



# THE GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE COMMUNICATOR



Brett Vandale, Glenn Lafleur, and Bonnie Hartman at the 2025 GDSF Golf Tournament Banquet Dinner

The GDI Communicator is an internal newsletter intended to document the achievements of management and staff of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research

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## GDI MOURNS THE LOSS OF NR I BOARD MEMBER GLENN LAFLEUR

By Lisa Klyne, GDI Senior Communications & Research Coordinator

With great sadness, Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) mourns the passing of board member Glenn Lafleur, a remarkable individual who was part of the Institute's journey for many years.

Glenn first became involved with the GDI Board in the late 1990s and served multiple terms over the years, representing Northern Region I. He dedicated more than 15 years to GDI, guiding and strengthening the Institute. His commitment to the Métis community was true and constant, and his leadership helped create opportunities for countless learners and community members.

In recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Métis community, Glenn received the Order of Gabriel Dumont Silver Medal in 2020, one of the highest honours awarded by the Institute. This distinction reflects the

profound impact he had on advancing Métis education, culture, and well-being. Glenn was not only a dedicated board member, but he was also a kind and generous person who cared deeply about helping his community. He exemplified what it means to lead and advocate in a meaningful and respectful way, and his example will continue to inspire us. We are deeply grateful for Glenn's service and the positive difference he made throughout his time with GDI. His wisdom, guidance, and spirit will never be forgotten.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Glenn's family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. 🙏



## UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR FALL 2026

Northern Saskatchewan Indigenous Teacher Education Program (NSITEP)

La Ronge

Feb 15

Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP)

Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert

Feb 15

Indigenous Community-Based Master of Education

Saskatoon

Mar 15

GDC  
Gabriel Dumont College

Apply early to ensure your spot in these popular programs!

[WWW.GDINS.ORG/UNIVERSITY](http://WWW.GDINS.ORG/UNIVERSITY)

## MICHIF WORDS OF THE MONTH

### AHKAMAYIHTUM

Resolve

### LI ZHOOR DI LAAN

New Year's

### LII ZWAYZOO'D NIIZH

Snowbird

### LI KRISMISS

Christmas

## INTRODUCING THE NEW DIRECTOR OF GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

by Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator



The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) is pleased to announce Tavia Laliberte as the new Director of Training and Employment. She brings more than two decades of leadership experience in Indigenous education, workforce development, and institutional transformation. A proud Métis Nation–Saskatchewan citizen, Tavia previously served as GDI's Director of Training and Employment from 2006 to 2013, where she helped establish the division, developed its core systems, and built strong partnerships to support Métis learners and job seekers across the province.

Since that time, Tavia has continued to advance Indigenous-focused education and training at a senior executive level. Her career includes serving as CEO of the Rupertsland Institute and Vice-President Academic at the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. Tavia is known for her collaborative leadership style, her commitment to Métis self-determination, and her focus on building high-performing teams that deliver culturally grounded, client-centered services. She holds an MBA from the University of Saskatchewan and is currently completing her Doctorate in Business Administration in Higher Education Management through the University of Bath.

Tavia is honoured to return to GDI and looks forward to working with staff, regional teams, partners, and communities to strengthen services, support Métis success, and advance the Institute's mission.



## PRINCE ALBERT PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM TOOK PART IN A CULTURAL WORKSHOP

by Chantelle Jule, DTI Program Coordinator

On December 4, 2025, Dumont Technical Institute's (DTI) Year 1 and Year 2 Practical Nursing students in Prince Albert participated in a meaningful cultural workshop hosted by Gabriel Dumont Institute's (GDI) Culture and Heritage Department. The workshop was led by GDI Culture and Heritage staff—Karon Shmon, Tracey Verishine, and Bonnie Hrycuik—who guided students through stories, teachings, and hands-on cultural activities.

The session began with Karon reading Métis *Christmas Mittens* by

Leah Dorion. Each student received their own copy of the book to take home, supporting their connection to Métis storytelling and seasonal traditions. Students then rolled up their sleeves for a hands-on crafting experience. Using scraps of Hudson's Bay blankets, real fur, and traditional techniques, they embroidered and stitched their own mitten. The unique embroidery choices made each mitten deeply personal and meaningful, and provided each student a one-of-a-kind keepsake.

