

December 2013

Volume 7, Issue 12

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

In this issue:

GED® Testing Site

Remembering Mandela

Christmas Break

Highlights:

Workplace Conflict Resolution 1

IT Update 2

ABE Students at Christmas Parade 4

GDI Joint Staff Brunch 5

Tips for Resolving Conflict in the Workplace

By Jim Edmondson

Conflict is inevitable. It is everywhere we go, home, at work, even in the grocery store. Conflict is unavoidable when people interact; but it is especially prevalent when groups of people are tasked to work together. The issues that arise can be small and easily disregarded, but when a problem needs action it helps to keep in mind that rarely is anybody looking to attack anyone else intentionally.

The first step to resolving the conflict is identifying it. It's important to realize that a problem is never a person, but it can be something a person does. For example, it can be irritating to work with a peer who dominates all discussions and is dismissive of your opinion. The problem may not be the co-worker, but rather their dismissive attitude towards others, or a lack of active participation by others who observe the behaviour.

Usually, the perceived perpetrators of conflict do not set out to make enemies or cause problems. They may not even know that they are annoying! Below are some tips for workplace conflict resolution.

In the case of an irritating co-worker, you could choose to ignore their actions and hope that they realize the issue. But this does not always result in resolution. It can work if you are not required to interact with that co-worker on a work

mandated task. However, if you work closely with the individual, the result may be heightened levels of tension and resentment; and decreased productivity.


A more effective way to resolve conflict would be to approach the individual, one on one, with your concerns and offer potential solutions. It can be difficult to talk with a co-worker about something they do or how their actions are perceived. Bringing up and discussing such issues constructively with co-workers is always complicated especially if the individual has a combative personality or they hold a position of real or perceived authority. Often, no matter how careful we are with the words we choose, they can easily come across like an unintentional verbal attack.

It may thus be helpful to address the concerns in calm, even voice, avoiding gestures whenever possible because in conversations such as these, gestures can be seen as threatening even if they are not. For example, instead of "You don't let anyone else talk or give their opinion in meetings," a less confrontational approach would be "You have great insight, and I feel that we would be able to come up with some really good ideas in our meetings if we all contributed our ideas." Prefacing that statement

with an acknowledgement of the individual's contribution and experience can peak their interest and encourage them to actively listen.

If one on one approach does not resolve the conflict, consider involving a third person who is trusted by both parties. Your immediate supervisor should always be a last resort as it could result in bad feelings and resentment. It is critical when bringing such concerns to your supervisor to have sufficient documentation or supporting information that can substantiate your claim. A concern that boils down to a he said-she said or strictly personality based issue can be hard to resolve amicably because it is likely based on perception or conjecture. As conflict that has escalated to this level, inevitably concludes in a win-lose scenario where one if not both the conflicting parties feeling as though they "lost".

Always remember that we are all professionals and our mandate is to serve the Métis community. While conflict is inevitable within our workplace or our personal lives, it can have a detrimental effect on how we operate in our jobs, in our homes and on our health. We should all do our part to resolve workplace conflicts.

GDI offers access to Employee Assistance Plan, a confidential support program that offers counselling to employees. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-387-4765. 



DTI is now Pearson VUE Testing Centre for GED®

By Chantelle Gagnon

DTI has recently joined the learning evolution and became a certified Pearson VUE Testing Centre. As of November 1, 2013, DTI is proud to be able to offer Computer Based General Education Development (GED®) exams at its Saskatoon location.

According to the Government of Saskatchewan, almost nine out of ten employment opportunities between 2013 and 2017 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. DTI is thus making GED® credential more accessible to our clients.

GED® exams are now offered computer based, which is one of the most important advancements in providing greater access to what can be a life-changing exam for many. The primary goal of the Computer Based Testing (CBT) is to modernize the GED® exam distribution method, which will increase the access and opportunities

for adults to pursue and attain the nationally recognized GED® credential. CBT has several advantages including: quicker turnaround time for results (unofficial results print immediately after exam is completed, except for the essay), greater accessibility, scheduling flexibility, streamlined experienced and highly secure test environment.

