



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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## Mr. Menard: "I Walk Taller, Think Deeper Because of SUNTEP"

By James Oloo

We recently caught up with Dylan Menard, a 2018 Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP Saskatoon) graduate and current teacher in London, England, to discuss his journey from a North Saskatchewan farm life to classrooms in one of the largest and most diverse cities in Europe. Dylan accepted the teaching position in London and traveled to England soon after his graduation.

Dylan works as a supply (substitute) teacher and has taught in 28 schools across London. "My job is comparable to teaching back home in Saskatchewan," he said, adding that the work is "multifaceted, challenging, and exciting because I am learning from and teaching to so many different groups of people in a foreign country with an entirely new curriculum."

So, how is schooling/teaching in England different from schooling in Saskatchewan? Dylan noted that the school systems in Saskatchewan allow a lot more individual teacher autonomy. Saskatchewan teachers in their own classrooms create their desired schedules and the content for each of the classes they teach. They choose how each unit takes shape and what elements they wish to be inspired from.

"This is both a freedom and a challenge. There's often only a few teachers in similar grades that are able to assist the Saskatchewan teacher," he said. Much of this work is on the shoulders of the individual Saskatchewan teacher to set up every single moment for their school year. "Personally, I love being able to choose what angle I will pursue each lesson. This often can result in more passion-driven lessons which the teacher could proudly teach with excitement."

England takes a different approach to curriculum planning. As Dylan describes it, primary schools are usually three-form schools. That is, there are three year (grade) one classes, three year two classes, three year three classes, and so on, in one school. Because of this, you have two other teachers supporting you. How these teachers support one another is by collaborating to create the content that will be taught over the school year. This support is largely appreciated by the teachers. Much of the individual pressures many Saskatchewan teachers experience is eliminated, because you have two other people in the same building teaching the same grade. A huge benefit of this is a balance of the lesson planning between the three teachers. One teacher will take charge of planning an

entire year's worth of math and art content, another teacher plans the year's Science and Health, and the final teacher will plan the English and Social Studies.

This teamwork is a powerful strategy. Teachers agree at the beginning of the year which classes they will plan. They then create detailed lessons and worksheets, and are able to log into a shared [online] computer network to share lessons and access their colleagues' work which they will review and teach. Weekly meetings are set up to deliberate the content they have created for that particular week.

According to Dylan, this system of planning is effective as students are being taught lessons that have been created by an 'expert' of the year group teachers. "When the focus for teachers is on two or three subjects, they have a better chance to focus to create quality lessons and perhaps avoid wearing teachers too thin. As a beginner teacher and community minded person, I find this highly appealing."

Is this method of planning perfect? Perhaps not. Many of these teachers may rely too heavily on their skill set and may get 'rusty' in planning other subjects.

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Human Resources  
Saskatoon

Farewell lunch was held on February 14, 2019 in honour of IT Technician Gordon Holtslander and DTI Program Coordinator Talia Pfefferle



Gord retired after being with the Institute for nine years. Photos by James Oloo



Talia Pfefferle (left) with Rhonda Pilon and Erin Miers  
Photo by Trudy Young

Talia joined GDI Training & Employment in 2013 as a summer student. She rose through the ranks to become Program Coordinator at Dumont Technical Institute

## Family Fun Night @ Gabriel Dumont Institute

By Kristen Rutten

The Dumont Technical Institute Adult Basic Education Program in Regina had a busy start to the New Year. In early January, Biology students headed to the Saskatchewan Science Center for the Amazing Anatomy Workshop. Working in small groups, led by a center staff member, the students conducted a successful experiment involving a full dissection of a fetal pig. The students were also able to enjoy the IMAX show "Amazing Adventure" and they took in the Science Center exhibits. It was a fun-filled afternoon.

Only one week later, the Regina Adult Basic Education Program hosted its first Biology Family Fun Night. Approximately 50 people participated in the event, despite it being an extremely cold, wintery night. Guests were greeted by a gymnasium display of Biology 30 Final Projects, many of which were done to an exceptional level. The tables

were covered with activities to stimulate conversation and there was a microscope station with slides to explore.

The evening began with a delicious potluck supper followed by a competitive Métis Quiz (Kahoot) that everyone participated in. The engagement continued as one student gave a demonstration, and guests explored the projects.

For anyone considering hosting a Family Fun Night, it was inexpensive and received positive feedback.

Here are some of my tips:

Potluck is always a good option. For the projects, we used bristle board attached to paper boxes to keep costs down. PowerPoint presentation was also used. As well, we had a Microscope Station with four microscopes and slide sets. The Microscope Station was a favourite for many. It was amazing to watch parents teaching their kids about science.

There were also activities on the tables – including coloring pages; cups of markers; conversation starters of biology topics; and cootie catchers which were filled in with science activities which encouraged participation by the guests.

Kahoot – Métis Themed Quiz game that people 'buzz' in with their cell phones. Everyone was able to participate.

The Family Fun Night event started at 5:00 pm and by 7:00 pm, we were completely cleaned up and everyone was gone.

A big thank you to the GDI Training and Employment for sponsoring prizes for the event.

