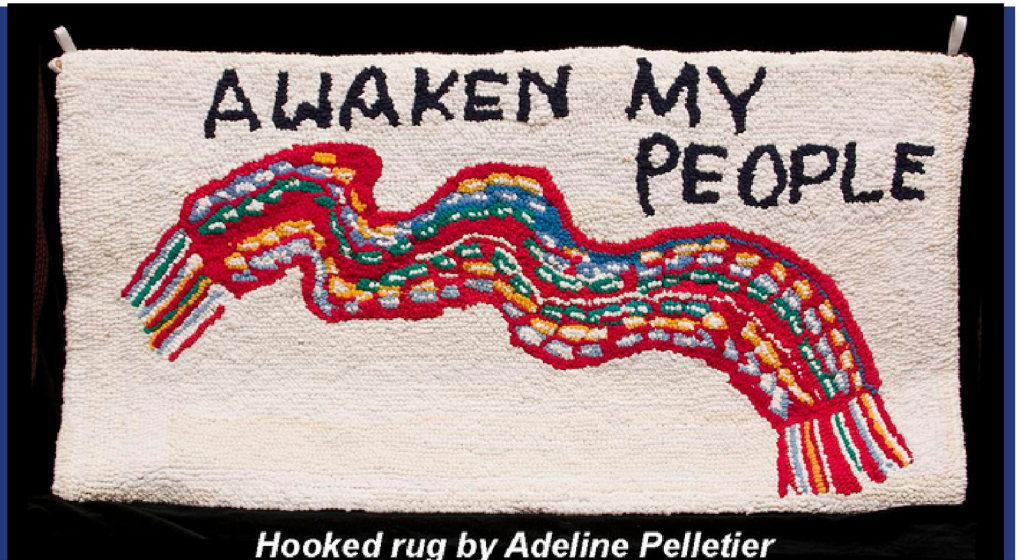




THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE COMMUNICATOR



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MONTH - A TIME TO CELEBRATE



Hooked rug by Adeline Pelletier

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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LETS GET SOCIAL



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WANISHKAA

by Karon Shmon, GDI Director of Métis Culture & Heritage

June 2023 was full of acknowledgements for Indigenous Peoples. June is Indigenous History Month and is the month in which National Indigenous Peoples Day occurs annually on June 21. Added to this is the many land acknowledgements to which we have become accustomed to hearing at most public events. But is it enough?

While there is nothing inherently wrong with this focus, it is becoming increasingly difficult to discern whether it is making a noticeable difference. I can say it makes a difference to Indigenous Peoples. Not only is June a month when we stand a little taller because of our proud heritage, but it is also the month when we hope the majority of non-Indigenous Canadians celebrate with us while also becoming more aware of our rich and diverse cultures, histories, and the systemic

inequities that take place whenever a people, or peoples, are colonized.

Beyond what some call the “beads and bannock” approach, which is defined as the celebratory but not controversial part of indigeneity, it would be wonderful to see more support and involvement in the more serious issues that surely must be dealt with to make progress on reconciliation. We can see organizations like SaskCulture herald and work towards achieving outcomes that are inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible (IDEA). As a lead organization in the province, this is good news. This means the funds SaskCulture has to distribute will go to initiatives that support this focus. This IDEA cannot be achieved solely by having non-Indigenous people ...

Story continues on Page 4.





La Loche CCA 2023 Graduates
Photo submitted by Shaylee Gardiner



SUNTEP Regina Graduates
Photo submitted by Brenna Pacholko



Tavia Terry accepts her Bronze Order of Gabriel Dumont at the Regina SUNTEP Graduation. Photo submitted by Brenna Pacholko

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

By Hailey Novotny, DTI Program Coordinator

"Change is hard at first, messy in the middle, and gorgeous at the end."

ROBIN SHARMA

April 2023 started as a new journey for me as I began my new job as a Program Coordinator. Coming off maternity leave and jumping into this new role was overwhelming and scary, but I knew in my heart it was right. Learning the ins and outs of a new position was one thing, but navigating travel and visits to unfamiliar locations was another. Thankfully, Program Coordinator Daniel Downs played a role in diminishing any doubts and uncertainties, as he provided me with insight, guidance, and a trip up north.

We prepared for our regular check-in trip for May, but Mother Nature had a plan of her own. May fourth brought a lot of fear, sadness, and uncertainty for La Loche and Clearwater River Dene Nation as wildfires came too close to home. Placed under a state of emergency with a mandatory evacuation order, the people of these communities had no choice but to endure hour-long bus rides to safety. DTI Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) students had to make tough decisions to relocate to Île-à-la-Crosse to do clinical placements.

