



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 Regina Partners with Jane Goodall Institute

By Janice R. Thompson

After months of phone calls and emails, and anticipation of meeting Carissa MacLennan, Director of Education and Youth Engagement at the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) in Toronto, SUNTEP Regina finally hosted Carissa last month. It was a bitterly cold Saskatchewan day.

February 25 and 26, 2014 initiated the newly formed partnership with JGI in establishing an engaged collaborative approach with SUNTEP student teachers. It was an experience our students took pride participating in, as rich conversations focused on Métis experiences in Saskatchewan schools.

While JGI is popularly known for its work with apes and chimpanzees, the non-profit organization has also been working with schools to empower students to make a difference in the society. Its work and advocacy promote a commitment to respecting, nurturing, and protecting people, animals, and the environment.

In 2013, JGI and the Learning for a Sustainable Future launched a teaching resource that has received good reviews across the country. According to the resource, "Protecting our Sacred Water helps educators ... bring education for sustainable development to their students in a transformative way

through action projects. The guide provides tools for teachers to help youth choose a project topic and how to carry it out through the integration of Aboriginal ways of knowing. It is important that Aboriginal youth; Canada's fastest growing and most marginalized population, see themselves as leaders in creating change. Youth who are meaningfully engaged ... are more likely to make positive changes for themselves and their community." The resource is available at <http://janegoodall.ca/get-involved/protecting-our-sacred-water/>

The interest in creating this partnership began in early 2013. Through various discussions, the agreed upon purpose of our work was to collaborate in delivering professional development to pre-service teachers, focusing on a Métis lens in supporting the existing teacher resource guides. Another goal was to produce Métis resources in Saskatchewan.

Carissa introduced us to the work of JGI. Together, SUNTEP Regina students and Carissa co-constructed experiences that included: education for sustainable development; community mapping; action planning process and its relevance to Métis education in

Saskatchewan; Aboriginal student teacher experiences; Elder involvement; and relationship between economy, sustainability, and curriculum.

In addition, time was devoted to addressing such questions as: How can student teachers incorporate Métis ways of knowing into the classroom? How does the 12-step action planning process reflect Métis ways of knowing? And what should a Métis educational resource look like?

The student teacher discussions provided another iteration of the current teacher resource guide with Métis pedagogy at the forefront. SUNTEP Regina science instructor John MacDonald facilitated the student work on JGI's session on Off-Campus Residential Experience. SUNTEP Faculty member, Russell Fayant led the session on Métis Ways of Knowing and Adaptability. When our time with Carissa, and John ended; excitement filled the air as students learned they will receive a JGI pre-service training certificate for their exceptional work. When all was said and done, I believe we left a positive impression on Carissa on her first visit to Saskatchewan. We look forward to future work with the JGI and showcasing the potential of SUNTEP Regina students with their expertise and knowledge in Métis education.



Being Open to Possibilities

By Jim Edmondson



SUNTEP Regina Instructor John MacDonald and pre-service student teachers Trenna Beauregard (L) and Sam Gold

One of the indicators of a quality employer is whether or not they have a base of long-term employees. This is the case with Gabriel Dumont Institute where the majority of the dedicated staff – over 60% - has been with the Institute for over five years. Long service provides numerous benefits such as extensive experience in the job, vast knowledge, and an understanding of what has traditionally worked. However, it can also have some unanticipated drawbacks.

When there is a well established workforce, it is sometimes difficult to be open to new ideas or new perspectives when we have been doing the job long-term. There is often the perception that because we have “always” done things a certain way that our methods, expertise or decisions are far better frameworks for solving problems, performing the

required tasks or serving clients. Not that we should not be quite proud of what we know or have accomplished for the Institute and our clients but we also need to appreciate the limitations of our knowledge and accept that there are sometimes even better ways to serve our clients and the Métis community.

As we strive to empower our clients so that they may overcome the barriers they face, we must continually learn and search out better, more effective ways to perform our mandate. This often means that we must be genuinely interested in learning new things, making new connections and being accepting of different perspectives or view-points. It’s not enough to be simply open to ideas at the margins of what we do; we must be willing to think in new ways about every aspect of what we do. This will always take some humility on the part of each one of us.

Humility means acknowledging and being open to the possibility that our expertise is sometimes not sufficient for many of the challenges that we face in the workplace. This is very difficult to do due to the fact that any change, whether in process or thinking, can be intimidating as people tend to fear the unknown. We fear that change will make us less effective, will force us out of our comfort zone or put us back to square one on the learning curve.

Being open to new ideas and different perspectives, be they from your supervisor or co-workers, will improve the way you perform because fresh ideas and new ways of doing things often help us achieve efficiencies. Fresh ideas, whether we act on them or not, will prove beneficial to us as individuals, employees, service providers, and role models for the Métis. As professionals at an educational and service providing institution, it is key that we all commit to non-stop, continuous learning. 🌐

Northern Labour Market Committee Meeting

By Bill Lehne

GDI Training and Employment Program Coordinator Bill Lehne represented the Institute at a two day Northern Labour Market Committee (NLMC) event in Prince Albert on March 5 and 6. The goal was to be able to better identify and understand the labour market challenges and economic opportunities facing Métis communities in Northern Saskatchewan.