I was nervous about trying this extra-curricular activity, but the reward was worth the risk. It was so heartwarming to see students interacting with their children and family members. I am hoping it becomes an annual event! 🌍

## Protect Yourself During Extremely Cold Weather

By Jim Edmondson

Doesn't it feel like this is the coldest February in recent memory? Exposure to the cold weather for longer periods of time is not just uncomfortable, it can be dangerous. Frostbite, numbness, dehydration and hypothermia are real concerns from chilly outdoor weather. If you are working outdoors or travelling on Saskatchewan highways this winter, be aware of the dangers and stay safe. There are a number of tips and things you can do to ensure

that you and your family are safe in cold weather:

**Stay hydrated and nourished**  
Make sure to drink enough fluids, as you dehydrate faster in cold weather conditions. Dehydration causes headaches, dizziness and fatigue, and it is important to stay alert outdoors. As well, eating enough food during the day, especially fats and carbohydrates, is also important. Your body uses those nutrients as a course of energy to stay warm during cold temperatures.

### Stay dry

Damp clothing can quickly drop your body temperature. It's always important to stay dry in the cold. Wear a moisture-wicking base layer to draw away sweat as you work. Wear waterproof gear as an outer shell to prevent your under layers from getting wet. This is especially important if you are out or working in snow, shoveling. Once you are able and in a warmer environment, remove any wet clothing immediately.

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## Prince Albert Library Update

By Nicolle DeGagné

The GDI Prince Albert library continues to serve as a meeting and learning space for students, staff, and Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employments clients. I was excited to partner with the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) Prince Albert earlier in February during Indigenous Achievement Week to offer introductory lunch hour sessions in beading. Participants used the Gabriel Dumont Institute publication *wâpikwanîy: A Beginner's Guide to Métis Floral Beadwork* by Gregory Scofield and Amy Briley to learn the basic steps in beading a Métis-style flower. It was nice to work with Adult Basic Education instructor Angela Letendre to plan and deliver these one-hour sessions.

The Prince Albert library also works with second year SUNTEP students every year (usually in March) in providing space for some of their

'science centres'. SUNTEP students focus on creating a centre that highlights Saskatchewan Curriculum-based science topics, ranging from grades 1-6. Elementary students from various schools in Prince Albert come to our building for an afternoon to participate in activities and learning, and the library is full of youthful energy!

The Prince Albert library ran a successful holiday draw in December, in benefit of the Prince Albert Food Bank. This draw was open to all staff and students in the building, and drew friendly competition from everyone who participated! Every food or personal care item donated was eligible for an entry ballot to win Leah Marie Dorion's *Strong Stories Métis Series* 8-book set. Over 20 pounds of food and care items were donated, and SUNTEP student Susan Cox was the winner of our draw.

New materials are always arriving at the library! I

encourage everyone to stop by often and browse the New @ the Library display area, as new materials are added weekly. I work with faculty and students to bring materials into the library that support the various programs offered by Gabriel Dumont Institute and Dumont Technical Institute, as well as materials our very own staff have published, or have been involved in creating.

The Prince Albert library also has a variety of items to borrow that are not books? Métis Sashes, musical instruments, board games, CD's, DVD's and kits are all available to borrow from the library. You can search our library catalogue at: <https://tinyurl.com/y8wt2e2g>. You may also follow the GDI library on Facebook for news, programming, and updates from our three library locations in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina: <https://www.facebook.com/gdi.library/>

## Protect Yourself in Cold Weather ... Continued from Page 2

### Stay well rested

Working outdoors or traveling in extremely cold weather, make sure you get as much rest as possible. This will enable you to stay alert on the job or behind the wheel when conditions are more dangerous.

### Plan breaks from the cold

Just like you need to take breaks from your work throughout the day, your body needs to take breaks from the cold. It is always preferable to plan warm-up times throughout the day, if you are outside for long stretches, to avoid numbness and shivers.

### Keep a weather safety kit

If you're on the road, make sure to take a cold weather safety kit. Each of the Gabriel Dumont Institute offices has been supplied with a Survival kit that is available for staff who needs to travel for Institute business. The cold weather kits include emergency blankets, candles, and matches. A candle burning in a vehicle could provide enough warmth to ward off hypothermia for a period of time.

### Dress for the conditions

Dressing in layers is critically important. Wear loose layers of clothing as the air between the layers will help keep you warm.

Layering also allows you to adjust to changing temperatures. Well-fitting gloves, warm socks, and footwear are essential. It is advisable to choose headwear that keeps your head and ears warm. Balaclavas can also help to warm your neck and the air you are breathing.

Before you work outdoors or travel in cold weather conditions, it is important to ensure that you're well prepared. Be aware of the dangers of exposure, and follow these tips to make safe choices. Be safe out there.

Gabriel Dumont Institute Library  
Prince Albert



SUNTEP 2<sup>nd</sup> Year 'Science Centre'



Photos by Nicolle DeGagné



Photo courtesy of  
Saskatoon Public Schools



Saskatchewan Urban  
Native Teacher Education  
Program (SUNTEP)

## SUNTEP Graduate Dylan Menard ... Continued from Page 1



Dylan Emery Menard, B.Ed. SUNTEP Saskatoon graduate Class of 2018 is currently a teacher in London, England Photo courtesy of D. Menard

Dylan suggests that this is why every year teachers in their year groups change the subject they plan for that year. He admits that because there isn't the same level of population to have schools set up with three teachers teaching the same grade in each school, this policy may not work in Saskatchewan."

