workplace, but also implement it in their own classrooms.

The WestCAST conference was a learning experience for us as we explored ways to effectively build a strong, purposeful, and indigenized curriculum. SUNTEP always encourage collaboration between its faculty and students in conference presentations. 🌐



SUNTEP Regina students (L to R) Douglas Jarvis, Elsa McKenzie-Ramos, and Crystal Norris.  
Photo by J. Reid-Vandevord



DTI Administrative Coordinator Christine Fiddler (R) congratulates Sharon Wood on her retirement  
Photo by James Oloo

## Gabriel Dumont Institute in the News

By James Oloo

This month, two main events took place that relate to our work at GDI. The first, GDI Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey gave a well-received presentation titled 'Maximizing the value of education' at the Métis Economic Development Strategy symposium (or MEDSIII) held in Winnipeg March 17-19, 2015. The Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada the Honourable Bernard Valcourt expressed his "pleasure to participate in a symposium where all partners agree to work towards the common goal

of creating even more Métis economic development opportunities."

The second event was closer to home. Saskatoon, like most areas around the province, has experienced considerable growth in recent years. That growth has included the revitalization of the city's 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. GDI owns four buildings along the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

On March 17, Leisha Grebinski of CBC Saskatoon visited GDI's Central Office and spoke with Geordy about the Institute and its unique approach to growth. That approach, according to Geordy, includes two main strategies. One, expansion that includes spreading the

campuses without having to take a big mortgage; and two, enhancing student experience by providing excellent facilities for both students and staff and making GDI facilities a source of pride for the Métis community.

This expansion is not limited to Saskatoon. In Prince Alberta, GDI Training and Employment office is being relocated to the Institute building on 48 12<sup>th</sup> Street East.

Key indicators including the number of partnerships, annual golf tournament, amount of scholarships awarded, and awards received by the GDI Publishing and its authors show that GDI's impact is being widely felt. 🌐



Geordy McCaffrey  
Photo courtesy of metisnation.ca



GDIT&amp;E/DTI GED students



Dalton Campbell

## IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

### IT Support System

In January 2015, 54 new Work Orders were received into Track-IT. Of these, 53 were closed (98% completion rate) during that month. Another 66 new Work Orders were received in February. Of these, 58 are closed (92% completion rate). Overall we closed 66 Work Orders in the month. There are currently 27 open Work Orders.

Please send any IT-related question to [support@gdins.org](mailto:support@gdins.org). If you are unable to send an email, do call any member of the IT Team, namely, Brody Parent, Gordon Holtslander, or Gareth Griffiths, and they will assist you.

### Social Media – Pinterest

We have just launched our new Pinterest board. Pinterest allows you to 'pin' images to your online board that interest you, pretty much in the same way as you would use a cork board. We have added a plug-in to the website that allows a 'Pin It' link to be displayed when you hover over a shop item. Our Pinterest account is available at <http://www.pinterest.com/gabrielumontin/>



Kelly Burns  
Photos by P. Beszterda

## Sharon's and Muriel's Retirement ...

Muriel Luther has been with the Institute since January 2007 serving as the Administrative Assistant at the Prince Albert Centre. Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Director Lisa Wilson noted that "GDI Training and Employment was incorporated in 2007 and Muriel has been here since then with a smiling and welcoming face."

### New Phone Procedure

We have been updating our Phone Management Policies. As well, we are incorporating tighter controls and inventory management to all mobile devices used by the Institute. All phone-related inquiries should be directed to [support@gdins.org](mailto:support@gdins.org).

### Windows Server 2003

July 2015 will see Windows Server 2003 reach its end of life. Microsoft will not support it past July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015. We will ensure that data and user experience is not affected.

### Great Plains

We are working towards replacing the server used for Great Plains and Management Reporter. This is currently Windows Server 2003. We have created a new virtual machine running Windows Server 2008. This is operational, and the coming month will see the Remote Desktop licenses and Great Plains/Management Reporter installed on this. We will send out an update soon.

### Phishing Threats

Please be vigilant when receiving emails. Always be wary of emails asking for account or password

information (phishing attacks). Some of the recent ones received include mailbox storage limit warnings and a Payment Advice Notice.

