



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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## “SUNTEP Prepared Me Well,” Says Miss Sachkowski

By James Oloo

“Be Bold! Move Forward...” is the title of a 2012 Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) publication. In the research report, the words, written in bold, “Aboriginal voices are needed at every level,” take a deeper meaning when you consider experiences of Devyn Sachkowski. Devyn graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree from SUNTEP Prince Albert in 2016.

Devyn moved to England, United Kingdom last year. Donna Biggins, SUNTEP Prince Albert Administrative Coordinator, said she would contact Devyn’s mother, Michele Sachkowski, and her friend and fellow SUNTEP graduate Chelsea Gunville to see how Devyn was doing and if she’d be interested in sharing her story. She did!

Devyn works as a teacher in London, England where she has had the opportunity to teach students from nursery to year 13. She describes herself as a proud Métis and traces her Métis heritage to her mother’s side of the family. Devyn first heard about the SUNTEP program through a friend when she was finishing high school.

Asked if SUNTEP met her expectations, Devyn says she was very happy with her SUNTEP experience.

Specifically, “I really liked the sense of community and belonging that SUNTEP provided. The faculty was great, and the emphasis on Métis culture and history was an important aspect of not just my growth as a professional but also in my personal identity as Métis.”

So, why did she choose a teacher education degree? Devyn reflected on her time as a high school student, a time when many young people consider the path ahead of them, whether it be post-secondary education, labour market, or something else. She says, “I didn’t know what to do at the beginning of my grade 12 year and knew I enjoyed helping people out with work during school. Education degree, therefore, felt like a natural progression and it was a career I always returned to when exploring my options.”

Devyn also discussed her teaching philosophy. She pointed out that “Children are naturally curious and inquisitive, so the teaching-learning process should foster a sense of curiosity and inquiry in each student; and guide the student to take control of their learning. Such an approach is empowering and enables the students to have ownership over their learning, and will likely make

them search out any information they seek in the future.”

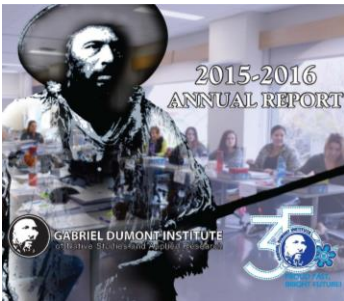
Asked why she decided to pursue career opportunities in England, Devyn answered that she has always enjoyed the idea of travelling and possibly living in a different country. She admitted however that as a young girl growing up in the small Saskatchewan community of Meath Park, the thought of living in a different country often felt like an unrealistic and unreachable goal. “There are not a lot of people who choose to leave Saskatchewan for a different country and decide to live there. But, I took the steps towards the unreachable goal of coming to London. So far, it has been wonderful. I have been to many different schools and have gone in classes that will either plan every second of the day or have no plans at all.”

Devyn discussed some of the similarities and differences between schools in Saskatchewan and England. “There is definitely more professional trust in the Saskatchewan education system as everything students work on is commented on and marked.” However, “UK schools do a wonderful job in accommodating and celebrating cultural differences, which I found Saskatchewan to also be improving on.”

Continued on Page 4.







Gabriel Dumont Institute 2015-2016 Annual Report is now available

# Meeting Room Protocols

By Cory McDougall

In our attempt to improve Gabriel Dumont Institute's internal processes, Finance and Operations has developed a set of procedures and protocols for booking meeting rooms and conference (telephone and IT) calls at our administrative buildings. These are summarized below.

All bookings should be made through the front line administrative staff at the building (including times required).

Admin staff will be solely responsible for maintaining a log book for bookings and

conference calls. Staff should not enter or alter their own booking in the log book.

Front line staff should be made aware of the services required (conference call booking, lunch being delivered, etc.) so that they know of the arrangements that need to be made and to direct traffic to the right area (i.e. lunch delivery).

If things change and the meeting room is no longer required, it is important that we let admin staff know so that they can update the log book in case others require the space.

The individual who is responsible for booking the space will also be responsible for ensuring that the meeting room is left tidy and ready for use by another party after they are done.

