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Gabriel Dumont Institute
40th Anniversary
1980 – 2020



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

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GDI 40th Anniversary Event a Resounding Success

By Karon Shmon

The Gabriel Dumont Institute is celebrating its 40th year in 2020. This milestone was the focus of a two-day cultural celebration held February 7 – 8 in Saskatoon. The event was preceded by a special ceremony at which 20 students received the Order of Gabriel Dumont – Bronze Medal following a keynote address from Duane Favel, a SUNTEP grad and current Mayor of Île-à-la-Crosse, SK. The Order of Gabriel Dumont Bronze Medal honours GDI students and alumni who have distinguished themselves through leadership, community involvement, and overall performance.

“The Order of Gabriel Dumont is awarded by the Gabriel Dumont Institute to persons who have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the Métis of Canada,” said Geordy McCaffrey, GDI executive director. “It is one of the Métis Nation’s highest civilian honours, awarded to Métis and non-Métis individuals based on their achievements and lifetime contributions.”

Silver and Gold medal recipients were invested at the evening gala held February 7. Silver medal recipients were Glenn Lafleur and Norma Welsh. The Order of Gabriel Dumont Silver Medal

honours those who have made significant contributions to the Métis. Gold medal recipients included Jean Baptiste (John) Arcand, Clément (Clem) Chartier, and Lawrence J. Barkwell (Posthumous.) The Order of Gabriel Dumont Gold Medal recognizes lifetime of outstanding service to the Métis of Canada. The honorees were celebrated with the music of a cadre of talented Métis performers which included John Arcand, Donny Parenteau, Jess Lee, Lucas Welsh, Tristen Durocher, Tahnis Cunningham, Angela Rancourt and Julianna Parenteau. They delivered a delightfully entertaining showcase at the gala.

The conference was highlighted with keynote addresses from renowned author, playwright, and activist Maria Campbell on Friday, and on Saturday from Jesse Thistle, researcher and author of his best-selling memoir, “From the Ashes.” Their powerful keynotes were followed with over 50 break-out workshops and presentations that fit with GDI’s cultural and education mandate. These varied from hands-on workshops such as beading, finger weaving, embroidery, Red River cart building, jigging, and square dancing, to presentations by Métis academics, scholars, and knowledge keepers.

In its 40 years, GDI has provided over 1,300 students with Bachelor of Education degrees, established services in 11 communities and created partnerships with the Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina, the Saskatchewan Polytechnic, and the regional colleges. The Institute is the largest employer of Métis people in the province.

“It’s pretty impressive to think about the impact we’ve had on Saskatchewan and the number of people we’ve trained. Seeing alumni and all the people from the community who have supported GDI and recognized the importance of having a Métis controlled institution is overwhelming,” said McCaffrey.

“I was around when (GDI) started. To see 40 years of this, not only education for our young people, but the people who came back to go to school, that’s something that never could’ve happened without GDI. I am so proud to see that our Métis people have an institution to educate Métis people. That’s why I feel GDI is an important part of our nation. In fact, I think it may be the most important part of our Métis Nation,” noted Nora Cummings, Métis Elder and founder of the Saskatchewan Native Women’s Association.

The article first [appeared](#) in the [FristNationsDrum.Com](#). It has been edited for space. 



Dumont Technical Institute

Travis Black: For the Love of Teaching and Giving

By James Oloo



Travis Black
Is a student at the University of Saskatchewan and a volunteer tutor at Dumont Technical Institute
Photo by Marilyn Black

We all know that math and numeracy skills are important in our day-to-day life, as well as in our education and professional lives. Yet, the very thought of math brings fear and anxiety to some students. As many teachers are aware, mathematics learning difficulties are common in regular, special, and adult basic education classrooms.

Over the past several months, Travis Black, a fourth-year student in the honours program of mathematical physics at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S), has been holding tutoring sessions every Wednesday at the Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) Adult

Basic Education program in Saskatoon. Travis is Métis and an active member of the Mathematics Student Society at the U of S.

DTI has received several positive comments regarding Travis's work. "We are enjoying his classes," said one student. Another noted, "Travis is a great teacher who is easy to talk to and is interested in our success." An Instructor stated, "Everyone walks out of the tutoring sessions with a big smile."

