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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



Photo courtesy of Marilyn Black

Saskatoon ABE Staff Prepare for Upcoming School Year

by Marilyn Black

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the landscape for everyone this spring. For those of us at the Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) in Adult Basic Education (ABE), we recognized the need to respond swiftly and creatively in order to continue to deliver the high-quality programming needed to support our Métis students, families, and communities.

The staff collaborated and rallied to ensure the ABE students were able to finish their courses, graduate, and move forward on their educational or employment paths.

The DTI ABE staff have been diligently learning how to utilize the Brightspace Learning Management System.

This will help to transform educational programming and delivery through the use of a 'hybrid' delivery model, which means that students will take classes in a blend of online and in-person sessions.

Brightspace gives DTI the capacity to deliver all the programs 100% online if required. We are learning how to use 'new to us' technology and are becoming comfortable navigating the digital world. We have even set up the COVID-19 screener to be completed by students daily through Brightspace in order to ensure good health and track data.

To prepare the upcoming students for success and hopefully positively impact the retention rate, the Saskatoon instructors called each student prior to

the start of school in order to help address any questions or concerns and make personal connections. Pictures were taken and posted on social media of the staff and facility in order for students to have a visual of the health and safety protocols in action. The 1003 building and classroom have a designated entrance and exit doors with sanitization stations.

The student lounge allows a maximum of four people at a time. Personal protective equipment is provided and readily accessible. The anxiety of the unknown is a huge barrier and everyone has done an admirable job to lean on each other during this journey to best support the students.

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Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Patteuw

Elizabeth Patteuw: A Success Story

Interview submitted by Randi Ross & transcribed by Desirae Barker

The Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) program offered by the Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) is a Saskatchewan Polytechnic Certificate Program that provides students the tools required to work with individuals in need of special care. In a recent interview, Elizabeth Patteuw, a graduate of the program, shared her perspective on the program and her future plans.

Elizabeth was introduced to the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) by her mother. Her mother was a student in the Institute's Practical Nursing program and encouraged her to look into programming and apply. If it weren't for her mother, Elizabeth says she would never have realized how much she loves being a CCA. She

states that she chose the CCA program specifically because "it is a stepping stone in my path to becoming a nurse. I like the idea of knowing how everything works, and this program helps open my eyes to the ins and outs of health care."

In discussions about what she enjoyed most about the program and GDI, Elizabeth describes her experience as amazing. She continues, "GDI helped me out financially but also brought me closer to my heritage as there were a couple of events that taught us about the culture and life of Métis people."

Elizabeth's future goals are to take the Practical Nursing Program at DTI and hopefully get into the labor

and delivery sector. She would also like to take the Indigenous Birth Support Worker Program to become an Indigenous Doula. Her advice to future students is, "take the course, it may not be something you saw yourself doing in the beginning, but it will help you for the rest of your life."

DTI continues its long history of offering health-related programming in Saskatchewan and is proud of the graduates who continue to learn and work in this essential industry.

Thank you for sharing your story Elizabeth and best of luck with your future!



GDI CEO Geordy McCaffrey Set to Retire

by Lisa Bird-Wilson

Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MN–S) Education Minister Dr. Earl Cook announced that the CEO of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), Geordy McCaffrey, has determined that the time has come to pursue new challenges and opportunities.

"Geordy began his journey with GDI as a student and twenty-seven years later leaves the school stronger than it has ever been," said Cook. "We thank him for his service and dedication, particularly during his eighteen years as chief executive officer, and are so grateful for the legacy he leaves behind."

Cook outlined McCaffrey's accomplishments since taking the helm as CEO in 2003, which include but are not limited to: unprecedented academic stability and curriculum growth; a 500 percent increase in revenues for programs and services; a quadrupling of student enrollment; establishing GDI Training and Employment; and securing university funding for Métis students. McCaffrey played an instrumental role in developing GDI's invaluable Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous Teacher Education Program (NSITEP) in La Ronge in 2019. He presided over the relocation

of the Institute to its beautiful new building in Saskatoon, which is also home to a Métis museum, art gallery, and special collection of Métis historical artifacts.

GDI's Board of Directors have resolved to extend Geordy's contract, due to expire at the end 2020, in order to enable a national search for his replacement by an executive search firm, which will be selected in the near future to assist in a comprehensive recruitment strategy.

