



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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Chennoa Tracy: Métis Engineer Thanks GDI For Support

By Audrey Arcand and James Oloo

Chennoa Tracy works with the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) as an Assistant Engineer, where she is in charge of modifying and creating machine parts, getting quotes for materials from manufacturers, and analyzing stresses in parts that need to be fixed. She graduated with a Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 2018.

Chennoa learned about Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) from her older sister who is an alumnus of the Institute. As a University student, Chennoa visited GDI Training and Employment, and through the Institute's summer student program, became a funded client of GDI Training and Employment through a partnership with the SRC. Regarding her decision to come to the GDI Training and Employment, Chennoa noted that "through my sister's experience and the obvious benefits of experience and partnership GDI has with the SRC, I knew that GDI would help me further my career."

"Chennoa made an immediate positive impression upon her team in Industrial Engineering and has been a real asset to SRC in her short time with us. She demonstrated the willingness and interest to learn and apply new engineering

analysis skills which is helping our Industrial Engineering group develop niche capabilities," noted Rebecca Gotto, the Aboriginal Mentorship Program manager at SRC. "Chennoa's work has helped us to collaboratively, and effectively advance the design and engineering process."

Her favourite thing about being an engineer is the ability "to take a design and its calculations and turn it into something tangible and useful." Chennoa continued, "Seeing my work built, installed, and making a project easier or less costly is gratifying."

Chennoa served as a College of Engineering representative of the Indigenous Students' Council at the University of Saskatchewan. Her advice to young women who are thinking of careers in engineering is that: "Always seek out opportunities. Do not get discouraged; and always keep trying to find a way to reach your goal." She encourages others to take opportunities offered by Métis organizations like GDI. "They help keep Métis people connected to our history and with each other like a community should."

GDI Training and Employment has partnered with the SRC in the latter's

Aboriginal Mentorship Program. The Program aims to connect Indigenous post-secondary students in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines with SRC mentors in the same or similar disciplines. It includes coaching and mentoring throughout the school year to help set students up for success, along with meaningful summer employment and opportunities to help students develop skills and gain work experience that will help them in their studies and future careers. Métis students are funded through the GDI Training and Employment summer student program.

Through a partnership with the SRC in 2015, GDI Training and Employment funded one Métis student (Thomas Lavergne, an Environmental Engineering student at the University of Saskatchewan). In 2016, GDI Training and Employment and SRC signed a three-year MOU to have more Métis students in the STEM disciplines linked with mentors at the SRC under the Aboriginal Mentorship Program. To date, six GDI Training and Employment-funded clients have participated in the program. Five have graduated with engineering degrees and found employment. The sixth, Alexandre St. Amand (Industrial Systems Engineering student) has just started the program. 



Gabriel Dumont Institute

GDI-Saskatchewan Research Council Partnership

By Rebecca Gotto

Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Training and Employment and the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) have partnered since 2015 to

create opportunities for Métis students in the science, technology, engineering and math programs with SRC mentors in the same or similar disciplines to help them in their

educational and personal growth. The students also get paid summer employment placements in positions that are relevant to their studies.

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Chennoa Tracey, BSc (Mechanical Engineering) is Engineer Assistant at the Saskatchewan Research Council and former client of GDI Training & Employment

Motivation In The Workplace

By Jim Edmondson

Certain people find staying focused at work to be a very simple task. For others, though, motivation can seem really difficult to achieve, especially when the weather is beautiful outside! There are no magic beans or potions that instill motivation; everyone has different things that motivate them.

Perhaps you're the person who is in love with their job, you love the work, the people, and the actual office space, then motivation to succeed is a given. However, for most of us, at least a couple of times a week our motivation level sinks far too low and we can't seem to get anything accomplished. Not only that, the things you *are* accomplishing are low quality work, and you know it to be true. Sometimes our brains can start to wander to different places and before we know it we don't have an ounce of inspiration left in us to continue on with the day. What can you do? Luckily, there are some simple steps you can take to get your motivation up to where it needs to be. Here are some simple ways to stay motivated at work.

Do Your Best

To get started, wrap your mind around the commitment to getting motivated. If you want to do the best you can do at work, you need to

commit to being motivated to do so. You should also commit to getting your job accomplished in an above-and-beyond manner.

Make a To-Do List

Let's face it; life can get really crazy sometimes, especially when we're trying to balance work, family, a social life, and whatever other real-world obligations come our way on a daily basis. It seems like an easy enough thing to do, right? Sit down with a pen and a piece of paper and jot down the things we need to get done that day. However, there is really an art to creating the best of the best to-do lists, ones that will truly help us to meet deadlines and ultimately feel less stressed and more accomplished.

Focus on the big things (quality vs. quantity). It will make you much more effective in your job and home life. Try making your to-do list the night before. This will eliminate wasting time and energy in the morning figuring out what things need to get done. Tackling something difficult or distasteful first thing can create a sense of achievement that you'll take with you for the rest of the day. Try adding a time estimate next to each item when you're creating a list — whether you think it's going to take you 15 minutes or three hours.