To identify a phishing email, please look at the 'From' email address. Usually this has no reference to the organization it purports to be from. For example, if the address was [rbc.support@hotmail.com](mailto:rbc.support@hotmail.com) and it really was from RBC, the chances are the email would be ...@rbc.com or ..@rbc.ca. Further, if there is a link in the email, hover over it, and look at the address it is sending you to. Again this usually bears no relation to the company it is supposed to be to.

If you suspect any email to contain a phishing threat, the safest option is to delete it. You are always welcome to contact IT for advice on how to deal with suspicious emails.

### Closing Thoughts

It was a disappointing day when I realized my Universal Remote Control did not, in fact, control the Universe. 🌐

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Cecil O'Neal, a friend of Muriel who retired from GDI in 2012 after 15 years as an Institute employee, recalled how Muriel's first office at GDI Training and Employment had two chairs and a table and did not have a phone or computer. Muriel's enthusiasm and 'legendary' spreadsheets were remembered by many who mentioned her organizational skills and readiness to help as being unforgettable.

On behalf of GDI, the Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey thanked the two retirees for their service and dedication, and wished them well in retirement. On their part, both Muriel and Sharon, whose last day at GDI is March 31, expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to work for the Institute. Their retirement was featured in the Prince Albert Herald. Congrats! 🌐



# Masonry Workshop ... Continued from Page 2

Kelly Burns, Robin Ernst, and Morgan Powder said they found the workshop useful. Dalton Campbell stated that "It opened my eyes to the endless possibilities out there." Joseph Gaudry and Hugh Hansen also said they enjoyed the experience and noted that Bricklaying is a lot harder than it looks. Tommy Esperance said, "It was an awesome learning experience" and Cheyenne Duffee thought, "the bricklaying workshop was fun. I learned a lot and really enjoyed myself."

Andrew Sunshine expressed that he "... had a lot of fun... I caught on real quick on how to mix the cement, butter the bricks and place them properly. I was really grateful that DTI

also brought us pizzas for lunch...and hope to have another workshop in the near future."

In commending the partnerships DTI has established with other organizations, Mark Boyer, the tutor, said that the masonry workshop "was a good opportunity for the students to acquire practical skills." He described the experience as a "valued exposure to trade work."

Cheng Teh, the instructor of this apprenticeship program is impressed with the students' dedication and commitment. "The students put high expectations on themselves and are dedicated to put in their best efforts. I respect their determination in striving for

their best future despite facing some challenges in their life circumstances." Cheng noted that her students are "responsible and take ownership of their own work. They are the future of Saskatchewan. I am very proud of them. We are having a lot of fun in class." Michelle Suteau, the program coordinator, is taking in more clients into this program in April.

For information about the GED program, please contact Michelle at (306) 659-1077 or [michelle.suteau@dti.dins.org](mailto:michelle.suteau@dti.dins.org).



GED Apprenticeship students and their Masonry instructor, March 2015



Max Wilson  
Photos by Peter Beszterda

## Payroll Cutoff Calendar – April 2015

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Student Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	<b>Good Friday</b> <b>Stat Holiday</b>	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	<b>Easter Monday</b> <b>Stat Holiday</b>	Cutoff @ Noon for April 17 Student Payroll		<u>A/P Cheque Run</u> Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for April 15 Payday	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student April 17 Direct Deposits	<b>Staff Payday</b>	Accounts Payable Cheque Run	<b>Student Payday</b> Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for May 1 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/P Invs., TMS & Payroll Revisions for April 30 Payday	
26	27	28	29	30		
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student May 1 Direct Deposits		<b>Staff Payday</b> Accounts Payable Cheque Run		



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Visit us at  
[www.gdins.org](http://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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@gdins\_org



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research

## GDI Locations

### GDI Central Office Saskatoon

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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 Central Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West  
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1-877-488-6888

### SUNTEP Prince Albert

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Fax: (306) 764-3995

### SUNTEP Saskatoon

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106 Wiggins Road  
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Phone: (306) 975-7095  
Fax: (306) 975-1108

### SUNTEP Regina

Room 227 College West  
University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
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Phone: (306) 347-4110

### GDI Training and Employment Central 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  
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### GDI Library Regina

Room 218 College West  
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