Dylan commended the education system in England for allocating time to "learn about 'bigger picture' ideas." British schools have assemblies a few times a week during which students learn various topics including water quality; fair-trade foods; bullying; mental health; LGBT; language use; endangered animals; and feminism. "London schools endeavour to not only educate children on the fundamentals in each subject area, but to also prepare them for the realities of life outside the school."

Asked about how well SUNTEP prepared him for his current teaching position, Dylan described SUNTEP as "a host of positive experiences" and asserted that "I wouldn't be nearly as confident walking into 28 different schools in London without the level of education and support I was offered at SUNTEP. SUNTEP didn't just teach to my academic side, it also enlightened my whole being. SUNTEP helped me fall in love with my culture, career, and myself. Today, "I walk a little taller, speak a little louder, think deeper, and give more generously because of SUNTEP. Without SUNTEP, I would not have the amazing life that I do now." Dylan credits SUNTEP for learning to become selfless for the betterment of

his students and spreading messages of self-acceptance. SUNTEP also enabled him to develop a good work ethic: "My dinner does not taste as good until I have my work completed."

Dylan also spoke about how his view of race relations changed. "SUNTEP helped me understand what white privilege is. As a Métis man with white privilege, I need to work harder than my coloured family members and larger Indigenous family to promote an advocate lifestyle." He emphasized that "It is sad to say that our society hears 'white voices' more clearly. Not often enough are those voices speaking against the injustices faced by oppressed and marginalized peoples. It will be my dying wish to use the platform of teaching to speak of the importance of tolerance and peace between all groups of people."

Dylan described how he was able to find ways to succeed at the bachelor of education program despite the challenges he was facing. "For three years of my university journey, I did not have Wi-Fi or internet connection on my farm. Many nights I stayed in the public library until closing just to complete my work. It was an uncomfortable time, but I did what I had to do for a chance at graduating."

Dylan's Dad graduated from SUNTEP in 2008; and his aunt, Andrea Menard, was also a SUNTEP student. "Both speak fondly about their time at SUNTEP as they have grown in positive ways because of it," he noted. So, choosing SUNTEP was an easy decision for Dylan: "I asked myself three important questions: What do you love doing? (Being creative); What type of person are you? (A kid at

heart); and What career will bring those two things together? (Teaching!)"

Dylan talked about what it means to him to be a teacher noting that the role of a teacher is not limited to 'teaching.' "I am not just a person at the front of young people regurgitating facts and statistics. I am a coach, a mentor, and a role model. I pride myself on being a young teacher and a Métis man who is part of the LGBT community. The professional and personal growth I have been able to more easily explore is the notion that you can display your 'flaws' positively to show others that they can love theirs too. And as a teacher, I believe this is an important message of self-acceptance that young people need more than ever."

Asked if there are people in his life who have inspired him, Dylan mentioned his mother, Karen, and his best friend, Kayla Peters-Whiteman. "My mother's continued support and her resilient ways have made me a strong and kind person like her." And Kayla: "She has transformed my soul for the better and shown me what true friendship is. I'll forever respect and love her."

Dylan has a word for Indigenous youth. "Post-secondary education will open up many exciting doors. But the journey is not easy; at times you may feel like a system is in place that is holding you down. But do not quit. Me, the world, your ancestors, and your soul are begging you to push forward and show the world that your abilities surpass any challenge in your way." 



Dylan Menard congratulated by Angie Caron, a SUNTEP Saskatoon Faculty member, at the 2018 graduation event Photo by James Oloo



# SUNTEP and Gabriel Dumont College Students Honoured

By Angie Caron

February has been an exciting month at Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatoon as five Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) and Gabriel Dumont College students were honored at the University of Saskatchewan Indigenous Student Achievement Awards Ceremony.

The Indigenous Student Achievement Awards recipients included SUNTEP students Ashley Smith and Vanessa Johnson who received

Award for Academic Excellence, while Daulton Sinoski received the Award for Leadership. Another SUNTEP student, Kelly Camponi, and first year Gabriel Dumont College student Kori Taylor received Award for Community Involvement.

Sheila Pocha, who heads both SUNTEP Saskatoon and Gabriel Dumont College Saskatoon, and her staff were joined by GDI Board Member Mavis Taylor to congratulate and celebrate the success of the students on February 7, 2019.



From left: GDI board member Mavis Taylor, her granddaughter and Gabriel Dumont College student Kori Taylor, SUNTEP students Vanessa Johnson and Kelly Camponi, and SUNTEP Saskatoon Head Sheila Pocha. Photo courtesy of Angie Caron

## Payroll Cutoff Calendar, March 2019

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.

MRTS due by the 15th of every month, and employee contracts are due prior to payroll cutoff date.

If received after the cutoff date, the employee will be paid on the following pay period.



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[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)

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**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
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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