**Story continues on the next page...**



## UPCOMING DUMONT TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROGRAM DEADLINES



Practical Nursing  
Saskatoon or P.A.

Feb 15



Heavy Equipment  
and Truck and  
Transport  
Technician Program  
Prince Albert

Feb 28



Adult Basic  
Education -  
Semester 2  
Various

Ongoing



Continuing Care  
Assistant  
P.A., Regina, or  
Saskatoon

Ongoing



Business Certificate  
Hybrid

Online

Ongoing



Office  
Administration

Regina

Ongoing



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

[WWW.GDINS.ORG/PROGRAMS](http://WWW.GDINS.ORG/PROGRAMS)

## P.A. PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM TAKE PART IN A CULTURAL WORKSHOP

Story Continued from Page 2

Many shared that they will always remember creating their mitten in nursing school whenever they look at it. PN Year 1 student Cheyanne shared, "I had a really fun time. It was great getting to come together with all our future nurses, relax, and take our minds off our workload. It was such a good learning experience for us all, and I'm very glad we got to experience it!"

After months of intense study in their nursing programs, students truly appreciated the chance to slow down and participate in an activity that was both creative and culturally connected. PN Year 1 student Molli shared, "This really was a great experience. As a person who uses art as stress management, I'm always looking for new mediums to

try. And the fact that I can put my cultural background into it with understanding now is actually really nice. I'm still learning about my heritage, and this was a huge step forward for me."

The workshop offered a welcome break, fostering reflection, community, and cultural appreciation. To add to the day, students and staff shared a warm, locally prepared meal. Dwight's Coffee House—an Indigenous-owned business—served a comforting lunch of soup and bannock, adding another layer of cultural connection to the experience. Thank you to our Culture and Heritage team, Dwight's Coffee House, and everyone who helped make this memorable day possible for our students. ☺



Photos submitted by Chantelle Jule



## CALL FOR BOARD MEMBER EASTERN REGION II

The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Board of Governors is seeking a representative from Eastern Region II (ER II). The Board oversees GDI and is responsible for its operations and governance in all matters. Each representative will serve for a three-year term with the possibility of renewal. Ideally the collective skills of the board will represent several different disciplines and perspectives.

Candidates can apply directly to ER II or GDI for consideration. All appointments to the board must be of Métis ancestry with knowledge of the social, cultural, and historical circumstances of the Saskatchewan Métis. Deadline for receipt of applications is **January 16, 2026**.

For more information and how to apply, please visit:  
<https://gdins.org/call-for-board-member-eastern-region-ii/>

## WINTER GDITE OFFICE HOURS IN LA RONGE

Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment (GDITE) is pleased to offer winter outreach hours in La Ronge. We will have Career Advisors available during these hours to help you with your job search, write a resume, apply for school.

**Jan 8 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Jan 22 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

Drop by during these special winter office hours at

**711 La Ronge Ave, La Ronge, SK.**

or give us a call at

**1-877-488-6888** or email

**careerservices@gdins.org**

to make an appointment.

## GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY: JORDAN SAMOILA

by **Bethani Groat, GDI Communications Coordinator**

When Métis pilot Jordan Samoila decided to take the next step in his aviation career, he wasn't just thinking about flight hours or new destinations—he was thinking about his family and the communities he could serve.

After more than 10 years in the cockpit, Jordan knew it was time for a new challenge. He wanted greater stability for his loved ones and the opportunity to use his skills to make a real difference. That goal led him to Chinook Helicopters Ltd., where he completed specialized training in August 2025 to upgrade his commercial pilot licence and become eligible for air medical flying.

"Loving what you do every day is the greatest feeling," Jordan says. For him, that means combining his passion for flying with his desire to help others as an air medical pilot. He now plays a vital role in transporting patients who need urgent care from remote northern communities to hospitals across the province.