Travis says he enjoys working with the students and making a positive difference. The 27 year old math and physics tutor likes the fact that students see him as a peer,

and so are able to have more open conversations. He encourages the students to ask questions and to bring forward any math or physics challenges they may have. His Wednesday sessions have between six to ten students and cover assignment, preparation for tests, and any questions that the students may have.

Initially, Travis could come to DTI at 4pm for the tutoring sessions. But that was tough for DTI students who wanted to attend the tutoring sessions but could not stay late. After consultations with students, instructors, and program coordinator, tutoring now takes place in the afternoon.

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GDI 40th Anniversary: In Their Own Words...

By James Oloo

Many words were spoken during the GDI 40th Anniversary Celebrations, February 6-8, 2020. A sample is presented below.

"My Dad was a trapper who could not read or write. Each time he came home after selling fur in the city, he brought crayons, pencils and books. He said education was important for Métis people. Métis people are in a strong place today because of education and because of GDI." - Maria Campbell, Métis Elder, author, broadcaster, and filmmaker.

"We remember that there were leaders before us who did the heavy lifting to ensure that we have a Métis institution. We acknowledge their hard work and sacrifice." - Geordy McCaffrey, Executive Director, GDI.

"Traditionally, academia has been a violent space for Indigenous peoples. GDI is helping to shift that narrative. They change people's material circumstances by giving them an education. Institutions (like GDI are) places of refuge, restoring language, restoring culture. It's a revolutionary kind of place." - Jesse Thistle, Métis scholar and bestselling author.

"Without GDI, I would not be here today. They made education accessible and affordable, and have been with me from day one. I am grateful for GDI." - Darren Quaal, Heavy Duty Mechanic, Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways, and 2020 Order of Gabriel Dumont Bronze Award recipient.

"It is because of the Métis community that we succeed. GDI is one of a kind success

in Canada. Thousands of lives have been changed for the better because of GDI. We have provided a prototype for other Métis organizations that would like to follow suit." - Karon Shmon, Director, Métis Culture and Heritage Department, GDI.

"GDI has come a long way over the past 40 years. Prior to 1980, the notion that Métis wanted to control their education, and that they wanted to incorporate Métis culture in education was foreign to political leadership at the time. There was a lot of resistance and skepticism." - Lisa Bird-Wilson, Director, GDI.

"The Métis have an entrepreneurial spirit. GDI caters to this by giving Métis people a hand-up to succeed." - Dylan Smart, Founder and CEO, Smartpath Safety Systems, and 2020 Order of Gabriel Dumont Bronze Award recipient.



Maria Campbell
Photo courtesy of MBC Radio



Jesse Thistle
Photo courtesy of lfpres.com



GDI 40th Anniversary Celebrations: An Appreciation

By Hayley Franks

On February 7, 2020, I attended the Gabriel Dumont Institute 40th Anniversary celebration and Order of Gabriel Dumont Awards in Saskatoon where my mother Norma Welsh was presented with the Silver Medal Award.

I didn't want to let the opportunity go by to thank Gabriel Dumont Institute. The gratitude for this award goes without saying, but I also wanted to comment on the venue, food, and entertainment. The whole

experience was amazing. It was a magical night and not just because my mother received this prestigious award, but because the planning and organizing was so well done.

My favorite part of the evening was the entertainment. The band, the fiddlers, and the interaction were just beyond compare. I was so impressed and entertained, and was so happy to see the traditional Métis music was being played and everyone was encouraged to join in. I just can't say enough

about the entertainment other than that I was just so impressed to see that we have that kind of talent in our community.

It was such a proud moment, not just because of my Mom (even though we are so incredibly proud of her), but also pride for my heritage and my community. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Very impressive evening and your efforts did not go unnoticed.

With gratitude. 🌐

Gabriel Dumont Institute



Travis and Marilyn Black

Travis is a volunteer math and physics tutor at Dumont Technical Institute. His mother, Marilyn, is a program coordinator at Dumont Technical Institute.

Photo courtesy of Marilyn Black

Travis Black, Volunteer Tutor ... *Continued from Page 2*

So why does Travis volunteers as a tutor? Because he enjoys it, and it is part of his community service, "to give back to the Métis community." More than one Dumont Technical Institute student with a disability grant has previously offered to pay Travis for tutoring but he declined; saying that he gives his services for free.

