



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 Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative Update

By James Oloo

It was on a warm summer day on June 29, 2011 when GDI and its strategic partners launched the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative under the federal Strategic Partnership Fund in Saskatoon. The initiative was aimed at empowering Aboriginal people to enter apprenticeship programs and gain employment in the growing trades sector in Saskatchewan. On March 31, 2014, the initiative officially came to an end. In the meantime, GDI Training and Employment has submitted a funding proposal to initiate a similar apprenticeship project. This article provides an overview of the journey to date.

Aboriginal Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) was a three year \$2.1 million demand-driven, partnership-based federal program aimed at skills training for Aboriginal workers. GDI Training and Employment administered the fund in the form of GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative. The goals of the Initiative included having 120 Aboriginal apprentices indentured with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Commission (SATCC), and partnerships with at least 60 individual companies in 17 different industries by January 31, 2014.

GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative met and or exceeded

all the targets as laid out in the agreement between Gabriel Dumont Institute and Employment and Social Development Canada. Partly because of this success, the SPF agreement was amended in October 2013. Under the new agreement, the targets were changed to 140 indentured apprentices and 60 individual companies in 17 different industries by March 31, 2014.

To date, the institute has met and or exceeded all the new its targets as follows. 271 partnerships have been signed with employers in 17 different industries; and 156 Aboriginal apprentices (114 Métis, 94 First Nations, and 16 who did not specify their identity) have been indentured with the SATCC.

In 2010, there were 8,924 apprentices in Saskatchewan who were registered with SATCC. Of these, 13% or 1,160 were Aboriginal. The 156 Aboriginal apprentices that have been indentured through the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative has resulted in over 13% increase in Aboriginal apprentices in the province; and about 2% increase in the total number of apprentices in Saskatchewan to date.

Further, a total of 223 Aboriginal clients have been

placed with employers to date. Note however, that more than just numbers; these are individuals such as Robert Parrell, a 45 year old Métis who lost his job in 2012 after more than 20 years as a production technician in the Saskatchewan film and television industry. Parrell is now Year II apprentice plumber with Reinhardt Plumbing and Heating in Regina and has plans of getting his journeyman certification. For more stories about how the GDI is changing lives of Métis people please visit <http://gdins.org/programs-and-courses/success-stories/>

Feedback from project partners Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways, SATCC, and Dumont Technical Institute; and employer partners have been very positive. GDI Training and Employment counselors and program coordinators also gave comments on their experience with the initiative and suggested ways for improvement.

Reporting on the Initiative is on course. We submitted two reports: Employer Partner Partnership Value Report and Project Partner Partnership Value Report to Service Canada last month. One final report is due on July 1, 2014.

For more information please contact Jason DeBack, Apprenticeship Coordinator, at jason.deback@gdite.gdins.org, Toll Free 1-877-488-6888, by Twitter at @gdins_org or at www.gdins.org



GDI Director Wins 'Woman of Distinction' Award

By James Oloo

The Director of Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment Lisa Wilson won the YMCA Women of Distinction Award in the Arts, Culture,

and Heritage category at the event held on May 29, 2014 in Saskatoon.

Lisa was one of the ten women who were honoured at the 33rd annual YMCA

event. Thirty seven women were nominated for the awards.

In April, Lisa's critically acclaimed book *Just Pretending* won four Sask Book Awards.

Congrats Lisa. 🌐

SUNTEP Regina Graduation 2014

By Janice R. Thompson

On Friday, May 9, 2014 approximately 200 guests gathered for the 31st annual Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) Regina graduation at the Delta Regina Hotel.

Emcee for the evening was chosen by the graduates; 2013 SUNTEP Regina graduate, Nicole Thomson join us for the event. A sense of pride filled the air as we celebrated the post secondary academic completion of five young professionals earning their Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Regina. During the evening there were many celebratory visits with Elders, dignitaries, special guests, families, friends, students, alumni, staff, and musicians who all celebrated the achievements

of the SUNTEP Regina Class of 2014.

