



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

In this issue:

SUNTEP Prince
Albert Christmas
Hamper Program

Office
Administration in
Regina
Embraces Online
Learning

Brian Thomas: A
Success Story

COVID-19 Update

Payroll Cutoff
Calendar

HIGHLIGHTS

Chandrelle Marshall
featured by
Canadian
Geographic
2

GDI Press Hold First
Virtual Book
Launch
3

Library Spotlight:
Gale Health and
Wellness
Database
4



Photo Submitted by Beige Unger

SUNTEP Prince Albert Christmas Hamper Program

By Beige Unger

The students and faculty at Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) Prince Albert have been busy this month bringing a little merry and bright to local families in need this Christmas.

For approximately the past 12 years, SUNTEP has partnered with local schools to sponsor a family at Christmas, not knowing that by 2020 those small acts of kindness would grow into a hamper program that helps numerous local schools in the city.

Students in the first, second, and third year of the program do everything from making personal donations, gathering

donations from outside businesses and family, shopping, and wrapping. Hampers include the fixings for a full traditional Christmas dinner, additional groceries to carry families through the holiday season, gifts and treats for children in the family, as well as family activities such as board games and sliding equipment.

This year with the donations received and hard work students and faculty put in, we were able to partner with six different schools in the city, providing hampers to six families in need.

The hamper program brings our SUNTEP family together. Students are instilled with a keen

understanding of what can be done when we work together to help others. The program helps students to see first-hand the connection between schools and families, and prepares them for some of the duties they will have as future teachers in the city. The schools involved host many SUNTEP students during the Extended Practicum as well as Field Experiences and the additional connection helps students to feel a part of their communities.

Faculty and students at SUNTEP Prince Albert hope to be able to continue to expand the hamper program in coming years to bring joy and kindness to more schools and families in the city. 🌐





Holiday
**DOOR
DECORATING
CONTEST**

**THE 2020 DOOR
DECORATING
CONTEST WAS HELD
AT GDI IN EARLY
DECEMBER &
WINNERS WERE
SELECTED ON
DECEMBER 10.
THANK YOU TO ALL
THE PARTICIPANTS!**

Winners

#1 HOLLY KAYTOR



#2 DENISE D'AMOUR



Office Administration in Regina Embraces Online Learning

By Kristen Rutten

As the first to kick off the online learning platforms this fall, the instructors and students hit the ground running.

Longtime employee, Kristen Rutten, welcomed Derek Stovin onto the Regina Office Administration Team. The team also includes Kathryn Schonhoffer, who leads the students through Medical Terminology.

The benefits to online learning are apparent as we make our way through our semester:

- Nearly 100% online attendance rates
- Academic Achievement
- Family/School Balance
- Connection to Staff

In a recent survey asking students for ways to sustain and improve their online learning experience, the key to program success is in instructor engagement through MS Teams. Students feel connected and supported. Almost five stars! Here are just a few quotes:

“Our instructors have all been very engaged and connected with us.”

“It’s really good, they are always making sure we are fully understanding.”

“I feel very connected with the instructors. I am not shy to ask questions when I am not understanding something.”

Why is online learning working so well for our students? This year has provided a unique opportunity for adult students to learn in a different way. No longer do they have to choose between their education and their sick child or being a Mom and taking their child to an appointment. This year, they are able to have balance and do both. Students can attend class online and never miss a beat.

Other student reasons for online learning working so well included anxiety and mental health no longer being a barrier to them attending. They are able to listen in and feel comfortable in engaging in the class, when a traditional classroom may have increased their anxiety levels during a difficult time.

Students can also work at their own pace, spend additional time on learning outcomes they find more challenging, engage more deeply with topics they find personally interesting, and working more quickly through material where less reinforcement is necessary.

How does Office Administration Regina delivery their online program? Students participate in a “traditional” classroom schedule delivered through Microsoft Teams daily. Microsoft Teams offers a social aspect including much chatting – the students get to “know” each other. Teams also provides an ability for students to contact each other and break into groups with consistent access to an instructor and the ability for instructors to “jump into” a group.