Travis was one of 18 Indigenous students from the College of Arts and Science who were recognized at the February 6, 2020 Indigenous Student Achievement Awards ceremony at the U of S. The "awards honour Indigenous students who have excelled in their studies, undertaken unique or compelling research, made significant contributions to the community or demonstrated

leadership." Travis was the recipient of the Academic Excellence Award. He maintains a 91% average at the U of S.

Travis Black is the son of Marilyn Black, a program coordinator at Dumont Technical Institute, Saskatoon and a former classroom teacher and deputy principal.



Derek Lerat: A Success Story

By Barbara Reyes

June 2019 was of great significance at the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Training and Employment office in Yorkton. Derek Lerat, my client in the GDI Indigenous Apprenticeship Program, received his Red Seal Journeyperson Certification in the Automotive Service Technician trade on June 21, 2019. On a personal note, Derek became the first client I have ever worked with as an Employment Counsellor to attain a Journeyperson certification.

I first met Derek Lerat in January 2015 when I did a

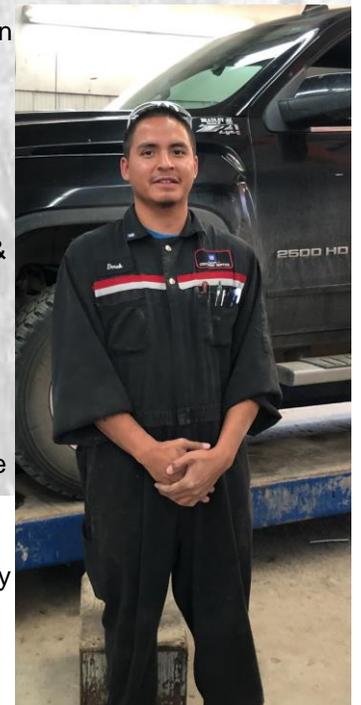
presentation on our Gabriel Dumont Institute Indigenous Apprenticeship Program at the SIIT Yorkton Career Center. Derek was then taking the Automotive Service Preparation Program (ASP) at the Centre.

Prior to Derek completing the ASP program, I had made contact with L.H. Bradley & Son, a local Automotive Sales and Service Center in Moosomin, SK, to participate in our Apprenticeship Program. With assistance from Darren Cote, an Instructor at SIIT, I arranged for Derek to complete his

practicum with L.H. Bradley & Son. They were so pleased with Derek that they decided to take him on as an apprentice through the GDI Indigenous Apprenticeship Program. Derek was immediately welcomed by the staff and treated like family.

Derek officially started employment with L.H. Bradley & Son on April 20, 2015 through the Apprenticeship Program, and soon after, the paperwork was completed to get him registered as an Automotive Service Technician Apprentice.

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Derek Lerat

Photo by Barbara Reyes



GDI 40th Anniversary

Order of Gabriel Dumont Inductees

Gold Award:

John Arcand
Lawrence Barkwell, Posthumous
Clément Chartier

Silver Award:

Glenn Lafleur
Norma Welsh

Bronze Award:

Nicholas Bage
Taylor Carriere
Will Crawford
Dayna Georges
Laureen (Lucy) Guetre
Tanzy Janvier
Tracie Léost
Jennifer McGillis
Gwen Hardy Munro
Nikki Natomagan
Darren Quaal
Rhonda Roberts
Tyson Ross
Davida Ryan
Daulton Sinoski
Dylan Smart
Ashley Smith
Luke Smith
Rosine Thibault
Sarah Woytas

Executive Director's Message

"On behalf of myself, our board chair—Dr. Earl Cook—and the board of governors, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of the staff that played a role in our 40th anniversary celebrations. Your hard work, dedication and professionalism were on full display for the world to see. We received so many positive comments from those in attendance. It was a honour to be part of such a great team of dedicated individuals.

Gabriel Dumont Institute is a very special place that we can all be proud of. I hope this is one of many milestones that we celebrate over the years.

Thank you for choosing to work at GDI!"