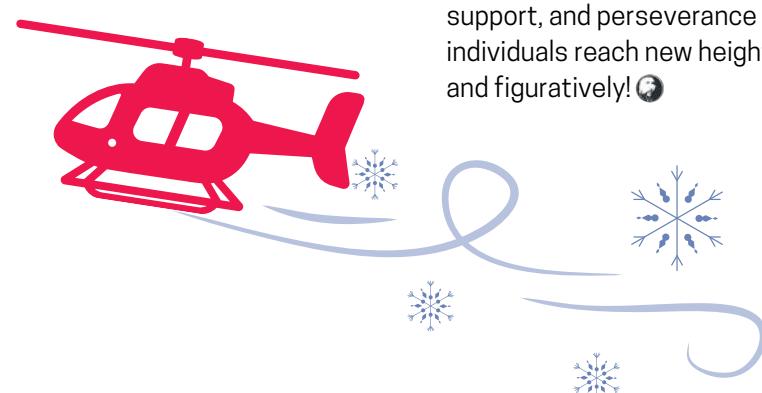
Air medical pilots are often the lifeline between isolated areas and emergency medical services. The job requires precision, calm under pressure, and a deep sense of responsibility. For Jordan, it's exactly where he wants to be. The work is meaningful, and he enjoys working closely with medical professionals to help people in their time of need.



Jordan's journey wasn't easy. The advanced training required time, focus, and financial resources—but he didn't have to do it alone. With support from Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment (GDITE), Jordan was able to pursue the upgrade that opened new career possibilities. "[GDITE's support] opened a door I had only dreamed of," he says.

Now, as a certified air medical pilot, Jordan is excited to work for STARS, one of the most recognizable medical flight companies in the industry. He's grateful to be able to continue doing what he loves while staying close to home and family. He hopes to provide this essential service for many years to come.

At GDITE, we're proud to support Métis clients like Jordan by investing in their skills and dreams. We help strengthen Métis communities across Saskatchewan. Jordan's success story is a powerful example of how training, support, and perseverance can help individuals reach new heights—literally and figuratively! 🌟





## SUNTEP PRINCE ALBERT'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS HAMPER PROGRAM

by Beige Unger, SUNTEP Prince Albert Faculty

SUNTEP Prince Albert's Christmas Hamper Program is once again spreading holiday cheer in Christmas 2025 with the generous support of the Wholesale Club Prince Albert. This annual initiative provides much-needed food and essential items to families in the community. Together, SUNTEP and Wholesale Club are making a meaningful difference, fostering unity, compassion, and hope across Prince Albert.

The Christmas Hamper Program also plays an important role in strengthening the SUNTEP community itself. Through their involvement, SUNTEP students gain firsthand insight into the power of collective action and community support. The program highlights the vital connection between schools and families, preparing students for their future roles as educators who value relationships, empathy, and service. Many of the participating schools host SUNTEP students during their Extended Practicum and Field Experiences, and this added collaboration deepens students'

sense of belonging. By taking part, students develop both professional and personal skills that will guide them in building meaningful, caring classrooms and communities in the future.



The generosity of the Wholesale Club Prince Albert has been pivotal to the success of the Christmas Hamper Program. Their donation enabled SUNTEP Prince Albert students and faculty to assemble hampers containing everything needed for a traditional Christmas dinner, along with groceries to support families throughout the holiday season. Each hamper included thoughtful touches such as gifts and treats for children, as well as family activities like board games to encourage connection and togetherness. This year the program partnered with local schools to support six families in need. This initiative continues to demonstrate the power of collaboration in creating a meaningful and memorable holiday season for Prince Albert families. ☺



