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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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Investing in Your Career Development

By Shepell (Your Employee and Family Assistance Program)

When we enter the work world, we often have dreams and ambitions of growth and advancement in our chosen field. These may be goals that you go in with initially – dreams that take form during education – or those that come more slowly as you get acquainted with a company and see available opportunities. Whatever way your aspirations took shape, most of us have had them, but it can be easy to lose sight of them once you have achieved a stable position; it can be hard to pursue better job opportunities when you are so busy with the job you have. The daily tasks that make up the contemporary working world are many, and when you are also striving to balance work with a healthy home life, thinking about how to move forward can seem like the invisible summit of a very high mountain.

You may also lose sight of these early dreams as you become more comfortable in your current job. You do your job well, and like it; and the unknown territory of what might be out there is too vast and overwhelming. Yet, to stay mentally engaged and find greater job satisfaction, investing energy in career development can be very rewarding.

Write it down

If your ideas about where you would like to be are not fully

formed, taking out a pen and a sheet of paper is a great place to start. Make a mind map, jotting down keywords, images, and even names of people whose careers you admire. Once you have a general idea of where you would like to go, your pen-to-paper work can begin to take the form of lists: write down steps you need to take to get you where you would like to be. Keep returning to your career plan and fine-tuning it until you can see a concrete path that you can set off on.

Speak about it

Once you have a clear image of what you would like to aim for, talk about it. Tell people close to you like your friends, partner or family about your goals. Speaking about what you are dreaming of out loud actualizes it, bringing it out of the realm of fantasy and into the real world. Telling people close to you also means you will have their encouragement and support, as well as the extra push that comes with wanting to follow through on what you say.

Continuing education

If you feel that your skills and experiences do not yet add up to what you need for your dream position, take a course to get you closer to where you want to be. This might be something offered through your workplace, a

weekend seminar as part of a conference, or even a more formal post-secondary institution. If balancing work and education seems daunting, take a look at [these tips for staying on top of both commitments](#).

Talk to those in charge

When you feel confident in your abilities and ambitions, it can be a great idea to speak with your supervisor(s). Articulating your goals to the people you report to is a demonstration of your commitment to your work. Furthermore, they will be aware that you are interested in advancement, and are more likely to think of you when positions open up.

There are a lot of reasons we often ignore issues of career development. Perhaps it can feel risky to put yourself out there and become vulnerable to rejection or feeling like you are in over your head. Keep in mind that challenges make our work rewarding, and seeking out opportunities for advancement can be an adventure that leads to deeper satisfaction both professionally and personally.

Morneau Shepell wellness programs, such as employee and family assistance program, are available to Gabriel Dumont Institute employees via the Great-West Life Group Benefit Plan.

www.shepell.com



The Month of **September** in **History**

September 2007, Dumont Technical Institute pilots on-line delivery of a Métis Studies course. IT Officer Edwin Morin worked with Program Coordinator and the course content developer, Claudette Moran, to build the delivery platform in Moodle software. Janice DePeel is the instructor for the course.

September 2009 Gabriel Dumont Institute announces that two proposals submitted under the federal Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF) have been approved, and contracts worth over \$3.75 million have been awarded to the Institute.

September 2010 Métis Nation—Saskatchewan affiliates, including Gabriel Dumont Institute, Métis Housing Corporation, Métis Family and Community Justice Services, Clarence Campeau Development Fund, and Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation gather in Saskatoon for a "Saskatchewan Métis Services Day." The event brings Métis service providers together for an information sharing and networking opportunity.

September 2012 Dumont Technical Institute launches an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Practitioner Applied Certificate Program in Buffalo Narrows. The program is the first to be offered outside of a SIAST campus, and the first to be delivered in Northern Sask.

September 2015 Gabriel Dumont College holds its first class of the Certificate Program in Education: Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) in Prince Albert with a cohort of 28 students. The program is offered in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan.

Creating a Positive Work Environment

By Jim Edmondson

Aside from the job scope itself, one factor that significantly influences employee job satisfaction is their workplace environment. Work environment includes anything that forms part of employees' involvement with their work, such as relationship with co-workers and supervisors, organizational culture, room for professional growth, etc. A positive work environment makes employees feel motivated and excited about coming to work.