Regards,
Geordy

Pinehouse Heavy Equipment Program a Success

By Dylan Pelletier

Dumont Technical Institute was proud to offer a Heavy Equipment Operator program in the autumn of 2019 in Pinehouse Lake, Saskatchewan. The program began with 12 students and all 12 graduated in November 2019.

The program was very successful and gave the students excellent job ready skills for immediate entry into the work force.

During the 12 week program, the students received training on six different pieces of heavy equipment: skid steer, rock truck, crawler, excavator, grader, and backhoe. The students also received training in a wide range of

industry recognized safety certifications.

Safety was of primary importance focus during the training, since the equipment can be very dangerous for a new operator. The students had to operate and drive within town limits. This meant that they had to be very careful with over-head power lines and private property. I am happy to report that there was not one injury or incident of property damage during the program.

The Heavy Equipment Operator students worked very professionally during the program and I am proud of their efforts. Much of the credit needs to go to their instructor, Harry Lariviere. Harry is Métis

from Pinehouse Lake. Dumont Technical Institute was very pleased to have Harry as an instructor. He brought over 20 years of heavy equipment operator experience at various mine sites to the position. Harry worked very hard to ensure the students were operating equipment in a safe and proper manner.

One student in particular deserves special recognition. Nathan Morin was in the program, but he lived in Beauval during the program. He drove every day from Beauval to Pinehouse Lake for the program. That is 100km on gravel each way every day for 12 weeks! And he never missed a day!

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Lerat Attains Red Seal Certification ... *Continued from Page 3*

Gabriel Dumont Institute covered the cost of his indenturing application and on August 14, 2015, Derek received his Automotive Service Technician Apprentice Level 1 Y Card.

GDI also assisted Derek with \$400 towards the cost of some of the required tools he needed for his employment. A second Aboriginal Apprenticeship Subsidy contract was signed with L.H. Bradley & Son in June of 2016 until April of 2017.

As Derek's employment counsellor, I conducted monthly follow-ups with Derek and his supervisor at L.H. Bradley & Son throughout both subsidies via follow-up reports and several on-site monitors; and I was always pleased to know how well he was doing and progressing in his skills.

GDI assisted Derek with the costs of his tuition in May 2016 to complete his apprenticeship Level 1 technical training, and again in January 2018 to complete his Level 2 technical training. Derek returned to work at L.H. Bradley & Son after completion of his technical training.

Although Derek lives in a smaller community with limited training and employment opportunities, he was very committed to his career goal and was always willing to travel to take his training and for employment afterwards. Through the GDI Indigenous Apprenticeship Program and our partnership with L.H. Bradley & Son, Derek was able to enhance his skills, gain valuable work experience while earning a wage and accumulating trade hours towards his journey person certification.

Through hard work, perseverance and dedication, Derek successfully completed all levels of the Automotive Service Technician apprenticeship program and received his Red Seal Journey person Certification from the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission on June 21, 2019.

Derek is grateful for the help he received along the way – from his family, SIIT Yorkton Career Center's Automotive Service Prep Program, GDI Training and Employment Indigenous Apprenticeship Program, and his employer L.H. Bradley & Son. He currently remains employed with L.H. Bradley & Son as an Automotive Service Technician. We at the GDI Training and Employment office in Yorkton are very proud of Derek. 



Pinehouse Heavy Equipment Program ... *Continued from Page 4*

Dumont Technical Institute

I was sure to put in a good word for him at the Village Office in Beauval after his graduation. They too recognized his achievements and he is now working as a heavy equipment operator for the Village of Beauval.

Congratulations to all of the graduates of DTI's Heavy Equipment Operator program in Pinehouse Lake. We at DTI wish you all the best in your bright futures. 🌟



Pinehouse Heavy Equipment Operator Program Class of 2019.
 Left to right: Nathan Morin, Randy Natomagan, Clint Durocher, Creed Misponas, Alex Lariviere, Ian Sanderson, Braydon Natomagan, Lyndon Lariviere, Harry Lariviere (Instructor in white hat), and Jordan Natomagan.

Photo by Dylan Pelletier

Payroll Cutoff Calendar, March 2020

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

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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index.php/833](http://www.Metismuseum.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

Métis Culture and Heritage Department/ GDI Press

917 22nd Street West
Saskatoon SK S7M 0R9
Phone: (306) 242-6070
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) 763-4834



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