Please be mindful to keep your meeting within the allotted time. There will likely be occasions when another staff member has booked the room soon after your meeting time. It is, therefore, important that clean up time be factored into the equation.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation with this. 🌐



Colette Schroell is congratulated by Dwayne Docken, Employment Counselor, GDI Training & Employment, for her journey person certification in Food and Beverage Person. Photo by James Oloo

# IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

## IT Support System

In January 2017, 71 new Work Orders were received into Track-IT. Of these, 65 are now closed (91% completion rate). Overall, we closed 83 Work Orders in the month. There are currently 44 open Work Orders.

Please contact [support@gdins.org](mailto:support@gdins.org) for any IT-related requests. If it is not possible to send an email, you may call any member of the IT Team, who will log the support Work Order for you.

## Website

Overall, there were 36,726 Page Views over 10,976 sessions in January 2017. About 51 percent of these were new visitors. The three most visited pages were homepage, What We Offer, and Work With Us.

## Social Media

The Institute social media stats for January were as

follows.

Facebook: Total number of people liking the page grew by 1,624 to 3,729. Total Engagements (number of links clicked, likes, and comments) was 4,789. The total reach of posts (number of people who saw a post in their feed) was 246,853 with 290,369 impressions (number of times a GDI page appeared in others' news feeds). The most popular post was the "If you're interested in some of GDI's History, check out this article..." reaching 7,493 people with 411 post clicks and 1,944 likes, comments and shares.

These figures are fantastic, and could be attributed to our DirectWest Facebook advertising campaign in January. The campaign aimed at reaching wider audience. We achieved that.

Twitter: 53 tweets earned 22,600 impressions. There were 31 new followers, 45

mentions and 703 Profile visits. The top tweet was "Congrats @umanitoba as 6 graduates appointed to Order of Canada," earning 3,127 impressions. Top mention was "Inner city Saskatoon coolness: I hear there is space in the Indigenous writers workshop" by Erica Lee with 44 engagements. Top media tweet was "@gdins\_org GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Update..." with 1,048 impressions. We currently have 1,022 followers.

## Phishing/Virus

Please always be wary of emails asking for account or password information (phishing attacks). The most recent reported one is from the RCMP saying you have a speeding ticket and to click the attached link. The RCMP has confirmed they will not issue any violation notice by email and to delete it.

To identify a phishing email, please look at the From email address.

*Continued on Page 5.*



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research  
**NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the Gabriel Dumont Institute Board of Governors has called for an annual meeting of the membership.

- Date:** Saturday, February 11, 2017
- Location:** 2002 Airport Drive, Saskatoon Inn, Saskatoon, SK.
- Time:** Registration: 9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. AGM: 10:00 a.m. - Noon

For further information, please call Rhonda Pilon at (306) 242-6070

Gabriel Dumont Institute Annual General Meeting was held on February 11, 2017 in Saskatoon



## Métis ASETS Holders Partner in Lloydminster

By Sylvia Moss

In the spring of 2016, we received a phone call from Rupertsland Institute, the Métis Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) agreement holder in Alberta. Belle Dy-Reyes, who is one of the managers for Rupertsland Institute, had called me to discuss criteria for our clients in Saskatchewan. We proceeded to exchange information and share the challenges facing Lloydminster with the downturn in the oil and gas industry. Belle and I arranged to have a follow up in-person meeting in Lloydminster.

Lloydminster is unique in that it is a border city along Saskatchewan and Alberta. The challenge is that while many Métis people who live in Lloydminster always visit or call GDI Training and Employment office, those who live on Alberta side of the border cannot access GDI Training and Employment funding. Similarly, the Métis clients who are Saskatchewan residents do not qualify for Rupertsland Institute funding. Up to this point, Wendy Weeks-Feltham, Employment Counselor at GDI Training and

Employment North Battleford, has been travelling to Lloydminster to meet with clients at the Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre, as well as with local businesses in hopes of bringing them into the Institute's Western Diversification Program (WDP) partnership. But things took a positive turn when we received a great offer from our fellow Métis ASETS holder.

At a meeting with Belle last September, she proposed that employment counselors from GDI Training and Employment and Rupertsland Institute should work at the same location in order to effectively serve the Métis people of Lloydminster. Rupertsland Institute then offered to share space with us in their mobile RV which they use as their offices. Both Belle and I agreed that the offer would be of huge benefit to all Métis clients in Lloydminster and area, because no matter what side of the boarder they lived, there will always be someone nearby to serve them.