Graduates, Melissa Bergbusch graduating with Great Distinction, Shyloa Jarrett graduating with Distinction, Leah Novak graduating with Distinction, Patrick Unrau graduating with Distinction, and Dallas Montpetit graduating with an 86.75% academic average were glowing as each one of them provided us with fond memories of their personal and professional growth and development over the past four years. Listening to their experiences, plans, goals, and aspirations for the future, made us proud.

The graduating students also received special awards that recognized their work during

the 2013-2014 academic year. The David Amyotte Scholarship is awarded annually to a senior SUNTEP student who promotes Aboriginal culture in the classroom, demonstrates teaching potential and leadership, and promotes the goals of cross-cultural education. This year's recipient, Shyloa Jarrett, worked consistently throughout her Internship to integrate Aboriginal content into her classroom routines, and fully understands that Aboriginal perspectives transform curriculum, making it the center of learning that takes place in the classroom. Shyloa also achieved a Perfect Internship final report. She was congratulated by Ray Amyotte who presented her with the award.

The Spirit of SUNTEP is an annual award that recognizes community leadership and involvement by a SUNTEP student. The award is presented to a student who consistently demonstrated the spirit of belonging, mastery, and generosity in applying the Circle of Courage practices. This year's recipient Melissa Bergbusch has also been recognized for her volunteer work. Melissa takes pride in sharing her Métis identity with all she works with.

Congratulations to the SUNTEP Regina Class of

2104. 🌐



Shyloa Jarrett, the 2014 David Amyotte Award recipient with Ray Amyotte



Melissa Bergbusch (r) receives the 2014 Spirit of SUNTEP Award from Janice R. Thompson



Graduates (L-R) Melissa Bergbusch, Shyloa Jarrett, Dallas Montpetit, Leah Novak, and Patrick Unrau
Photos by Brenna Pacholko



Employee Self-Care

By Darcie DeBruyne


We all know that trying to balance work, family, and personal life is a challenge. The question we need to ask ourselves is how well we are balancing it? Our work days are filled with multi-tasking and deadlines, all while trying to complete assigned tasks that seem to keep piling up. As workplace pressures increase so do our stress levels.

Prolonged high levels of stress in the workplace may compromise employee

productivity, relationships with coworkers; as well as emotional and physical wellbeing. As a result, the effects may spill over into our family and personal lives. Research shows that stress is associated with a wide variety of health problems.

There are steps that we can take to lessen our stress and improve how we cope and respond to the demands on our everyday lives. There is no better time to begin taking care of our health and well-being, and to make self-care a priority.

Considering the amount of time we spend at work every week, it is important to practice self-care at work. This is likely to help improve employee well-being, productivity and performance.

Small healthy changes such as including wellness related goals and making better health care decisions add up to big healthy changes which lead to life balance. As Shakespeare once said, "Our bodies are our gardens to which our wills are gardeners." 

SUNTEP Prince Albert Graduation Ceremony

By James Oloo

May 16 2014 was a great day in Prince Albert as 23 SUNTEP students graduated with Bachelor of Education degrees. The grads are Keegan Brodacki, Leslie Choumont, Brittney Dearing, Justin Dinney, Logan Fines, Jillian Fremont-Ross, Chelise Gamble, Santana Johnson, Karen Horne, Gerald Lisoway, Clarissa McDonald, Kayli McKay, Jennifer McLeod, Melissa Melnyk, Tanya Morin, Charmaine Natomagan, Susie Nontell, Nicole Parenteau, Chris Phalen, Jennifer Sanderson, Kristina Slater, Randeon Tomiak, and Alicia Vandale.

Under the able leadership of the Program Coordinator Liza Brown, SUNTEP PA (including Cory Teeter, Sandra Sherwin-Shields, Linda Lysyk, Leah Dorion, Donna Biggins, and Leslie Morin) organized an unforgettable event that was attended by hundreds of families, distinguished guests, and friends.

Linda Lysyk introduced the SUNTEP partners and thanked Métis Nation-Saskatchewan for making

SUNTEP a reality. She also expressed her gratitude to schools for providing space for SUNTEP student teachers to do their internship and to cooperating teachers for sharing their classrooms.

