



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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## Dayna Georges Excels in a Male-Dominated Trade

By Brenda Klassen

We recently sat down with Dayna Georges to discuss her experience as a client in the Gabriel Dumont Institute Indigenous Apprenticeship program. Dayna has just completed Level 4 Heavy Duty Equipment Technician in Saskatoon and will be writing her Heavy Duty Equipment Technician Red Seal (Interprovincial Exams) in July. She recently became a new mother and is currently on maternity leave. Dayna worked right to the last week before baby arrived.

From a young age, Dayna would ride alongside her Dad as he graded roads. This is when Dayna's curiosity was peaked as she watched her dad operate and maintain the grader, fire truck and other heavy equipment. Dayna wanted to know how to keep those machines operating and was determined she would learn.

Life doesn't always go as planned; but Dayna has proven that even when dreams seem impossible, determination, a strong support system, and self-confidence will help pave a road to success. When Dayna was 15, she had a life changing experience when she had her first child. Family and school were there for Dayna and at age 17 she returned to school to finish her studies. Dayna's

parents have been there to provide the home environment Dayna wanted for her son while she continued her education. It's never been easy to pursue a challenging career, but Dayna wants to pass this knowledge to her son for him to know that anything is possible when you put your mind and heart into it.

When she first came to Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment, Dayna was placed with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure in the Institute's apprenticeship wage subsidy program.

In 2011, Dayna completed Level 1 Heavy Duty Equipment Technician Apprenticeship in Prince Albert where she worked closely with Tammy Cummins, an Employment Counselor at the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Prince Albert. She then returned to Pinehouse and worked for local businesses in the area of motor repair and equipment maintenance. Dayna moved to Meadow Lake in 2013 and continued her apprenticeship training with Saskatchewan Highways and completed her apprenticeship Levels 2 through 4. No matter the location where Dayna was working, Gabriel Dumont

Institute Training and Employment staff were available to provide her with support and continuity.

Dayna believes that her crew and her supervisor are an integral part of her mentorship. She said "I've found support here from mentors and co-workers who are patient and take the time to explain in detail. The crew is a big family here, everyone tries to help one another out. It's a team environment." Dayna also shared what makes her happy at work. "It's that sense of accomplishment when you see that piece of equipment drive out of the shop and you know that you fixed it or were a part of a team that fixed it. It makes me proud of what I do."

Dayna has faced adversity from those that doubt a woman's ability in the shop. She commented "It's tough to face them. I tell myself, they started at the same place as me, they had to start at the beginning too. I have a right to learn while I work, and doubters aren't going to sway me."

Dayna would like to see more women in male-dominated trades. I asked her for advice to other women who may be thinking of a career in the trades. First, she identified common challenges that are unique to women at the work sites.

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Gabriel Dumont Institute



Rossignol High School Robotics Club members with their silver medals

## Math Preparation Course Exceeds Expectation

By Lisa Lenkart

Many students who interview for the Dumont Technical Institute Adult Basic Education (ABE) Level 4 program in Regina expressed

concerns about how they would perform in their mathematics courses. For students starting in first term, a mathematics bridging course assists greatly

with the transition and provides a solid base for the Math Foundations course in the second term.

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## Île-à-la-Crosse Robotics Club Soars to New Heights

By James Oloo

Rossignol High School has made a name for itself while earning respect and admiration for its award-winning robotics club. This year, students in the Île-à-la-Crosse club sent six teams to the annual Saskatchewan Polytechnic SUMObot, in which 120 Saskatchewan high school teams participated in a robot challenge. The Rossignol High School teams finished first and second.

On April 13, the Rossignol High School robotics club

finished second at the Skills Canada Provincial Competition in Regina. "We were pretty pleased," Dave Dalton, the math and science teacher who is also the coach of the club said about the silver medal. "Rossignol High School has one of the best, if not the best, Robotics programs in this province."

The students get hands on experience in engineering, designing, constructing, and wiring, as well as building interpersonal skills, teamwork, and dedication. These are important life skills that will also

enable them to pursue post-secondary education in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). In appreciating the importance of STEM and of supporting young people to pursue their dreams, Gabriel Dumont Institute has been providing financial support to the Rossignol High School robotics club over the past five years and will continue doing so next year. "Thank you for helping make a difference in the lives of our students,"

Dalton said. 🌐



Rossignol High School Robotics Club members Photos by Dave Dalton

## Neal Hughes: SUNTEP Grad Named CFL Ambassador

By James Oloo

June is a special month. It marks the beginning of summer and the Canadian Football League season. It is also the end of school year for many students, a time of farewells and graduations.

The end of the school year is a moment of review, reflection, and celebration. But every end marks a new beginning. And as students graduate and walk into their future, their teachers, while wishing them well, hope to one day connect with them; and hear about their successes. So it was nice when Janice Thompson, Head of the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) Regina, received a message of appreciation from Neal Hughes.