A memorandum of understanding was developed between GDI Training and Employment and Rupertsland Institute. It is a joint agreement stating

that GDI Training and Employment and Rupertsland Institute will partner as ASETS holders to work in a collaborative approach to serve Métis clients. Since October 2016, Wendy has been using the Rupertsland Institute RV as her base when in working in Lloydminster.

Now four months later, we can say we have a strengthened relationship with a fellow Métis ASETS holder and working out of the RV has been a positive experience. Communication between us as partners has been important. For example, if the RV cannot travel due to weather conditions, Wendy is notified so she can make alternative plans. The private office space in the RV where Wendy meets with her clients, the access to computers in the RV, and the excellent staff all make this a win-win partnership.

This is perhaps the only existing two-province ASETS partnership. We look forward to working with Rupertsland Institute, sharing information, attending job fairs, and any other opportunities that will mutually benefit our Métis clients. 🌐

### GDI-Rupertsland Institute Partnership



Wendy Weeks-Feltham, Employment Counselor, GDI Training and Employment  
Above: Outside the Rupertsland Institute RV

Below: At an office space inside the RV



Photos by Sylvia Moss

## GDI Publishing, Authors Shortlisted for Awards

By James Oloo

On February 9, 2017, the Saskatchewan Book Awards announced its 2017 shortlist. The Award recognizes Saskatchewan authors and publishers. This year's winners will be announced at a ceremony on April 29 in Regina.

On the shortlist were *The Red Files* by Lisa Bird-Wilson, the Director of Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment, and *Road Allowance Kitten* (written by Wilfred Burton, illustrated by Christina Johns, translated by Norman Fleury,

and published by Gabriel Dumont Institute Press). The two books were shortlisted for the Rasmussen, Rasmussen & Charowsky Indigenous Peoples' Writing Award.

*Continued on Page 4.*





2017 Sask Book Awards

## Sask Book Awards Shortlist ... Continued from Page 1



*The Red Files* by  
Lisa Bird-Wilson, Director,  
Gabriel Dumont Institute  
Training and Employment

*The Red Files* was also shortlisted for Poetry Award, while Gabriel Dumont Institute Press was shortlisted for Award for Publishing in Education.

One thing sticks out as you read *The Red Files*. Though the poems cover a variety of topics, there is a common thread, perhaps a sash, which weaves cross its pages. It touches on the oft criticized Canada's policies and practices towards Indigenous children. Lisa's poems are well written and deep, often touching on the painful past – residential schools, violence, and broken promises by successive governments – and their fruits that are manifested today. *The Red Files* is also about an enduring hope. Across the book, the raw history of Canada's past (and present) realities is etched upon the reader.

Lisa starts her poetry collection with photos of residential schools. The photos seem to speak louder, they are poems unto themselves. Words and images are juxtaposed to create a powerful prose. Consider the first poem,

Mourning Day, which features an image of girls' braids cut off at a residential school. The braids "cry like useless ropes on the floor."

Lisa writes of Miss Atwater's Class in which students are "never smiling, never/ frowning, unreadable" (a big contrast to what SUNTEP is about).

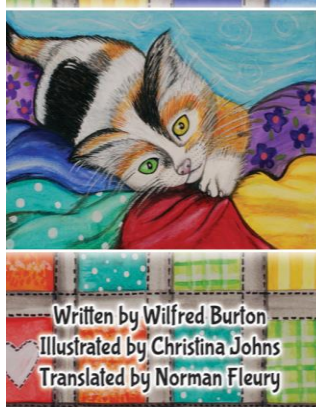
There is also another theme, that of government officials making light, even attempting to erase, the painful and unfair history. The author uses imagery in the form of a letter to a superintendent of schools with complaints about the residential schools. Two points stand out. One, the names of 'accused' (white) teachers are blacked out; and two, the superintendent makes a claim that "as you know/ Indians are very poor witnesses". *The Red Files* concludes on a very hopeful note. It is well-written, emotional, and at times quite raw.

While *The Red Files* calls out policies that have led to the fragmentation of Indigenous families with negative consequences through

generations, *Road Allowance Kitten* is children's storybook about two young Métis girls whose families are forced from their homes on the road allowance. Both books cover the topics of family, and the joys and hardships of life for Indigenous peoples.