Brightspace is the learning platform for delivering all assignments, exams and grades. Many classes are recorded or supplemental videos are uploaded. Students access the videos to reinforce learning or to use for review.

Here a few favourite quotes from our survey:
“Positive love everything about it, makes life a lot easier.”

“You’re doing great! Thank you for a great semester!!!!”
“I honestly feel that I do not have any negative feedback to give.”

“The benefits of working online are that it is more accommodating.”

...and so many more! 🌐

Chandrelle Marshall featured by Canadian Geographic

By Desirae Barker

Chandrelle Marshall, Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP)

graduate and teacher at Westmount Community School in Saskatoon was featured by

Canadian Geographic Magazine this fall.

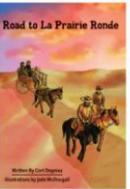
Story Continues on Page 5



Shop GDI
 NEW - Credit Card Payments now accepted via Paypal
 NOTE: The Gabriel Dumont Institute will be closed from December 24 - January 3rd and all orders placed during that time will be sent in the order they are received upon our return!
 If you're planning on giving gifts from our shop during the holidays, we recommend ordering by December 9th for the best chance at having them arrive on time!
 In the interest of health safety at this time, in-person shopping at our retail outlet in Saskatoon has been suspended. We will fill online orders at this time!
 For a printable PDF version of our catalogue, click here
 For our return policy, click here

View cart (0) Checkout Search for products

ROAD TO LA PRAIRIE RONDE
 Cort Dogniez's *Road to La Prairie Ronde* takes the reader on an imaginative journey of his ancestor, Frederick Dumont, from his home in Batoche to the Métis settlement of La Prairie Ronde. From there, he follows his grandfather's path as a member of the famous Métis leader, Gabriel Dumont. Frederick's journey takes place just a few years prior to the tragic events of the 1885 Resistance.
 This charming coming-of-age story focuses on young Frederick's exciting adventures from his family as he begins his own journey from Batoche to Round Prairie. The story and illustrations are a combination of historical accuracy and imagination. It's a story about maintaining and celebrating relationships with the Creator and the natural world and with family, community, and Indigenous nations. We have a relationship to all things.
 Originally illustrated by Jade McDougall, *Road to La Prairie Ronde* is complemented with a Métis identity, language guide, and age-appropriate learning activities. This comprehensive learning package gives readers and educators an opportunity to learn more about 19th-century Métis history and culture.



Road to La Prairie Ronde is available for purchase online at Shopmetis.ca



Cort Dogniez, photo submitted by David Morin

GDI Press Hold First Virtual Book Launch

By Desirae Barker & David Morin

In early December, GDI press announced their first virtual book launch. Under normal circumstances, book launches included a meet and greet with the author and invited others to gather in celebration of the book's release. However, the pandemic prompted GDI Press to find a new and inventive way to celebrate this event.

The virtual book launch celebrated the release of *Road to La Prairie Ronde* written by Cort Dogniez with illustrations by Jade McDougall.

The book is a historical fiction based on the life of Cort's great-grandfather Frederick Dumont. Frederick's grandfather was one of the founders of the La Prairie Ronde otherwise known as Round Prairie, and this story details his adventure from Batoche back to La Prairie Ronde.

Cort explains that he hopes kids across the province will get the opportunity to read this book and feel the same sense of pride he has in being Métis. *Road to La*

Prairie Ronde is available for purchase at shopmetis.ca. The virtual launch began with an opening prayer and introduction about Round Prairie by Métis Elder Senator Nora Cummings, and featured stories and excerpts from the book with the author Cort Dogniez.

The virtual book launch premiered on Facebook (https://fb.watch/2rdMCRfNp_/) and YouTube (<https://youtu.be/wDCw1pfA5D0>) and is still viewable on both platforms. 🌐

GDI COVID-19 Update

By Desirae Barker

Due to the rising cases of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan, many staff at head office are still working from home as much as possible in efforts to reduce contact between employees. Departments

are incorporating half-time in-office approaches to limit in-office work time. Many staff work from home offices to continue to support students and clients. The mask procedure is still in effect

all times in public common spaces. Please ensure you are informed about GDI'S most current COVID-19 procedures and updates. More info can be found here: <https://gdins.org/covid-19/> 🌐

Holiday DOOR DECORATING CONTEST

Winners

#3 DTI REGISTRATION



#4 SASKATOON ABE LEVEL 4






Brian Thomas, photo submitted by Desirae Barker

Library Spotlight: Gale Health and Wellness Database

By GDI Library Staff

Given our focus on health in 2020, the GDI library staff wanted to highlight the [Gale Health and Wellness database](#), which provides information seekers with a wide range of health-related information applicable for both general and student use.