When reviewing your current job, you should always consider the work environment. After all, you spend a lot of time at work and should expect the experience to be as positive as possible.

Testing Services Update

By Kristi Ross

Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) has offered General Educational Development (GED) testing for over 15 years, and in 2013 became an approved GED Testing Centre through Pearson Vue which allows us to offer computer-based testing in Saskatoon. The main goal of GED testing is to measure the academic skills and knowledge expected of Saskatchewan high school graduates.

DTI also offers GED testing throughout Saskatchewan with our Mobile Testing Unit. Currently, we are one of the largest Mobile Testing Units in Saskatchewan. We have delivered 226 exams since January 2016 in our Saskatoon location. Across the province, we have delivered 121 exams with our Mobile Testing Lab. These numbers have exceeded the totals for 2015.

Below are factors that could help improve the workplace environment.

Open Communication

In essence, open communication addresses employees' need to feel that their views are valued. It enhances employee sense of respect and belonging in the organization. It increases job satisfaction as the employees know that their work affects the organization that they are affiliated with.

It is important that employees discuss the organization's philosophy, mission and values, from time to time at retreats, meetings, etc, to ensure that everyone knows what they're working for besides their paycheques.

Open communication enables employee involvement and allows them to share their views on how to achieve the organization's goals.

Give and take is crucial to effective open communication because it may help break down the hurdles and misunderstandings that could otherwise exist. As a result, there is trust built through interactions among employees. Everyone becomes more united with the organization's mission in their mind, and there is mutual respect among all employees. This is when employees will not be afraid to suggest ideas to improve the work processes, thus benefiting the whole organization.

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This year, we started offering Accuplacer, a testing system that determines a candidate's knowledge in math, reading and writing as they prepare to enroll in college-level courses. Accuplacer testing is currently being used by DTI to assess admission requirements for its programs. It is also being used to determine eligibility for the Institute's apprenticeship programming.

Other post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan have policies with respect to Accuplacer that range from the use of Accuplacer as part of their admission process, to Accuplacer not being a part of admission requirements, depending on individual programs. Thus, for example, applicants to Saskatchewan Polytechnic Library and Information Technology program must have English

Language Arts A30 and English Language Arts B30 besides Accuplacer.

Accuplacer testing helps determine the strengths and weaknesses of an individual in each subject area, and helps the individual candidate improve his/her skills through interactive online learning tools. We provide any support that the candidate may need as they prepare for the tests. We have delivered 20 Accuplacer tests across the province in 2016.

We have recently introduced "Virtual" testing to our testing services. Virtual testing service can be provided from one location to individuals across the province using a webcam, computer, and internet.

For more information, please contact the Testing Services Coordinator Kristi Ross at testing@gdins.org 



Jumping Ponds and Provinces to Get to DTI

By Daniel A. Downs

While it has not been uncommon for residents of Newfoundland and Labrador to move out west to seek their fortunes, most in their autumn years decide to return back to the East Coast, relax seaside, and enjoy their days with friends and family.

This was not the case for Derek Ballard, instructor in DTI's Security Officer Program in Buffalo Narrows. After a long career with both the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Derek decided to try to make a difference in the world of security... literally travelling the world and providing security. His last major contract was with the College of the North Atlantic in Qatar, a Middle Eastern country that borders Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

When Derek arrived in Saskatoon, we began to discuss the similarities and differences between Newfoundland and Saskatchewan. Our conversation reminded me of the first time I spoke with DTI/GDI staff almost seven years ago about what to expect going North for the first time. Being from Southern Saskatchewan

and having never travelled north of Prince Albert, the areas of Beauval, Pinehouse, La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and Buffalo Narrows were as foreign to me as Saskatchewan was to Derek. I wanted to know everything I could about the differences and so did he. After a rather long conversation (only having been interrupted by my children asking Derek constant questions about his accent and if Newfoundland was as big as Saskatoon) we came to the understanding that most differences between the North and South, as well as East and West are largely superficial. That in the end, no matter where you go or where you call home, people love to learn, they love to experience new things, and they only want the best for each other. Everything else is... like I said... rather superficial.