The NLMC assesses labour market and economic development issues in

Northern Saskatchewan and initiates actions aimed at enabling residents of Northern Saskatchewan to benefit from training and economic empowerment in their region.

By participating in the NLMC, GDI not only gets to represent Métis interests, but the Institute also engages with a number of stakeholders thereby becoming aware of the trends in labour market and skills training needs in the north.

The NLMC was started in 1983 as a group of people working in the labour market

field. Since then it has grown to include over 80 different stakeholders that include industry, government agencies, educational institutions, and Aboriginal communities. The stakeholders share a common interest in improving economic prosperity in Northern Saskatchewan. The NLMC meets quarterly to discuss economic development issues in Northern Saskatchewan. Glenn Lafleur, Vice Chair of the Gabriel Dumont Institute Board of Governors, is the current NLMC Chair. 🌐



SUNTEP Regina students Sam Gold (L), Victoria Parisien, Venus Kay and Cassie Fisher
Photos by Janice R. Thompson



IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

IT Support System

As last month's update was a little different, here is a double dose of stats. In January 2014, we received 85 new IT requests to the support system, all of which have been completed and closed. Overall, we closed 85 work orders in January.

In February 2014, we received 67 new IT requests to the support system. Of the 67, 58 have been completed and closed (86% closure rate). Overall, we closed 58 work orders in February. There are currently 58 open Work Orders.

Don't forget to email support@gdins.org for any new requests. In the event that an email cannot be sent for any reason, you can also call any member of the IT Team, who will log the support Work Order for you.

Service Level Agreements

The IT Department works hard to ensure that all support requests are met in a timely and efficient manner. In order to manage expectations for staff, it is worthwhile indicating the Service Level Targets that we try to adhere to.

We use a system called Track-IT for monitoring support requests. When an email is received to support@gdins.org, a Work Order is automatically created, and will trigger these Service Level Agreement (SLA) targets as follows: Within one working hour of a Work Order being received, an automatic email will be sent to the requestor and the IT Coordinator. Within two hours, the Work Order is assigned to technician and a priority level is set by IT. The usual priorities are set to either 'urgent' (fix within three days) or 'two weeks.'

By the end of the next working day, a response by email or telephone will be received by the requestor. While this does not guarantee resolution, every effort will be made to resolve the problem within the expected completion time frame. Once the expected completion date is met, this will be escalated to the technicians Line Manager who will reevaluate the work order, assign a new expected completion date, and reassign if necessary. If a request for information from the requestor is not provided after seven working days, the Work Order will be assumed to be resolved and closed. It will be the responsibility of the requestor to request this call be reopened

with a new expected completion date. Staff has the opportunity to raise any concerns that may have regarding this work order during the course of its remedy, and can also communicate any concerns with IT management.

New Website

The new website has been extremely well received, and has led to many favourable comments. We are also seeing a marked improvement from the online shop site.

The increased ease of use of the site has led to a significant upturn in sales. So far for 2014, we have seen 55 new orders through the website totaling just short of \$7,000. One other contributing factor to this increase may be the introduction of the simple shopmetis.ca domain name.

A key point to remember is that it is critical that we keep the information on the website and our Social Media sites up to date. If you have any events or newsworthy items in your program, please share them with us. The easiest way to do this is through the support system by emailing attachments to support@gdins.org
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SUNTEP Regina student teachers
Mariah Rope and Sam Fayant
Photo by Janice R. Thompson

Third Annual GDI Scholarship Golf Tournament

By James Oloo

As the long cold winter slowly bows off the stage, it is not too soon to start thinking about golf especially if it is for raising scholarship funds for Métis students. The Third Annual Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation (GDSF) Golf Tournament will be held at the Moonlake Golf and

Country Club in Saskatoon (www.moonlakegolf.com) on Friday May 30, 2014.

Last year's GDSF Golf Tournament was a success. It raised about \$21,000 which was matched by the Provincial Government. Also, SUNTEP Prince Albert Program Coordinator Liza Brown won the golf skill prize and a

camera. In 2012-2013, GDSF awarded the largest amount of scholarships to Métis students in the history of GDI. To date, GDSF has awarded scholarships worth over \$1.2 million to Métis students. For more information including registration and corporate sponsorship, please visit www.gdins.org/events



DTI Regina LPN students and instructors with the Grey Cup:
Kattie Thierren, Leah Lund,
Arlene Aisaican, Meagan DuMont,
Danna Henderson,
Samantha Wagman,
and Patricia Hooper
Photo courtesy of P. Hooper



RLI Releases Study on Aboriginal Education Gap

By James Oloo

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



Valine Gaudet
Dr. Cecilia Reynolds, Dean
College of Education,
Kate Clements, alumnus,
SUNTEP Saskatoon, and
Glenn Lafleur, Vice Chair,
GDI Board of Governors
September 2013
Photo credited to www.usask.ca

This month Rupertsland Institute, an affiliate of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), released a study commissioned by the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research and conducted by Dr. Eric Howe on the economic impact of the Aboriginal education gap in Alberta. The study follows a 2011 report commissioned by Gabriel Dumont Institute in which Eric Howe calculated benefits that individuals and Saskatchewan enjoy when a Métis person graduates with a Bachelor of Education degree from SUNTEP and take a job as a teacher.