Enjoy Small Achievements

You will find that once that to-do list is made, you'll get extra

motivation by ticking off the item as you complete them and by glancing back at the list/items you've checked off as the day goes on to see what you have accomplished.

Take Breaks

If you're someone who has completely jammed days from start to finish at work, it might seem borderline impossible to find time to take breaks. However, taking breaks is critical to keeping yourself motivated throughout the day. Try to take time during the day to stand up and take a small walk. Remove yourself from whatever it is you're working on, it could be as simple as heading to a co-workers office to chat or simply walking to the water cooler to refill your water container.

Ask For Feedback

Feedback can be scary, but it can also be incredibly motivating. If you've done well, feedback can give your ego a jump which can be motivating. If your work is lacking in certain areas, the constructive criticism can push you to amp up your efforts and continue to do better.

What You Can Control

In all aspects of life, it's never a good use of energy to spend our time focusing on the things we simply cannot control.

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Chennoa Tracey

Photos courtesy of C. Tracey and Saskatchewan Research Council



Michael Jenkins: A Budding Actor Credits GDI For Success

By Tammy Cummins and James Oloo

We caught up with Michael David Jenkins, a former client of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment. Michael, who is originally from the Prince Albert Area, worked closely with Tammy Cummins, an Employment Counsellor at the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment – the Métis Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) agreement holder for Saskatchewan. Michael lives in Toronto where he works as an actor.

Michael is affiliated with Colin McMurray & Associates, a Toronto talent agency that represents actors, singers and dancers for film, television,

voice-over, theatre and commercials.

Before he contacted the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment, Michael had a job, but felt that he wanted a career. "I was working at a bar in my hometown when I first started to think about a career in the entertainment industry," he said. "However, living in Saskatchewan, I didn't think that this would ever be possible due to limited opportunities and a lack of resources." But that did not stop Michael from pursuing his dreams. "I scouted a few schools on the internet and came across Toronto Film

School. Immediately I began to look for ways to get out to Toronto. That is when a friend recommended I go and talk to Tammy Cummins at GDI. I did, and everything got better from that day."

But Michael felt a bit of apprehension at the thought of seeking help at GDI Training & Employment. "I was hesitant that someone I had never met before would be so eager to help me get on the road to my dream. But Tammy had such a good feel to her. I could tell she meant well, and was only interested in my well-being.

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Institute Staff



George Gingras, Research Officer
GDI Publishing Department



Sara Belair,
Administrative Assistant,
Indigenous Apprenticeship



Daniel Downs
Program Coordinator,
Dumont Technical Institute

Partnership With Research Council ... Continued from Page 2

The partnership between the SRC and Gabriel Dumont Institute has been extremely successful in its short three years. Because of this partnership, SRC has been able to provide summer jobs and mentorship opportunities to six students throughout this time, leading to two of these students, Thomas Lavergne and Chennoa Tracey, joining SRC as permanent employees upon graduation.

This partnership with GDI is a big part of why SRC's

Aboriginal Mentorship Program has been so successful in supporting Métis students as they progress through their post-secondary education with opportunities to learn and grow both academically and personally.

We are excited to continue our partnership with GDI into the future and see what successes come next from it. This summer another GDI client is joining our organization as part of our Aboriginal Mentorship Program.

This University of Regina Industrial Systems Engineering student will be placed with our Industrial Engineering team and will be working directly alongside Chennoa. We are thrilled that Chennoa will now be able to move from mentee to a bit of a mentor role as a new crop of students join our program this summer and in the years to come.

Rebecca Gotto is the Manager of Aboriginal Mentorship Program, SRC. rebecca.gotto@src.sk.ca

Mr. Ray Field, The Mathematics Road Warrior

By Daniel A. Downs

As it is the midst of summer, many Gabriel Dumont Institute employees are taking some well-deserved and long-overdue vacation time. Many return to work and post on social media stories of their adventures and time spent with friends

and family in distant locations, and the inevitable horror stories of bad hotels and unsavoury rest stop washrooms.

These stories (good or bad) are a reminder of the adventures one takes in life not only to reach the destination, but the destination itself. While

listening to a colleague's vacation adventures earlier in the month, I was reminded of a well-travelled yet relatively unknown Dumont Technical Institute employee has kept in its pocket for nearly two decades now.

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Motivation In The Workplace ... *Continued from Page 2*



Michael Jenkins

Work is no exception to that. To stay as motivated as possible, try to focus on the things you can impact, that are within your control, as focusing on them could increase our progress at work on the broader scale.

Consider The "Why?"

You need to complete a certain task today, but why? Asking yourself "Why?" lets you stay in touch with the

reasoning you're doing something, or the "vision" behind the work, so to say.

Power of Positive Words

If you've heard before those positive affirmations can be beneficial, you've heard correctly. Saying out loud what you want to happen to keep yourself motivated or post it somewhere that's visible to you every day. So, if you're trying to conquer a huge,

difficult project, try writing a Post It note that says, "You've got this!" and sticking it on your computer monitor.