While many left families behind, others packed up their children and drove out of their community, worried whether they would have access to come back in. Evacuation left students wondering what was going to happen next. What would happen to everything they left behind, including their homes, belongings, community and most importantly, their loved ones? Constant questions and concerns that I am sure haunted their minds throughout those coming days.

On Monday, I met the students, and they greeted me with smiles and a calm and collected atmosphere. You would have never guessed what they had just been through and were continuing to go through. At that moment, I knew that these students were resilient. Their interactions with residents filled the room with humor, laughter, and warmth. I watched as some spoke their Dene language to the Elders and felt a sense of peace as I could see they carried their beloved culture and identity of their home communities with them. Not letting their personal lives affect their jobs, I watched the students demonstrate strength and determination to finish their program.

That day as I left Île-à-la-Crosse, I thought the worst was behind them. I was wrong. Tuesday, May 16th, we received an update from instructor KaSandra informing us that the fires had spread, and now Île-à-la-Crosse and Buffalo Narrows had to evacuate, again uprooting our students. Our very own CCA student, Shaylee Gardiner stayed behind to assist in leading emergency operations.

The students' strength, along with the support of Daniel and their instructor, played a critical role in their successful completion of the program in crisis. KaSandra played a calming force throughout the situation. She functioned as more than just an instructor during the crisis. Whether that meant doing grocery runs, being an "Uber" driver, a therapist, or just ensuring that they felt safe and secure, she was there making sure that every student had what they needed to complete their clinical placements successfully.

Story continues on Page 5

MICHIF

WORDS OF THE MONTH

TOOT LITII

All Summer

ZHAARDAYN

Garden

AEN PICNIC

Picnic

**LI FEU
KAANOHTINUHK**

Fire Fighter





UPCOMING PROGRAM DEADLINES

Continuing Care Assistant

Prince Albert

July 11th



Continuing Care Assistant

Île-à-la-Crosse
Saskatoon
Regina

July 19th



For a full listing of all current programs and to apply online visit

WWW.GDINS.ORG/PROGRAMS



Saskatoon SUNTEP Graduates & Speakers. Photo submitted by George Gingras



P.A. SUNTEP Graduates & Speakers. Photo submitted by Desirae Barker



P.A. SUNTEP Graduate receiving their diploma. Photo submitted by Desirae Barker

2023 SUNTEP GRADUATIONS

By Desirae Barker, GDI Senior Program Coordinator

May is always a milestone month for students and faculty at Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). Each year families, friends, and communities gather to celebrate the success and hard work of SUNTEP graduates across the province. This year, SUNTEP graduated 40 Indigenous educators!

In congratulatory remarks to all students, Lisa Bird-Wilson, Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Executive Director, stated, "With nearly 1,500 SUNTEP grads to date, there is not a classroom in Saskatchewan without a SUNTEP graduate. I want to affirm how special SUNTEP is to Métis students. You are all role models in Métis education; thanks to you, Métis children across the province will see themselves in the curriculum and classroom."

The SUNTEP Regina graduation was held on May 5th for four outstanding graduates. The 2023 graduation theme was resilience, which was very fitting for students that persevered through two years of pandemic uncertainty. The "Order of the Sash" was presented to each graduate along with a beautiful leather portfolio for their bachelor of education degrees. Both hold significant importance to Métis cultural pride and identification.

The following day, on May 6th, SUNTEP Saskatoon hosted a graduation celebration for its 17 graduates. Raquel

Prosser, a 2023 SUNTEP Saskatoon graduate, shared that the most influential part of her experience at SUNTEP was finding her identity as a Métis woman and discovering her passion for anti-racist and anti-oppressive education. After graduation, Raquel plans to find a position in the school system and continue her education journey.

SUNTEP Prince Albert hosted the final graduation celebration for the month on May 18th. Nineteen graduates walked across the stage and received their diplomas and Métis sashes. During opening greetings, Superintendent of Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division Neil Finch congratulated all SUNTEP graduates and commended the program for their long-standing partnership. "Over 60 of our classrooms are impacted by SUNTEP graduates and students every day; at least 25% of our teachers are from SUNTEP. Each brings a breath of fresh air into classrooms with new ideas and care for students," said Finch.

With another successful year of graduations in the books, GDI and SUNTEP look forward to the fall when a new cohort of students will begin their studies at SUNTEP. Congratulations to the SUNTEP Class of 2023! 🌍

THE INAUGURAL NSITEP GRADUATING CLASS 2023

By Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator and Pearl Gardiner, GDI Program Coordinator

Big smiles all around at the inaugural Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous Teacher Education Program (NSITEP) held on May 18th, 2023 at the Jonas Roberts Memorial Community Centre (JRMCC) in Far Reserve, Lac La Ronge. As everyone

arrived, they were greeted warmly and the feeling around the hall was one of welcoming and belonging. The hall has hosted many major events, and now the NSITEP graduation can be added to the list.