It is amazing how, in an attempt to explain to his young daughter Rosie the significance of a visit to their home by "strange men in suits" who order the family to leave their home and move "way up north in the bush," the father imagines the land they are forced to go to as being good: "They promised us our own land. There are lots of trees to build a log house ... Maybe even a school for you!" What a beautiful book about the story of lived experiences of the Métis in the prairies. It is a story of struggle, resilience, love, displacement among the 'Road Allowance Métis.'

Congratulations to Lisa, Wilfred, and the GDI Press on making the shortlist. Best wishes as the Awards Ceremony approaches. 🌐



*Road Allowance Kitten*  
By Wilfred Burton  
Illustrated by Christina Johns  
Translated by Norman Fleury  
Published by GDI Press.

## SUNTEP Grad Teaching in England ... Continued from Page 1

Devyn stated that unlike Saskatchewan, "England doesn't have a hidden curriculum, but everything in the curriculum must be taught; and is often scheduled on week to week basis with not much time to revisit or review difficult topics."

Despite the differences in the education systems in England and Saskatchewan, Devyn emphasized that "SUNTEP provided me great teacher education that I have taken everywhere. SUNTEP helped to prepared me for lesson

planning to a range of learning styles and pedagogy, cultural diversity, and teaching in mixed-ability classrooms."

While stating that "It has been an amazing opportunity to teach abroad," Devyn had a suggestion for SUNTEP students and graduates who are considering similar opportunities. "Do plenty of research on the country you plan to go to. Not just education differences, but also cost of living, culture and language (slang). Research the area you're planning to teach in."

SUNTEP is a four-year bachelor of education program offered by Gabriel Dumont Institute in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina in partnership with the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. A total of 1,206 teachers have graduated from SUNTEP since 1984. For more information about SUNTEP, please visit <https://gdins.org/programs-and-courses/what-we-offer/suntep/> 🌐



# IT Update ... Continued from Page 1

Usually, it has no reference to the organization it purports to be from. Thus, if the address is, say, [rbc.support@gmail.br](mailto:rbc.support@gmail.br) and it really was from RBC, chances are the email would be .@rbc.com or ..@rbc.ca. 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 claims to represent.

If an email looks suspicious, do not follow any of the links or reply to it. The safest option is to delete it. You are always welcome to contact IT for advice on how to deal with such emails. Just to reinforce this, no reputable company

will ask for confidential information such as passwords and banking information by email.

### Mail System Enhancement

We have taken steps to protect ourselves from our addresses being used in phishing emails. We added a Sender Policy Framework (SPF) record for our email domains. SPF is a system where you specify the mail servers that are allowed to send from your mail domains. Any other emails received from outside of these domains will be rejected.

### CDMA Wireless Network

Currently, SaskTel is supporting older devices on the CDMA network. However, other providers have already started discontinuing these; so travelling with them will become harder. On July 5, 2017 SaskTel will turn off the CDMA frequencies, meaning all devices on this network will cease to function. Examples include older flip phones, Blackberry World Edition and Blackberry Curve.

Most of our phones will already have been upgraded to a 4G or LTE device, and so will be unaffected. If you are unsure if your device will be affected by this, please contact IT.

**Closing Thought**  
The nature of life is such that if you tell your boss you were late because your car broke down, the next day your car will break down.



Devyn Sachkowski, a SUNTEP (Prince Albert) graduate, is currently working as a teacher in London, England (Please see page 1). Photo courtesy of D. Sachkowski

## Payroll Cutoff Calendar, March 2017

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.





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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)

Follow us on Twitter!  
@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  
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### 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  
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Fax: (306) 975-0903

### DTI Central Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Phone: (306) 242-6070  
Fax: (306) 242-0002

Toll Free (DTI):  
1-877-488-6888

### SUNTEP Prince Albert

48 12th Street East  
Prince Albert, SK  
S6V 1B2  
Phone: (306) 764-1797  
Fax: (306) 764-3995

### SUNTEP Saskatoon

Room 7 McLean Hall  
University of  
Saskatchewan  
106 Wiggins Road  
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5E6  
Phone: (306) 975-7095  
Fax: (306) 975-1108

### SUNTEP Regina

Room 227 College West  
University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
Regina, S4S 0A2  
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  
Fax: (306) 347-4119

### GDI Library Regina

Room 218 College West  
University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
Regina, S4S 0A2  
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