There are currently 332 different topics of interest, such as “Diseases and Conditions,” “Drugs,” and “Diagnostics and Tests,” as well as up-to-date information about the Coronavirus, and Gale Cengage continues to expand and update topics covered. Once users

identify a topic of interest, there are various content types (such as audio, video, reference, and news) users can access topic-specific information from, all from credible information sources.

Users can also filter their results within each of these content-type categories to include characteristics such as “peer-reviewed” or “publication date” to further specify their information needs. There are also optional search choices on this site that include a subject guide search, a search by specific publication, and an

advanced search option. Consider this informative database as the first stop for up-to-date health information.

The *Gale Health and Wellness* database can be easily accessed from the A-Z Database list on the [GDI library catalogue homepage](#).

Library staff are available for assistance in accessing this database, or any other information-seeking support you may have; please consult the [Library Contacts page](#) on the GDI website to get in touch with us. 🌐

Brian Thomas: A Success Story

By Desirae Barker

Brian Thomas approached the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) for support with education and employment in 2015. Prior to this, Brian was undecided about which field he wanted to pursue and sought assistance in securing long-term employment.

After being introduced to GDI by family and friends, Brian met with GDI Employment Counsellor, Sheena Yew, to begin his journey. Within a few weeks, Brian secured a position as an apprentice plumber with Metro Mechanical Inc. in Saskatoon.

He states, “GDI helped me get started by reimbursing me for some

tools and school fees. The wage subsidy (to the employer) also ensured that I could remain employed during slow periods in trades, even while I was still learning.”

For over five years, Brian has been employed with Metro Mechanical Inc. He is directly involved with estimating and coordinating project materials and working hands-on when needed.

On May 15, 2020, Brian became a journeyman plumber and continues to work with the same company. He hopes to continue gaining skills in plumbing installation and solutions, time management, and project management.

In the future, Brian has goals of taking on additional leadership responsibilities and investing in the company. He also would like to pursue further education in Mechanical Engineering.

Brian’s advice to Métis peoples thinking of a career in the trades is to “advocate for yourself! Don’t be afraid to be curious and ask lots of questions. Find out why you’re doing something. Take advantage of the programs available to you. Invest in quality tools and keep them in good condition.”

Thank you for sharing your story Brian and best of luck in your future! 🌐





Chandrelle Marshall group circle at Westmount Community School. Photo retrieved from <https://www.canadiangeographic.ca/article/featured-teacher-chandrelle-marshall>

Chandrelle Marshall featured... *continued from page 2*

The Canadian Geographic Magazine is a nationally recognized magazine of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. The magazine features an education section which highlights teachers and their accomplishments from across the country.

Chandrelle’s feature in the magazine includes an interview where she explains her collaborative work as a teacher and how important language and Métis culture are for students at a young age.

Chandrelle is part of the Michif Early Learning Pilot Project (MELPP) in Saskatchewan that offers Michif language immersion to students. She also works with teachers to infuse Métis content into their lessons.

Chandrelle explains, “I work with a teacher and we create a unit that is taught through a Métis or Michif perspective. They can pick any curricular area — language arts, science, social studies, physical education — and we incorporate Métis and Michif

content, language, values and ways of knowing.”