Michael Relland congratulated the grads and thanked GDI Executive Director Geordy McCaffrey and the GDI Board (represented at the event by Vice Chair Glenn Lafleur) for their leadership and support. Michael reminded the grads that somewhere in their being they knew that they had the ability to succeed and that they should be able to mentor others and help ignite hope and confidence in their students that they too can be successful.

Dr. Dianne Miller who brought greetings from the University of Saskatchewan told the grads that teachers are like stems that connect the roots and the leaves and allow nourishment to pass through them.

A representative of the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division recognized the partnership with SUNTEP Prince Albert and stated that the Division is the largest employer of SUNTEP grads.

In his speech, Geordy noted that with this year's 51 grads, almost one out of every 10 (9.2%) teachers in Saskatchewan is a graduate of SUNTEP. Geordy, who is SUNTEP graduate, told the grads that parents entrust their "precious hearts" in the form of their children to schools and reminded the grads of the responsibilities that come with being a teacher.

From its humble beginnings in 1980 when there were only eight Aboriginal teachers in Saskatchewan, SUNTEP is today a success story. It is a mega-narrative made up of many personal narratives of relationships and changed lives.

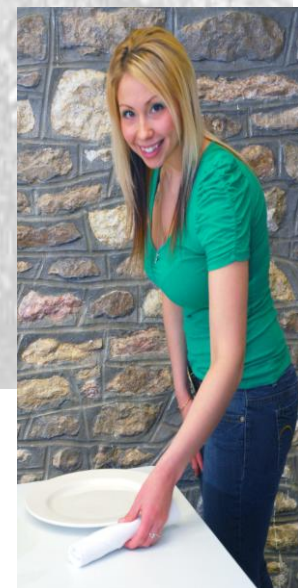
Jillian Fremont-Ross left school before finishing Grade 12. She came to Dumont Technical Institute for her Adult Basic Education then joined the SUNTEP program. She is now graduated as a teacher thanks to her hard work and GDI support.

Tanya Morin said that SUNTEP gave her an opportunity to become the woman she was meant to be. *Continued on page 4*



Susie Nontell
SUNTEP Prince Alberta graduate
Was the Recipient of the
2014 SaskEnergy
Sharing the Warmth Award

"SUNTEP has become a 'third space' where Métis people can come together, be together and teach each other what it means to be Métis"
- Cathy Littlejohn



Joselyn Cosh
Photos by James Oloo



War Memorials: Métis Veterans' Monument

By James Oloo

A brief look at the history of war reveals that 'war memorials' were often erected to commemorate victories. Remembering fallen soldiers was rarely the main concern. For example, in Napoleon's France (1769-1821), dead soldiers were buried in unmarked mass graves. Even England's Nelson's Column does not have names of fallen soldiers.

It was not until late 19th Century that the British Royal Army started to erect monuments to commemorate their comrades who had died overseas in the British Imperial Wars. The monuments listed the names of the fallen soldiers. This became a common practice in Britain in early 20th century as communities built memorials to commemorate soldiers from local communities who had died at war.

As Europe experienced big losses during World War I, memorials that listed the names

of soldiers who had gone to war but never returned home became more common.

But war memorials have sometimes been polemical. A memorial at Gentioux-Pigerolles France depicts an orphan and the words 'Maudite soit la guerre' (Cursed be war). In Australia, a memorial was erected in 1984 to commemorate Aboriginal people who resisted European settlers. The memorial was "frequently shot at" and "eventually blown up" (see Reynolds, H., 1999, *Why Weren't We Told?*). At Hartlepool War Memorial in the UK is the inscription 'Thine O Lord is the Victory.'

Today, the main goal of war memorials such as the Métis Veteran Memorial currently under construction at Batoche is to acknowledge and honour those who have died – it is not to glorify war. Some memorials have space left for names of soldiers who have not died yet. Such is the case of Northwood

Gratitude and Honour Memorial in California that has space for additional 8,000 names. In the UK, the National Memorial Arboretum displays over 16,000 names of fallen soldiers with more space available for future fatalities. (For more discussion please see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_memorial).