I have had the pleasure of knowing many people from Newfoundland over the years, but very few had stories that could rival Derek's. In the short time I spent with him before he travelled North to DTI's Security program, I learned that the RNC is the oldest operating Civil Police Force in North America; that it is

one of only two Police Forces in Canada to use the term "Royal" in its name (the other being the RCMP); and that up until 1998, its officers were not allowed carry side-arms. Having been modeled after the British Bobby, officers had to use verbal de-escalation techniques as well as control tactics to deal with potential assailants. This aligns with DTI's Security program, where students are taught that they should always attempt to de-escalate a situation using verbal means rather than physical.

I do not think that Derek is the first from Newfoundland to live and work in the Village of Buffalo Narrows. My hope is that Derek will leave a memorable and lasting mark on the community as much as I hope the community will leave a positive and lasting impression on him. His wealth of experience, willingness to bring training to the people, and amazing stories will definitely leave students with the skills and tools needed to work as security officers. Let's just hope they stay in Saskatchewan and not follow him out East. After all... some of those stories are incredibly exciting. 🌟

Happy Retirement Theresa Malboeuf

By James Oloo

"Theresa Malboeuf is a name known throughout DTI Saskatoon. Her hard work and caring nature precede meeting her, and when you meet her in person, you realize that she exceeds all

the wonderful things said about her," reads the nomination of the then Dumont Technical Institute student for the Order of the Gabriel Dumont Bronze Medal. The words were written over 10 years ago

by Dumont Technical Institute Program Coordinators and Instructors Tracy LaPrise, Bryan Guiboche, Dylan Pelletier, Janelle Duplessis, and Cindy LaPlante.

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Theresa Malboeuf is all smiles on her last day at work before her retirement. With her are: Bonnie Hryciuk (L), Charity Chaboyer, and Sarah McCallum



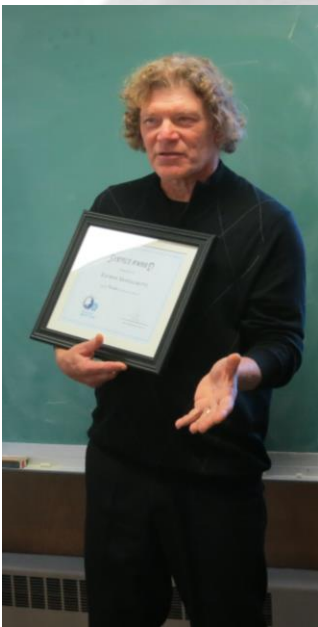
Photos by James Oloo.



A Positive Work Environment ... *continued from Page 2*



HR Director Jim Edmondson (l) and SUNTEP Saskatoon Head Sheila Pocha present Instructor Raymond Montalbetti with a five-year service award.



Raymond Montalbetti, an Instructor at SUNTEP Saskatoon.



SUNTEP Saskatoon Instructor Bob Lindsay receiving his 10-year service award from HR Director Jim Edmondson and SUNTEP Saskatoon Head Sheila Pocha.

Photos by James Oloo

Work-Life Balance

I have previously written articles on work-life balance, but because it is so fundamental to a healthy work environment, I revisit it below.

There is a constant juggling act going on in our lives, trying to keep our home and work lives separate but fulfilled. Therefore, there needs to be some sort of balance between work and personal life. In general, having that balance will improve employee job satisfaction. When we fulfill our various needs and goals in life, such as those of family, friends, spiritual pursuits, self-growth, etc; we can then feel more confident about ourselves and perform our best at work. As well, life experiences outside of work could impact our job performance. Too often, 'good' employees are defined as those who put in loads of effort and sacrifice their personal time in order to perform well in their work. This antiquated thinking does not prevail in progressive organizations like GDI. Managers have a responsibility to show that this is not right, by leading by example and maintaining healthy work-life balance habits (e.g., leave work on time) and still perform at the highest level.