The entire article is available on the Canadian Geographic website located here:

<https://www.canadiangeographic.ca/article/featured-teacher-chandrelle-marshall>

Thank you Chandrelle for your work in sharing Métis culture and creating Michif resources for students and the community! 🌟

Payroll Cutoff Calendar, January 2021

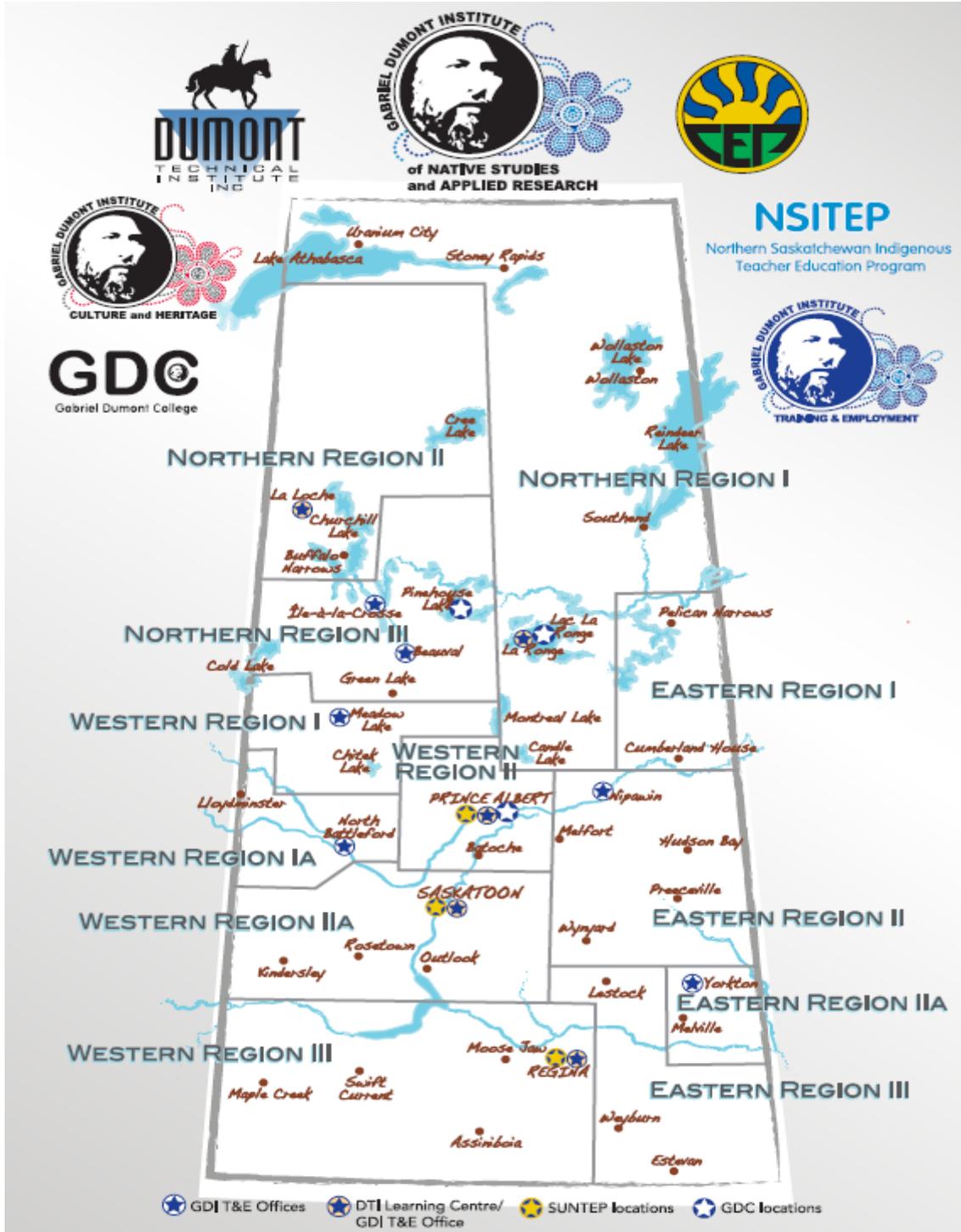
By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
					New Year's Day Stat Holiday	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Finance Cutoff @ 4:30 for Jan 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 Jan 15 Payday	Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on Student Jan 15 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices Student Payday	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Finance Cutoff @ 4:30 for Jan 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 Jan 29 Payday	Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on Student Jan 29 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Accounts Payable Invoices Student Payday	
31						

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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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>