As a Pearson VUE® Authorized Test Center, DTI provides on-site, on-demand testing for GED at our convenient on-site testing centre in Saskatoon. DTI Saskatoon is currently offering GED® testing one day a month, with intentions of increasing the availability as needed. We will also be applying for a mobile site, which will allow us to offer GED® tests across the province. In the future, we also hope to offer other exams as well, such as Accuplacer.

The GED® exam has online registration and scheduling, which is both a benefit for candidates and test centers. The candidates can schedule their test from the comfort of

their home, by computer or telephone, while the testing center has less paperwork to deal with. This is a win, win. The cost for the exam is \$35 which can be paid online, or vouchers can be purchased from DTI prior to exam registration. Clients have the option to write all five subject areas at once, or else pay \$7 per subject they choose to write.

For clients who have completed certain areas of the exam previously, not to worry, your paper based exam marks, can be combined with your computer based exam marks beginning January 2014. If a client is unsuccessful on their first attempt, they must wait 14 days in order to rewrite.

DTI test center is open to the public and we look forward to serving the community's GED® testing needs. The next GED® exam will be offered on January 13, 2014. The GED® exam is a joint venture between the American Council on Education and Pearson, the world's largest education and testing company. For more information please do not hesitate to contact Chantelle Gagnon at (306) 659-1065 or chantelle.gagnon@dti.gdins.org.



IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

Support System

In November 2013, we received 22 new IT support requests. Fifteen of the requests were completed and closed (68 percent closure rate). Overall, we closed 29 work orders. There are currently 33 open work orders. Please send any IT related question you may have to support@gdins.org or call any member of the IT Team.

New Website

GDI has a new website. It has an improved and streamlined graphical look, making it more polished and easier to navigate. We have amended or created 80 to 100 pages for the site, including some high quality images taken by EnVogue Photography.

This has been the culmination of 12 months' work by the Website Steering Committee,

consisting of Lisa Wilson, Jessica Sandell, David Morin, Tim Metz, Gordon Holtslander, and myself. Initial feedback has been very encouraging. They include: "The new website looks spectacular – Congratulations! Your hard work is a success to be very proud of" (Janice DePeel); and "The new website looks great, is very current and easy to use. Thank you" (Twitter Follower).

Continued on Page 3.



Karon Shmon with the Bell of Batoche
Photo by P. Beszterda



Brett Vandale, Director of DTI and Interim Director, GDIT&E
Photo by EnVogue Photography



Bill Lehne, GDIT&E Program Coordinator at a GDIT&E All Staff Event, October 2013
Photo by James Oloo



Remembering Mandela, the Honorary Métis Citizen

By James Oloo

"I welcome you to Canada on behalf of the Métis National Senate, the Métis leaders and all the Métis people of Canada, as one Aboriginal people to another Aboriginal people. I have a presentation of a sash for you. The sash is given to special people as a symbol of honor, pride and respect. Along with this sash, it is my privilege and duty as the presenter of the sash to bestow upon you an honorary Métis name. So if you would allow me to put the sash around your waist..."

Those were the words spoken by the late Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Senator John B. Boucher to the visiting South African

President Nelson Mandela on September 24, 1998 in Ottawa. Boucher had been chosen to represent Métis people in Canada at a meeting with Mandela.

The late South African icon and Nobel Laureate became a honorary Métis when he was presented with a Métis sash by Senator Boucher. The Métis leader from St. Louis, SK had the privilege of wrapping the sash around Mandela's waist which he wore proudly for the rest of the day.

Later that day, Mandela addressed the Parliament of Canada and was inducted into the Order of Canada – with the Métis sash around his waist. According to the Métis National

Council, the sash represents a distinctive honour that is bestowed up on special people as a symbol of honor, pride and respect.

Boucher called Mandela 'Diamant,' a Métis name meaning diamond. He told Mandela, that like a diamond, "You have spread a very bright light, not only over your own country, but over all of the world as well."