Geordy will continue as CEO until June 2021.



Geordy McCaffrey & Dr. Earl Cook, photo by Peter Beszterda





Saskatoon ABE Staff Prepare.... *Continued from page 1*

by Marilyn Black

Below are some reflections, advice, and inspiring messages in regards to this upcoming school year, from the Saskatoon ABE staff:

Marilyn Black, Program Coordinator: This is an exciting time! It truly takes a team to make an impact and move the learning forward. I am so proud of how the instructors have embraced the new reality, positively supported each other in the learning, and have taken on new leadership roles during this time of uncertainty.

Shawna Dubiel, Instructor: I'm looking forward to meeting our new students and seeing familiar faces return. It'll be great to get back into a routine. We have a lot of new experiences this year, so I'm anticipating some excitement from that as well. My advice is to set realistic goals for yourself. Acknowledge the big picture, but focus on the little steps that will help you be successful. As your instructors, your success is also our success, and we want to celebrate each step with you. So far, this school year has taught me to be more patient with myself. Learning something new might seem scary at first, but with time, you will realize it isn't so bad after all.

Cindy LaPlante, Instructor: Have confidence in the steps that GDI/DTI has taken to ensure safety for the staff and students. With that being said I am looking forward to the return of our students and engaging in the learning and sharing of knowledge. Despite the challenges that have been placed upon our learning this semester, keeping attendance and engagement a top priority is still the key to a successful semester.

Janelle Duplessis: I am looking forward to working with everyone both in the classroom and online. This is going to be an amazing new adventure together. Hard work and dedication are the key to becoming successful. I have learned to adapt to the changes that are put in place due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Kristi Ross, Program Support Facilitator: I am looking forward to meeting our new students and starting the year with our new "normal." There are going to be bumps along the way but bear with us, and we will make sure to give you one of the most rewarding years. We have to learn to go with the flow. So far, I have learned that we need to make sure we are working together because the new normal has taught us that we need to lean on each other for emotional and mental support.

Amanda Fisher-Laframboise: I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of the Adult Basic Education Program students. It was so great speaking with you and seeing you on the zoom interviews. Being accepted into the ABE program is truly a gift. I am so grateful to witness you all on your journey of building a brighter future. I can't wait to see you with your Graduation cap and gowns and wearing your Métis sash.

Abby Pelletier: Hi, and welcome to Dumont Technical Institute. My name is Abby, and I work at the front desk and will be the first person you will see when entering our building. We have been busy preparing for the start of classes amid the COVID-19.

This year will definitely be different, but looking forward to seeing the returning students and meeting our new ones. You have chosen an excellent school to further your education, and our instructors are the best. Welcome, and have a good year! 🌟



Photos courtesy of Marilyn Black

Call for Nominations: Order of Gabriel Dumont

by Lisa Bird-Wilson

Nominations for 2021 *Order of Gabriel Dumont* awards are now open. The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* is awarded to a small number of

persons who have served the Métis of Canada with distinction. Award criteria and nomination forms are available online at the following:

<https://gdins.org/metis-culture/>

Nominations close on October 31, 2020. 🌟



Gold & Silver Order of Gabriel Dumont Awards





GDI & DTI staff on Orange Shirt Day 2020

Orange Shirt Day 2020

By Desirae Barker

September 30, 2020, the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) staff and faculty showed their support for Phyllis Webstad’s story and the history of Indigenous residential schools by wearing orange shirts.

Orange Shirt Day is an annual national movement in recognition of the harm the residential school system did to Indigenous children in removing them from their homes, families, and culture. The movement recognizes the history and significance of this day by honoring the survivors and those who never made it home from residential schools.

Every year, GDI retails orange shirts designed by Ryan Nordmarken, GDI Culture & Heritage Senior Administrative Coordinator, to spread awareness and share Phyllis’ story. The

Orange Shirt Day background and Phyllis’ story can be found at <https://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html>. A piece of her story is copied below:

“I went to the Mission for one school year in 1973/1974. I had just turned 6 years old. I lived with my grandmother on the Dog Creek reserve. We never had very much money, but somehow my granny managed to buy me a new outfit to go to the Mission school. I remember going to Robinson’s store and picking out a shiny orange shirt. It had string laced up in front, and was so bright and exciting – just like I felt to be going to school!