Dr. Howe also estimated forgone earnings from bridging the gap in educational attainment between Métis and non-Aboriginal people. Unlike the Gabriel Dumont Institute report that focused on the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), the Rupertsland Institute study examines all postsecondary credential earned by Alberta Métis under Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy, first by MNA until 2010, then by the Rupertsland Institute since its creation in 2010.

Over the past 33 years, Gabriel Dumont Institute has provided opportunities to many Métis people to earn educational credentials ranging from high school diploma to postsecondary certificates, diplomas, and undergraduate degrees. The Institute has also provided numerous interventions including financial support to several Métis students who are attending other institutions

including graduate schools. As a result, generations of Métis people continue to be impacted – for the better as indicated in some of the success stories of current and former students (see <https://gdins.org/programs-and-courses/success-stories/>).


Perhaps now more than ever, demand for Gabriel Dumont Institute programs is on the rise as the Saskatchewan labour market demand specific skills that are needed to grow the economy. Unlike other Aboriginal groups, Métis do not have access to legislated education funding but have relied heavily on funds made available through federal labour market strategies such as the current Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy.

There are similarities in the findings of the two Howe Reports: a strong positive correlation between education and lifetime earnings, an education gap between Métis and non-Aboriginal peoples, and that closing the Aboriginal education gap would have the direct benefit to both the individual and the society as a whole. In terms societal benefit of closing Aboriginal education gap, Howe shows that the benefits are over \$90 billion for Saskatchewan and \$132 billion for Alberta. The reports present a great opportunity to create a common sense policy and education programming that enhances Aboriginal educational success.

Many people know that there is a link between education and earnings. Howe reports highlight the extent to which the level of education actually determines poverty, instability and social dependence. A

Métis adult without high school diploma is likely to live a life of poverty. The average Métis female with less than high school can expect to earn \$395,523 over the course of her working life. If she stays in the workforce for 20 years, she is likely to earn less than \$20,000 per year, or just over \$1,600/month; an amount that would make it challenging to own a house or involve children in extra-curricular activities. However, as education levels increase, so do the earnings potential and the contributions a Métis can make to the province in terms of higher tax contributions and lower dependence on provincial programs.

Since 2006, the Rupertsland Institute has funded 1,496 Métis clients who have successfully completed a postsecondary education credential. The increase in the potential lifetime earnings of the 1,496 Métis people is valued at \$1.2 billion; the total social benefit of those credentials is about \$6.9 billion and Alberta's tax revenue of \$267.9 million.

Hopefully these reports and debate on Aboriginal educational gap will be an incentive to Métis youth to pursue higher levels of education, and also help inform Aboriginal education policy. The reports will also help strengthen the case for increased efforts in Métis education as negotiations for the successor to the federal Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy program begin. 



Cochin, Saskatchewan
Photo by EnVogue Photography



IT Update ... *continued from Page 3*

Intranet

The new intranet is now live. This is a private system accessible by logging in through the 'Sign In' link at the top of the page. The username and password for this are created by IT, and have been forwarded to you in a separate email. If you have any problems logging in, please contact IT.

The intranet includes all current Policies and Procedures (over 200 documents), standard forms and templates, company asset disposals, internal job postings, and an Online Payslips landing page.

Training and Employment staff will also have access to student job listings, and an apprenticeship listing system that is in testing.

Recently we have also added the latest Internal Phone List, and a Staff Registration Form for the upcoming Golf Tournament. Also introduced is an automatic email notification system, to inform you when new items such as news, events or assets for disposal are added.

Online Payslips

Please do not forget to use Penny to access your payslips, as paper payslips will no longer be issued. The system can be accessed from the website

<http://services.gdins.org> or from the intranet. Also please note that as T4 processing is completed, these are now available in here too. It is vitally important that all members of staff are able to login to access this

information. Please contact IT at support@gdins.org if you require further information or need assistance getting this to work.

Closing Thoughts

Just a few nerd thoughts to end on: There are 10 types of people in the world: those who understand binary, and those who don't. The first step in solving a math equation is admitting you have a problem. CAPS LOCK – Preventing Login since 1980. Come to the Math side – We have Pi. Q: Why did the programmer use all the shampoo in one shower? A: Because the bottle said "Wash, Rinse, Repeat!!" 🌀



Carissa MacLennan, Director of Education and Youth Engagement, JGI with SUNTEP Regina students Trenna Beauregard (L) and Taylor Pelletier. Photo by Janice R. Thompson

Payroll Cutoff Calendar, April 2014

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Buschnysky

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

Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.



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can be obtained at:

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

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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