On November 19, 2001, Nelson Mandela became the first living person to be made an honorary citizen of Canada. Mandela passed away this month at age 95. His struggle for justice and reconciliation holds a deep significance for many Métis peoples. 🌐



Métis Senator John Boucher presents Mandela with a sash
Source: L. Halcro/ PA Herald



Mandela with Prime Minister Jean Chretien at the Parliament in Ottawa

GDI's New Website ... Continued from Page 2

Shopmetis.ca

In order to simplify the process of visiting the online shop, we have created a new domain name – shopmetis.ca. This is easier to remember and will give us an easier path to migrate to the new website location when it is ready.

We are still currently using the old site for the intranet and the shop. The old site has been renamed <http://intranet.gdins.org> and the shop is unchanged on www.shop.gdins.org. These items will be incorporated into the new site over the coming months.

Online Payslips

The Online Payslip system (Penny) is now available at <http://services.gdins.org>. Please note that from January 2014, no paper payslips will be issued by GDI.

Browser Upgrades

Microsoft recently launched

the latest version of their Internet Explorer browser via Windows Updates. However, a few issues have been reported to IT. If there are any websites you visit that do not display as expected, there are two options to fix the problem. You can either add the site to the Compatibility View list, or use another browser. Please contact IT at support@gdins.org for further details.

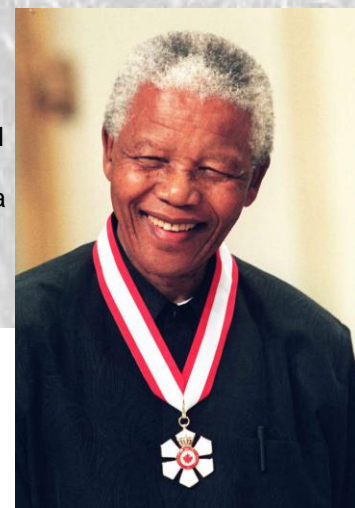
Also in Firefox, it sometimes indicates that the Java Runtime Engine is an 'untrusted' application, and disables it. This is needed for some valid applications, such as Banner and some banking apps. If you get a message about a blocked add-in, upgrading to v26 will allow you to authorize the app to run always, and get around this (also a workaround is to use another browser). 🌐

Management Reporter

The Management Reporter training has been held in most locations. What has come to light is the need to instruct in how to interpret the information, so a second Financial Literacy course will be held in the New Year. Final work will continue on the Reporting Units as we move forward, and the processes will be finalized by Finance for production of these reports in a timely manner.

Learning Portal

Testing continues on the learning resource portal with the Practical Nursing program in Regina. We are in the process of setting up a domain name and a security certificate for this to use. In January, we will move on to the next phase, and actually give LPN Regina students access to the resources to test operations. 🌐



Mandela smiling after receiving the Order of Canada
September 24, 1998
Photos by the Canadian Press



DTI ABE Students Shine at Christmas Parade

By Jeannie Murray

Over the past three years, ABE students at DTI in La Loche have been enthusiastically participating in the annual La Loche Community Christmas Parade. Each year, DTI students join hands to creatively improvise a Métis-specific float.

November and December are exciting months at the DTI La Loche Centre. Students learn about Métis and the many contributions of the Métis to our country. As well, ABE Level 3 students get to read *Halfbreed*, the 1973 memoir of renowned Métis author and Elder Maria Campbell. *Halfbreed* is one of the most acclaimed Aboriginal autobiographical writings of all time. It explores Campbell's

poverty-stricken childhood; and early adulthood, which included being married at 15, high-end prostitution in Vancouver, battles with addiction, racism, and thoughts of suicide; as well as the inspiration of her great-grandmother that gave her confidence, and helped her to survive and thrive. *Halfbreed* is taught in schools across Canada, and continues to inspire many Aboriginal peoples.

Lessons in Métis history lead up to the celebration of Métis culture that includes building a Métis themed float to be displayed at the Christmas Parade.

In 2012, the students built a float with a religious overtone.

They built a church surrounded by teepees representing the devoutness of the Métis people. In the foreground sat fiddle player symbolizing the gathering of the Métis during a ceremony or festive season. They won fourth place last year winning them \$200.00. The two classes split the monies towards their fundraiser, and some went towards our annual Christmas feast with family and staff here at DTI. This year, the students built the Red River cart pulled by a black horse. All materials are improvised, and with lots of effort and enthusiasm there was a sense of pride in their skills and in their Métis history and culture. Tamara Toulejour, an ABE Level 3 student, literally surprised everyone - she built the whole Red River cart herself. It was a very creative and beautiful art work. The horse drawn Red River cart was declared the overall winner of the 2013 La Loche Community Christmas Parade.