Story continues on page 4





Gabriel Dumont Institute staff celebrated National Indigenous People's Day in Victoria Park, Saskatoon.

We encourage everyone to learn more about Indigenous history and communities as an opportunity for reconciliation and healing. Some great historical archives can be found on our Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture, online at:

WWW.METISMUSEUM.CA



Inaugural NSITEP Graduation Ceremony at Far Reserve, Lac La Ronge. Original graduation mural painted by local knowledge sharer and artist Alex Halkett. Photo submitted by Morris Cook.

WANISHKAA

Continued from page 1

become aware of, and enjoy, our food, dances, music, clothing, and accessories. Those activities are a good start for those beginning their journey on the road to reconciliation, but it is now time to get out of the parking lot and head out to the places they have failed to acknowledge exist, until now.

One's eyes must open in order to awake. Then one can deal with reality and let go of dreams that were never true. While some, and in some cases many, settlers and newcomers had challenges, many had the privilege to work and live where they wanted and the Caucasians avoided much of the discrimination levelled at Indigenous Peoples and other people of colour. This advantaged the newcomers

(including the settlers) and their offspring for generations, resulting in the disparity of wealth and ownership we currently see. What is different for Indigenous Peoples is that they have inherent rights that have been ignored while, at the same time, the oppression from newcomers attempted to extinguish our nations.

Addressing these issues with heart and meaning, and even with courage, is where the real work will make a difference. Transitioning out of the celebrations and focus June brings us, we enter July where Canada Day is the most noted celebration. I look forward to the time when ALL of us celebrate July 1st with the same enthusiasm and pride. 🌍

THE INAUGURAL NSITEP GRADUATING CLASS 2023

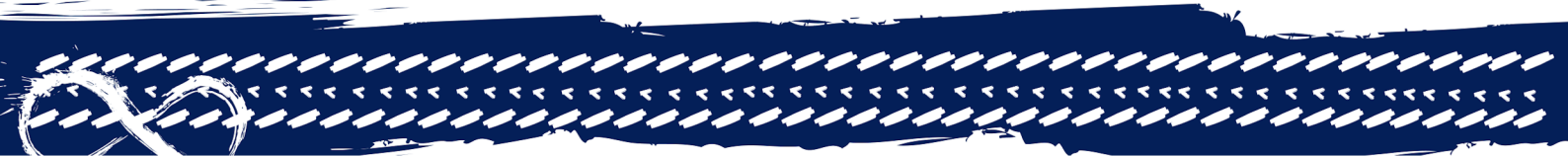
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Morris Cook got the idea to host a graduation ceremony and NSITEP faculty members, Nancy Lafleur, Sue Carriere, and Gabe Andrews quickly joined in to help organize. Students were involved in fundraising and event planning efforts, and the whole community pitched in for the celebration. Everyone was feeling excited and nervous at the same time for the big day, but Morris kept thinking "we can do this."

Lisa Bird-Wilson offered congratulations on behalf of the Gabriel Dumont Institute, and Chief Tammy Cook-Searson shared gratitude on behalf of all the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, and Glen Hector McCallum, the President of the Métis Nation — Saskatchewan, brought congratulations as well. When each speaker congratulated the students on being the first ever NSITEP graduating class, the audience broke out into thunderous

applause. Everyone felt a deep pride for all the challenges overcome and accomplishments earned by this class.

Many of the graduates speak Cree, which is a remarkable step forward. NSITEP students will be able to reintroduce traditional language skills in their classrooms, and this makes them highly sought after in the job market. As of June, 15 of 17 graduates have signed teaching contracts for September in Cole Bay, Pinehouse Lake, Sturgeon Lake, Hall Lake, Stanley Mission, Sucker River, and La Ronge. For some faculty, they have been teaching these students since they were in grade school, so they're filled with pride and joy while celebrating their students coming full circle to teach future generations of Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous Teachers. 🌍





ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Continued from page 2

Though this trip was brief, it taught me so much. I saw firsthand how quickly situations change and how fast program coordinators pivot and adapt to best accommodate their students and staff. In return, I witnessed students doing

the same to ensure their success in completing their program. A reminder of why we do what we do in the world of education, and how the work that everyone contributes paves the road to success. 🌍

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

By Desirae Barker, GDI Senior Program Coordinator

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Board of Governors has appointed Brett Vandale as the Institute's Acting Executive Director for a one-year term effective September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024.

Lisa Bird-Wilson, the Institute's Executive Director, will begin a one-year leave starting September. The GDI Board is supportive of Lisa's leave and confident in Brett's abilities to lead the work of the Institute.