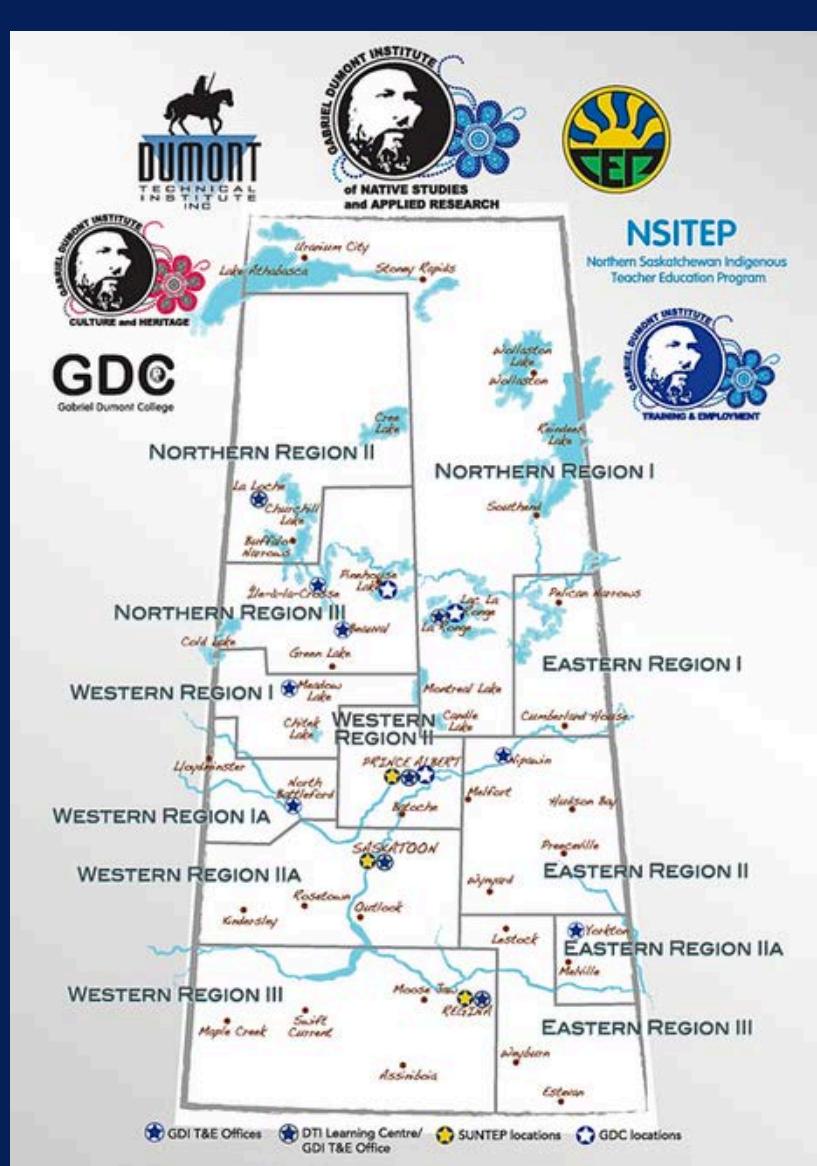
Photos submitted by Beige Unger

## JANUARY 2026 FINANCE & PAYROLL CUTOFF CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				New Year's Day Stat Holiday	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Jan 9 Accounts Payable	
4	5	6	7	8	ISETS Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Jan 16 Accounts Payable	9 10
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on ISETS Student Jan 9 Direct Deposits	Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Jan 15 Payday		
11	12	13	14	15	MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Jan 23 Accounts Payable	16 17
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on MNU Student Jan 16 Direct Deposits	Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts	Staff Payday		
18	19	20	21	22	Cutoff @ 4:30 for Jan 30 A/P - Timesheets & Payroll Revisions for Jan 30 Payday ISETS Student Payday	23 24
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on ISETS Student Jan 23 Direct Deposits	Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts			
25	26	27	28	29	MNU Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Feb 6 Accounts Payable Staff Payday	30 31
		Cutoff @ 3 pm for Stop Payments on MNU Student Jan 30 Direct Deposits	Accounts Payable Payment Run - Noon for Friday Pmts			

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

# CONTACT US



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**Previous issues of the *Communicator* can be found online at [www.metismuseum.ca](http://www.metismuseum.ca)**

If you would like to submit an article for the *Communicator* please contact Bethani Groat [communications@gdins.org](mailto:communications@gdins.org)