When I got to the Mission, they stripped me and took away my clothes, including the orange shirt! I never wore it again. I didn’t understand why they wouldn’t give it back to me it

was mine! The color orange has always reminded me of that and how my feelings didn’t matter, how no one cared, and how I felt like I was worth nothing. All of us little children were crying, and no one cared.”

Ryan states that after reading Phyllis’ story, “I was horrified and decided I wanted to somehow acknowledge and pay respect to not only Phyllis but to all survivors and families of those who were affected or lost to residential schools. The simple design I created shows two feet (those of a child), with the soles being infinity symbols (to represent the Métis flag).” Let’s not forget the children but honor them on September 30. Every child matters. 🌐

❄️

**CHRISTMAS
BREAK
APPROVED**

**THE INSTITUTE
WILL BE CLOSED
FROM
THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 24,
2020 TO SUNDAY,
JANUARY 3, 2021
(INCLUSIVE).
THE INSTITUTE
WILL RE-OPEN
ON MONDAY,
JANUARY 4, 2021.**

❄️

Métis on High Alert after Positive COVID-19 Test Results

by Lisa Bird-Wilson

A case of COVID-19 within the Executive of the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan demonstrates the ease of transmission of the virus and the need to take precautions seriously.

On September 18, 2020, Glen McCallum, President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, tested positive for COVID-19, learning of the results while at a meeting with other Métis officials in Waskesiu at the Hawood Inn. President McCallum immediately left the meeting, and attendees

were later informed of the positive result, at which time the gathering was disbanded. Anyone with close contact with President McCallum was advised to self-isolate, monitor for symptoms, and get tested if they displayed symptoms.

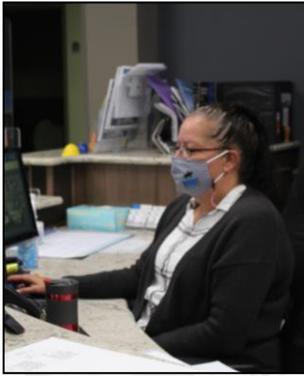
Since March 2020, when the COVID reality hit the province, GDI has implemented a number of safety precautions at all our locations in an effort to mitigate the spread of the virus. As we move into the fall the numbers are rising provincially and forecasts

expect case numbers will continue to increase. Our duty to one another and our community is to do all we can to prevent the spread of the virus.

At GDI, it is now standard that masks are worn in all common spaces and screening occurs at all facilities.

Let’s continue to take every precaution possible to ensure the safety of our community, which includes the Elders, youth, and families within each of our circles of contact. 🌐





Abby Pelletier, photo by Desirae Barker



COVID-19 Update: Masks are Mandatory

by Desirae Barker

Currently, the best public health evidence available states that masks are extremely important in preventing the contraction and spread of the COVID-19. Everyone accessing a Gabriel Dumont Institute facility or program location is expected to wear a face mask in all indoor common spaces where physical distancing is not possible. This may include hallways, lobbies, classrooms, labs, study spaces, elevators, and other designated shared spaces. Masks will be available onsite for

visitors who do not have their own masks.

Students and staff may wear their own personal face covering (non-medical mask or cloth face-coverings) as long as they meet appropriate guidelines. Guidelines state that coverings must: allow for easy breathing, fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops, maintain their shape after washing and drying, be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment, not impair vision or interfere with tasks, be made of multiple

layers (2+) of breathable cotton fabric or linen (e.g. not plastic). The Government of Canada recommends woven cotton e.g. quilting fabric or cotton sheets, and not be shared with others.