Brett is a long-serving employee at GDI, with almost 25 years of experience in

various roles. He held the position of Director of Dumont Technical Institute for 19 years and currently is the Director of GDI University Programs. Brett and the GDI leadership team are well positioned to continue the important work of the Institute.

In the interim, all inquiries regarding GDI university programs can be directed to Chantelle Julé. This role will be managed by Chantelle until August 31, 2024. Upon Lisa's return, Brett and Chantelle will revert to their original positions. 🌍



SUNTEP P.A. and Saskatoon participated in their local Pride Parades. Thanks to all who took part walking, painting signs, and decorating shirts. Happy Pride Month!

JULY 2023 FINANCE & PAYROLL CUTOFF CALENDAR

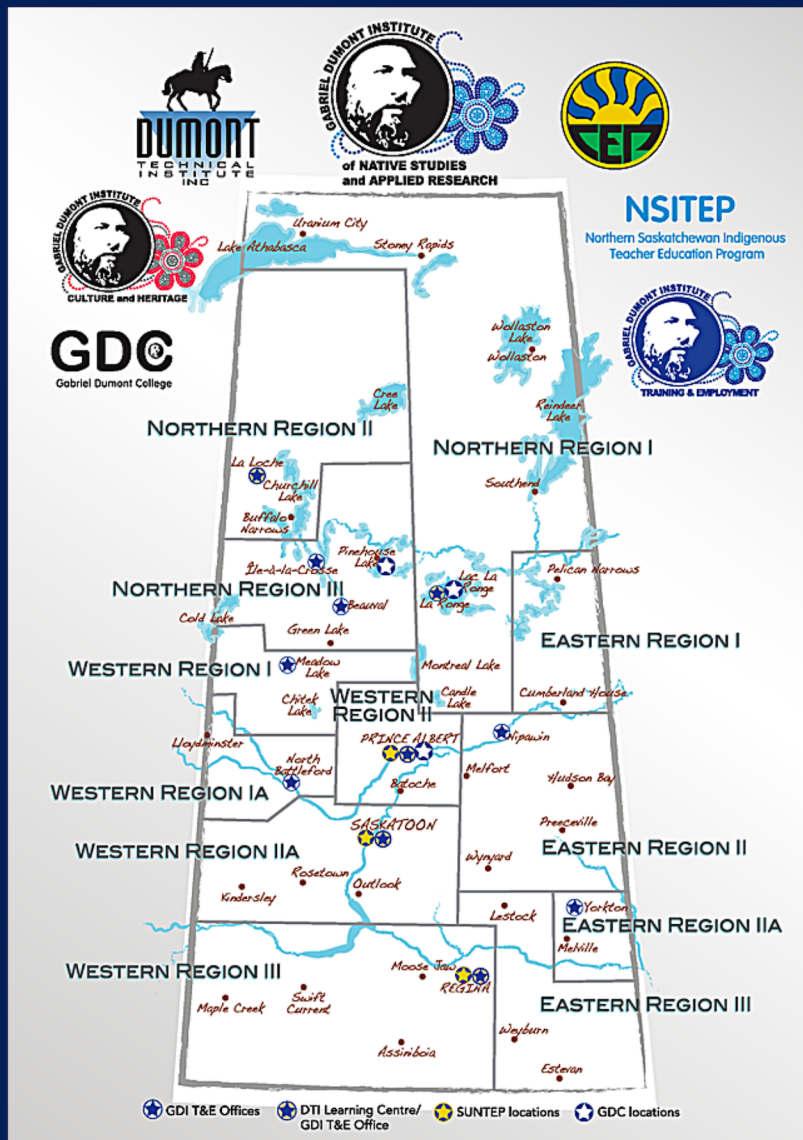
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Canada Day Stat Holiday			Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 pm for Accounts Payable Invoices	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Cutoff @ 4:30 pm for Timesheet & Payroll Revisions for July 14 Payday	Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on Student July 14 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Staff / Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 pm for Accounts Payable Invoices	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
				Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 pm for Accounts Payable Invoices	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Pmts on Students July 28 D.D. Cutoff @ 4:30 pm for TMS & Payroll Revisions for July 31 Payday		Accounts Payable Cheque/EFT Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 pm for Accounts Payable Invoices	
30	31					
	Staff Payday					

EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS DUE AT PAYROLL UPON JOB ACCEPTANCE. PAYROLL MUST RECEIVE CONTRACTS PRIOR TO PAYROLL CUTOFF DATE IF RECEIVED AFTER THE CUTOFF DATE, THE EMPLOYEE WILL BE PAID ON THE FOLLOWING PAY PERIOD MRTS DUE BY THE 15TH OF EVERY MONTH



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Previous issues of the *Communicator* can be found online at www.metismuseum.ca

If you would like to submit an article for the *Communicator* please contact Bethani Groat bethani.groat@gdins.org