Neal Hughes is a SUNTEP Regina graduate. He played for the Saskatchewan Roughriders between 2004 and 2015, helping the Riders win Grey Cup in 2007 and 2013.

Neal also worked as a teacher at Regina Public School Division, where he was able to impact the lives of many students using some of the skills and knowledge he gained during his time at SUNTEP Regina (1998-2003). Below is what Neal wrote in his message to Janice Thompson:

*Good Day!*

*I am an alumni of the SUNTEP Regina program. I am emailing to say a little thank you. I retired a few years back from the Saskatchewan Roughriders and this year, the CFL has chosen me as an ambassador for their*

*"Diversity is Strength" initiative. I was chosen because of my Métis heritage and the community work I did in the offseason on numerous First Nations across the province.*

*There will be a game in August where the team will be wearing T-shirts with my name and number on the back and the Diversity is Strength slogan on the front. I am humbled by this and want to say a big THANK YOU to SUNTEP and all involved who helped in creating the pride and strength I have for my Métis culture and heritage. I did my best to convey my strength and pride in my First Nations roots to youth across the province. Again thank you to all who were involved!*

Neal Hughes. 🌐



Neal Hughes, SUNTEP Regina graduate and two time Grey Cup champion Photo courtesy of Regina Leader-Post



# Off Duty Behaviour Can Adversely Affect Employment

By Jim Edmondson

This is a precautionary tale intended to remind people that the behaviors or actions they engage in while off duty can result in loss of employment, so be mindful of what you decide to do on your off time. Gabriel Dumont Institute's reputation is one of our greatest assets and any behaviors or actions of employees, while in the workplace or on their off hours, that damage that reputation will result in disciplinary action.

A recent Court of Queen's Bench case in Saskatchewan upheld the termination of an employee for off duty behavior, in that case a criminal conviction that was unrelated to the person's employment duties. The behavior had the potential to do serious harm to the employer's reputation in the community. The individual was charged and convicted of possessing child pornography. Shortly following the conviction and subsequent press coverage, the employer terminated the employee for cause. The union involved, filed a grievance to dispute the termination.

The issue of whether an employee's off duty behavior/conduct warranted termination of the employment was forwarded to arbitration. The arbitrator ruled that the employer in this case has satisfied the legal test articulated in the Supreme Court of Canada decision of *Milhaven Fibres LTD v Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, Local 9-670 (1967)*. It was determined that the seriousness of the behavior and the subject matter had the real potential to harm the employer's well-established reputation in the community and warranted termination of employment. The union appealed the decision.

In early February 2018, the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan upheld the arbitrators ruling of rightful termination. This is significant to all employers and employees because in the past it seemed far-fetched for an employee's off duty conduct to be seen as legal grounds for termination. With this ruling and decision at appeal, there is now a volume of case law which states that if

an explicit link can be proven between an employee's behaviors and harm to the employer's reputation, then termination of that employee's employment would be warranted.

The Institute has a reputation in the Métis community, in Saskatchewan and the nation for integrity, professionalism and the preservation of confidentiality in every aspect of our operation. Any behaviors, conduct, or actions that in any way besmirched or had the potential to damage our reputation may warrant disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The takeaway from this article is that you should be careful about what actions or behaviors you engage in, (including online activity such as social media and other web-pages) on or off duty as they can all affect your employment. Be careful of what activities you participate in, what comments you post or say and how you are perceived in community because you are seen as representing Gabriel Dumont Institute. 🌐

## GDI Training & Employment Indigenous Apprenticeship

Dayna Georges recently completed her fourth and final year of the Heavy Duty Equipment Technician. She has been invited by the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission to write the Interprovincial Red Seal Exams in July 2018. Dayna is also a new mother.



Dayna Georges



Dayna Georges  
Photos courtesy of D. Georges

## Dayna Georges: A Success Story ... *Continued from Page 1*

Dayna then stated, "Keep your head up and keep working hard. Put your mind set to never give up and keep going. There will be hard days and you might worry, but don't give up and don't let doubters pull you down. There'll always be doubters, but this is your chance, you got to take it."

Dayna also acknowledged Gabriel Dumont Institute and said that the Indigenous Apprenticeship Program is

vital. "There's very little support for apprentices and GDI has provided me with the opportunity to apprentice where I wanted to be. Without GDI this may not have been possible. I really like where I am with Saskatchewan Highways and I want to make this my lifelong career."

Dayna will be writing her Heavy Duty Equipment Technician Red Seal (Interprovincial Exams) in July. She recently became a new mother and is

currently on maternity leave. Dayna worked right to the last week before baby arrived.