This is a reminder to please follow all mask use guidelines and ensure you are informed about the Institute's most current COVID-19 procedures and updates. More info can be found here:

<https://gdins.org/covid-19/>



Payroll Cutoff Calendar, October 2020

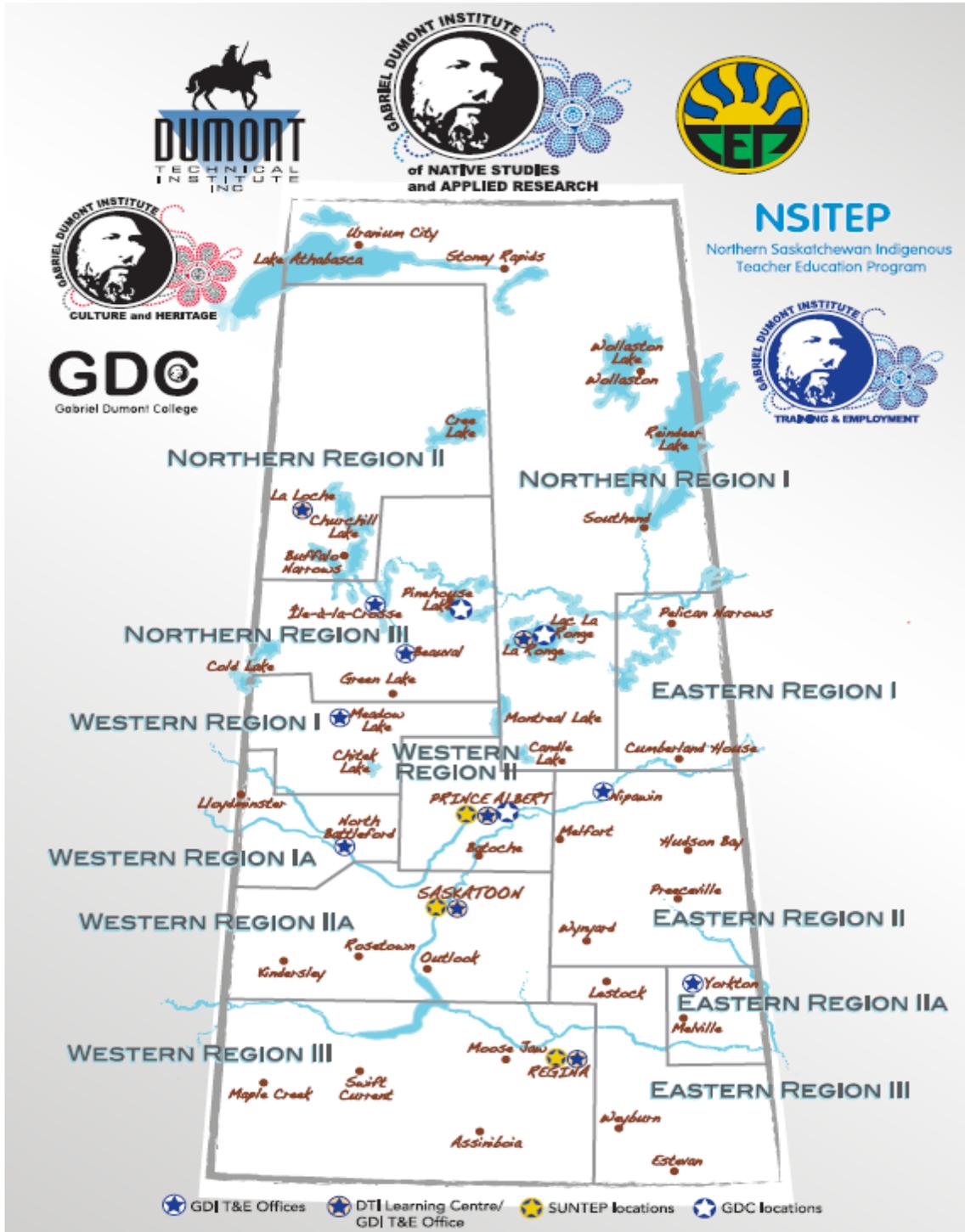
By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

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

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.





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Heritage**

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Fax: (306) 244-0252

Finance and Operations

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SUNTEP Prince Albert

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Fax: (306) 764-3995

SUNTEP Saskatoon

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Phone: (306) 975-7095
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SUNTEP Regina

Room 227 College West
University of Regina
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**GDI Library
Regina**

Room 218 College West
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3737 Wascana Parkway
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**GDI Library
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Mission Statement: To promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection, and distribution of those materials and the design, development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services

Back issues of the communicator can be found here: <http://www.metismuseum.ca/browse/index.php/898>