Sometimes inspiration can seem really lacking at work. However, by trying some of these tips for getting motivated, you might quickly find some positive changes happening at the office sooner than you know it. 🌐

Michael Jenkins: A Success Story ... *Continued from Page 3*

He continued, "Tammy was on my side 100%, she would do follow-up calls to make sure everything was going smoothly, and if I had a question or concern she returned my calls, and email immediately. I could see that she wanted me to be successful as much I wanted to be successful."

When asked about his typical day as an actor, Michael stated that "As an actor, I have to be available at the drop of a hat to get to an audition that my agent sends me. I have to know my lines, know my character, sometimes go as far as learn a dialect in a couple hours." And, "after the audition happens, I wait to hear if I receive a call back. When a call back happens, I receive new information which needs to be learned in a very little amount of time. Once a job is booked, I show up to set on a determined day with lines memorized, character built, and costumes fitted. I sit in 'holding' until the director tells the second Assistant Director that they are ready for me. From there, I show up to set, hit my mark, know my lines and make the director's job as easy and not complex as possible. I return to 'holding'

and wait for them to tell me whether or not I am wrapped for the day."

There are key lessons that Michael learned at the Film School that helps him in his day to day work. "How to deal with rejection was a very important lesson." He noted that "Being an actor is very difficult because you are going to audition a lot. The going rate is 10 auditions may lead to one booking; which is a great ratio when you are living in it. But it can be daunting to someone who is not in the industry. My acting coaches didn't just give me acting pointers, they gave me a lot of self-confidence that didn't just help me in the acting community; but continues to be useful in day to day life. I think this is probably the most valuable part of the schooling I received."

Michael discussed the aspect of his acting career that he likes the most: "I like that my job doesn't feel like work. There is so much I can do to create work for myself. For instance, last summer I wasn't booking anything, so I reached out to a local bar and told them I wanted to host a show." He continues, "They were ecstatic to have the opportunity to bring in an improv show. I got four of my friends, and together, we threw a show in two week. It

was an absolute blast performing for a room full of people. The bar covered our expenses and I paid my actor friends for their time." Michael stated that, "The whole thing sounds like a lot of work, and yes it was difficult at times. But in the end it came together so beautifully that I can't help but want to do it again and again."

We asked Michael to describe the secret of his success in a few words. His answer was, "Schedule, budget, and enjoy. School does not take long to complete. So you may as well enjoy the chaos while you can."

Michael reiterated his message of thanks to Gabriel Dumont Institute. "GDI was the only way I was able to complete school and keep my focus 100% on my studies. Because of the support from GDI, I did not have to worry about juggling part time jobs while in school for the 18 months. I was able to complete my schooling with a 98% overall average, graduate at the top of my class with distinction. I owe my highest level of thanks to Gabriel Dumont Institute." 🌐



Michael Jenkins as a Métis Soldier during World War I

Photos courtesy of M.D. Jenkins



Mathematics Road Warrior ... *Continued from Page 3*

Dumont Technical Institute
Adult Basic Education Program

This individual is arguably one of the most travelled persons within the Gabriel Dumont Institute family. He has worked for Dumont Technical Institute in nearly every community across Saskatchewan in which Dumont Technical Institute has provided service over the last 20 years. When a community is told that Mr. Ray Field will be travelling to their area to provide a whirlwind tour of very unique and inspirational mathematics instruction, the common question is "Who is this Ray guy?" This is the same question that even many seasoned Gabriel Dumont Institute employees ask when they are informed that Ray

Field will be providing work on mathematics in their communities. Who is this Ray Guy?

The answer I give them is very simple. Ray Field is the Mathematics Road Warrior of Dumont Technical Institute. He travels anywhere and everywhere spreading his own unique style and love of mathematics to nearly all of Dumont Technical Institute's programs (be it Adult Basic Education or Skills training). Being a provincial training institute, one would expect that several Dumont Technical Institute staff are racking-up highway miles and discovering the best

Poutine and Zinger Wing spots through the province... but very few to the extent and with as much longevity as Ray.

So as Gabriel Dumont Institute staff continue to log miles on some of Saskatchewan's better and lesser travelled roads this summer, remember Ray Field who has been hitting the highways for Dumont Technical Institute for nearly two decades now. Most of his roads have been far less travelled, and I don't think he would have it any other way. 🌐



Ray Field, Faculty member
Adult Basic Education, Saskatoon
Photo courtesy of R. Field

Payroll Cutoff Calendar, August 2018

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

Employee contracts due at payroll upon job acceptance

Payroll must receive contracts prior to payroll cutoff date, otherwise the employee will be paid on the following pay period.

MRTS due by the 15th of every month.



Gabriel Dumont Institute/Dumont Technical Institute

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK
S7M 0R9

PHONE:
(306) 242-6070

FAX:
(306) 242-0002

E-MAIL:
general@gdi.gdins.org

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www.gdins.org

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

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GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE
of Native Studies and Applied Research

GDI Locations

GDI Central Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West
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
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

[https://gdins.org/student-
services/library/](https://gdins.org/student-services/library/)

GDI Library Prince Albert

48 12th Street East
Prince Albert, SK
S6V 1B2
Phone: (306) 922-6466
Fax: (306) 763-3947



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