Congratulations to Tamara and Team DTI ABE! The Team wishes to express its appreciation to members of staff who supported them along the way. Special thanks to Lenny Gamola for his encouragement and for "loaning us boards and tools." 🌐



DTI ABE students at the La Loche 2013 Annual Christmas Parade
Photo by Jeannie Murray

Christmas Break 2013

By James Oloo

2013 was a great year for GDI. The Institute hosted a highly successful golf tournament that raised over \$21,000 for scholarships and opened four renovated buildings in Regina, Prince Albert, and Saskatoon. Publishing Department

published ten resources, won three awards, opened the GDI Gallery, Museums, and Special Collections, and also played a key role in welcoming the Bell of Batoche back home.

Christmas break 2013 as approved by the GDI Board of

Governors is from Tuesday December 24, 2013 to Thursday January 2, 2014 (inclusive). Monday December 23, 2013 and Friday January 3, 2014 are regular work days. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2014. 🌐



Joint SUNTEP, DTI, T&E Christmas Brunch Held in Regina

By SUNTEP Regina

Gabriel Dumont Institute is the parent company of four incorporated companies: DTI, GDI Training and Employment, Gabriel Dumont College, and Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation. As well, GDI offers core programs and services that include SUNTEP, Library and Information, Finance and Operations, and Publishing Department. As of December 1, 2013, the Institute has 130 full-time employees and 35 part-time and sessional employees across the province. It is not always that employees from various companies and locations attend common events. But that changed this month when the staff from SUNTEP, DTI, and GDI Training and Employment in Regina and Yorkton Centres got together in Regina on December 5, 2013 to at a joint event that also

coincided with the start of the holiday season.

The event, which was attended by 17 employees, was organized by Erma Taylor, Administrative Assistant at SUNTEP Regina. Janice R. Thompson, the SUNTEP Regina Program Coordinator, welcomed everyone and there was a round of introductions. As people introduced themselves, they indicated where they worked and whether or not they were GDI alumni. It was a wonderful feeling to know that there were at least eight people around the table that were GDI alumni, either through DTI or SUNTEP.

Erma said a Michif blessing before we ate. It was a wonderful Breakfast Brunch at the University Club, the University of Regina.

Some of us were meeting for the first time, and so it was a

good opportunity to learn about each other. A toast was made to GDI for allowing us the opportunity to gather together. Connections were made, names were put to faces, bellies got full, gifts of a tote bag were handed out and it was altogether a very nice time.

After brunch people milled around the Library, picking up books and just looking at the very large collection of Métis resources.

One of the key lessons learned from the event is that internal joint events like this are likely to enhance staff collaboration and interacting toward realizing shared goals and mission of the Institute; and contribute to achieving synergy within GDI. Teamwork culture may also help members of staff develop cross-functional skills, such as negotiation and strategies to better serve our clients. We look forward to many such events in the coming year. 🌐



Cochin SK

Photo by Envogue Photography



Clockwise from the left:

Marilyn Belhumeur - Library
 Janice R. Thompson - SUNTEP
 Janelle Bellegarde - DTI
 Erma Taylor - SUNTEP
 Kim Kovacs - Library
 Barbara Reyes - GDIT&E
 Jane Kard - GDIT&E
 Ashley Hayden-Ross - GDIT&E
 Sharon Hoedel - GDIT&E
 Brenda Fiddler - GDIT&E
 Janelle Smith - DTI
 Patricia Hooper - DTI
 Michelle Easterby - DTI
 Kristen Rutten - DTI
 Ryan McLeod - DTI
 Jennifer Reid-Vandevord - SUNTEP
 Coralee Potetz - DTI
 Missing: Brenna Pacholko - SUNTEP

Photo credited to E. Taylor



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

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)

Follow us on Twitter!
@gdins_org



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

<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