Professional Development

Both at work and in personal life, change seems to be more rampant than ever before. It is thus necessary for organizations to keep abreast of the changes and train their employees accordingly. For instance, technology is rapidly evolving that some items that were commonly used few years ago, such as Floppy disks, are obsolete today.

Adapting to change is never more crucial in today's

economy because those who don't adapt get replaced. This applies to both individual employees and organizations. GDI, as a provider of education and service to the Métis community, is well aware of that reality and has a robust professional development policy. As a training and development-focused organization, GDI has a clear roadmap for training its employees to sustain and enhance the productivity of the organization as a whole. Our focus on capacity building of our employees is a measure of the value the Institute puts in its people and factors into GDI being a positive work environment.

Recognition for Hard Work

Reward, or positive reinforcement, is necessary to encourage certain behaviours in persons. Recognizing and rewarding employees for their effort can promote similar behaviors in the future.

The reward doesn't have to be monetary in nature. Often, verbal recognition by the supervisor can spur an employee's motivation. Showers of praise must be earned and not be seen by the employees as 'false' because then they are perceived as hollow gestures. When hard work is appropriately rewarded and duly recognized by the management, employees will feel valued and appreciated. GDI has made a conscious effort to recognize the length of service of its employees through awards, certificates, and plaques displayed in each of our locations. The strength of GDI is its people!

Strong Team Spirit

As social beings, humans naturally seek support from our

peers as well as sense of belonging. During tough times, the team should come together to deal with whatever problems are out there. This is where a sense of unity is evoked in the team and employees will no longer just feel that they're working by themselves. They are now working towards something bigger than themselves, and as a team.

Instilling a strong team spirit is not always easy because it involves the acceptance and tolerance of differences in perspectives and working styles among co-workers. There is a need for us to see that we are working towards a common goal before we can look beyond any differences. Team spirit can be built or enhanced through many activities that let the team focus on the positive attributes of each member. The Institute builds an overall team spirit through our 'all-staff' and cultural celebrations and events. A challenge that GDI faces is also one of our assets; that we are a province-wide service provider and are community-based. This tends to silo groups rather than bring them together as a single team; but we are working on it!

So look at your current position with the Institute, what aspects of the factors discussed above can you identify with? A lot I bet! Makes you feel good when you look at everything the Institute provides as an employer and organization. I can tell you without reservation that Gabriel Dumont Institute is the best place I have ever worked bar none! 🌐



Happy Retirement Theresa ... Continued from Page 3

Theresa joined Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) in 2005 as a student and soon completed her Adult Basic Education Levels 3 and 4. She then accepted the position of Custodian which she held until her retirement last month. On August 31, 2016, several Gabriel Dumont Institute employees gathered at the Central Office for a retirement BBQ in honour of Theresa.

A number of current DTI students described how Theresa has always been very helpful and encouraging. Similarly, fellow employees had positive things to say about Theresa. Cindy LaPlante, a faculty member at the ABE program in Saskatoon,

stated that: "From joining DTI as a student and retiring as a respected and admired employee of the Institute, Theresa has made great strides in her life at DTI. She has been like a mother to all of us – student or staff member. Theresa would randomly show up with a treat from DQ on a day when it seemed you needed it most; or she would mother hen us when we needed sewing or alterations done. You knew when Theresa was near because there would be a laugh and a smile coming towards you with a heartfelt greeting."

DTI Program Coordinator Dylan Pelletier described

Theresa as "an extremely kind and positive person, she always welcomes you with a smile. She is very hardworking and always goes above and beyond for the Institute, staff, and students." Dylan noted that "Theresa has done a lot of sewing work for me over the years and she always does excellent work; she even read my tea leaves once. Theresa will be greatly missed at GDI. I wish her the best in this next chapter of her life."

Thank you Theresa, for your service to the Institute. Best wishes in retirement. 🌍

GDI 35th Birthday Photo Campaign

Please send photos of anything that means something to you about GDI to GDIphoto2016@gmail.com.



Brendon Demerais, Administrative Coordinator, Dumont Technical Institute at Theresa Malbeouf's retirement lunch. Photo by James Oloo.

Payroll Cutoff Calendar, October 2016

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

MRTS due by the 15th of every month, and Employee contracts are 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