The GDI Indigenous Apprenticeship is recruiting for Indigenous participants who are interested in skilled trades. The participants are placed with employers where they learn under mentorship of a qualified supervisor while getting paid. For more information, contact Sara Belair at 1-877-488-6888 or [apprenticeships@gdins.org](mailto:apprenticeships@gdins.org). 🌐



GDI Training & Employment  
Fashion Design by  
Lydia Gardiner



Lydia Gardiner  
wearing one of her designs



Photos courtesy of L. Gardiner

## GDSF Scholarship Golf Tournament a Success

By Amy Briley

The Seventh Annual Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Golf Tournament Fundraiser was held on May 25, 2018 at Moon Lake Golf and Country Club in Saskatoon. Thirty-seven teams competed in the tournament, which raised a

record \$42,504. All of the money raised will be awarded this year to Métis students through the Scholarship Foundation.

Congratulations to Misty Ventures Inc., the top scoring team, and to all the golfers who participated in the tournament.

Also, a big thank you to the Golf Committee and to the staff and GDI Board of Governors who volunteered at the tournament, maarsiii!! Next year's tournament will be held on May 31. More details to follow. 🌐

## Lydia Gardiner Shines in Fashion Industry

By Audrey Arcand and James Oloo

Lydia Gardiner, a Métis woman from Île-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan, graduated with a Diploma in Fashion Design from the Academy of Fashion Design in Saskatoon this year.

Lydia learned about the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Training and Employment through family and friends who had themselves been clients or students at GDI. At the time, Lydia was on Social Assistance and had not been in the labour market for about three years. She noted that, "After considering all my options for post-secondary education, I felt that as a Métis citizen, Gabriel Dumont Institute had the best services and support for my educational needs."

That is when Lydia decided to visit the GDI Training and Employment where she met with Audrey Arcand, an Employment Counselor, in the summer of 2016. "Audrey helped me decide which programs would best suit my interest. She was direct and very knowledgeable, and though I was intimidated at first, I learned and understood that Audrey wanted me to succeed, and I am grateful for that."

With funding from GDI Training and Employment,

Lydia completed a First Nations Cultural Design and Contemporary Native Design Certificate program and a Diploma in Fashion Design. She started in September 2016 and went all the way through to April 2018 with no break.

Today, as a fashion designer, Lydia's major responsibilities include listening to her clients and what they want, and bringing it to life through her designs. She describes fashion design as her "passion," noting that "it gives me the opportunity to express my creativity and unique Métis designs."

Of her training at the Academy of Fashion Design, Lydia stated that "I learned that it is a very competitive field. But perseverance is important, while self-sacrifice is temporary. Determination through discipline is key to success."

Heather Brigidear, the Program Coordinator at the Academy of Fashion Design stated that, "As usual, Lydia is doing great. I have never had a student who has put herself out in the Fashion community and entered Fashion Shows and found herself clients. She has made garments for the presidents of both the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (Mr. Glen McCallum) and Manitoba

Métis Federation (Mr. David Chartrand), as well as Andrea Menard. Lydia's attendance is great and her attitude is fantastic. Wishing all of my students were as dedicated as Lydia." Andrea Menard is a Métis woman, an award-winning singer, author, and actress.

Sylvia Moss, Employment Services Manager at GDI Training and Employment said of Lydia, "I was amazed by her talent. Lydia came from being on social assistance for years to being the star of her program, self-taught in beading."

Asked about the secrets to her success, Lydia said, "My success is my spirituality and my connection to the land. Water is important to me; it is the inspiration for the name NIPII Designs. I am also grateful for the support of my family, their encouragement and belief in me has unlocked the Artistic me."

Last year, Lydia's work was featured at the London Fashion Week, in London England. Her work was also exhibited at the April 8, 2018 fashion show at the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon. Lydia has also been invited to Australia for a fashion show. 🌐



# Math Preparation ... *Continued from Page 2*

However, many students begin their program in the second term and do not have the benefit of this course.

To address this gap, Darlene Deschambault, a full-time instructor, piloted a math preparation course. The course was delivered at evening classes that ran twice a week in December and January and had a positive impact on student achievement in Math Foundations 30. The class average for the students who started during the second semester increased from 66 percent in 2017 to 76 percent in 2018. These students also

experienced a more comfortable transition between semesters and were able to keep up with the pace of course delivery. The entire transition to second semester went more smoothly. Students were already attending regularly and becoming familiar with each other and the expectations of the program.

Darlene also invited other current ABE students to attend in the evenings if they needed more time to work on math. This allowed the students to meet each other and boosted the confidence of

those who began in September, as they were now able to assist those starting out. The time spent in planning and running this course brought more success than anticipated and current plans are to offer it again next year.

The goal for the course aligned with Dumont Technical Institute's strategy to "maximize effectiveness in terms of outcomes" (Business Plan 2016-2019, p.14).



Adult Basic Education Level 4 students in Regina  
Photo by Darcie DeBruyne

## Payroll Cutoff Calendar, July 2018

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

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.



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[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)

Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

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

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**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research

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[https://gdins.org/student  
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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