It is thus important to Métis people across the homeland to build Métis Veterans' Monument at Batoche Grounds to remember and celebrate the contribution and sacrifice of Métis men and women who proudly and fearless fought for our freedoms and gave their lives so that we can be free. To date, GDI has raised over \$235,000 towards the monument. The Métis Veterans' Monument will be unveiled and presented to the public in July. Long live Métis Veterans' as you rest in peace. 🌐



Work on the Métis Veterans' Memorial is on-going at the Batoche Grounds
Photo by Greg MacLeod



SUNTEP Prince Albert Graduation ... *Continued from page 3*

Similarly, Jennifer McLeod stated that SUNTEP changed her life and introduced her to a new world that is full of possibilities she never would have imagined.

Alicia Vandale thanked SUNTEP for teaching her about her Métis heritage. Gerald Lisoway said he was able to learn a lot about himself and what he is capable of doing. As he put it, "you cannot be a teacher if you do not know yourself. SUNTEP made me know myself."

Nicole Parenteau asserted that SUNTEP's uniqueness is interest in the development of the whole person not just academics. Nicole is happy

that SUNTEP provided her a "support system like no other."

Clarissa McDonald dedicated her degree to her recently departed mother who she said was a rock in her life. Clarissa recognized the power of prayer and belief in oneself in achieving a goal in life.

Leslie Choumont was cheered by the audience when she said that at almost age 40, she decided to go to SUNTEP to work towards a teaching degree. The married mother and grandmother told the audience to never give up.

All the grads expressed their gratitude to SUNTEP faculty and staff, their cooperating teachers, families and friends,

and the Gabriel Dumont Institute. Some of the grads have received job offers. Chris Phalen declared that he will be a good ambassador of SUNTEP.

The 2014 SaskEnergy Sharing the Warmth Award was presented to Susie Nontell. Susie was selected by her peers for the award. She had excellent attendance and volunteered in the community. Susie demonstrated empathy and kindness both in and outside the classroom.

Riverside Dance Troupe gave fantastic entertainment. Congratulations SUNTEP PA Class of 2014. 🌐



SUNTEP Prince Albert Celebrated graduation of its 23 Students on May 16, 2014.
Photos by James Oloo



Under My Skin!

By Jim Edmondson

Ever had a boss or co-worker who for some reason gets under your skin - something they do or have you do just rubs you the wrong way? I once had a boss who would fly into a rage if we used smooth plastic coated paperclips instead of the silver ridged ones, he would go on and on exposing the inherent flaw in plastic coated paperclips. I never quite understood the problem or why it caused such emotion from him, but after a couple of chew outs we all stuck with the silver ridged ones.

We all have them, those annoyances that gnaw at us and we feel passionately about, they are affectionately known as pet peeves. Most are petty and are not worth much of our time. There are exceptions

however; when a pet peeve becomes distracting to co-workers ability to perform their jobs or make the work environment unhealthy.

As professionals, we are all expected to play a bit of a leadership role when it comes to a harmonious workplace. The manager or supervisor in an office must be at the forefront of maintaining the work environment. This can be achieved through the establishment of equitable processes, the adherence to established policies, compassion and flexibility where appropriate and intolerance of "jerks".

You know them. The individuals with the attitude; they disrupt, they snicker, they smirk at others, they throw cold water on everyone's ideas but their own and participate in office gossip which are all disruptive to the work environment. These individuals may very well be

smart and have viable ideas based on their experience, but their constant negativity infests a room just by them entering it. Negativity sabotages office or individual progress and becomes a real threat to our effectiveness when serving client needs.

We all need to recognize these tendencies, and avoid them as much as possible. As professionals, we know how to behave and what idiosyncrasies of others that just needs to be ignored. If you are having difficulty avoiding the affects of a co-worker's pet peeves and it has gotten under your skin, bring it up in a professional manner to that individual. If that approach is not garnering results then bring your concerns to your immediate supervisor.

By working together as a team, we can build the capacity of GDI continue to do great work for the Métis community. 🌐



Leslie Choumont of SUNTEP Prince Alberta
 Congratulated by Geordy McCaffrey
 On her graduation. Leslie is a Married mother and grandmother
 Photo by James Oloo

June 2014 Payroll Cutoff Calendar

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for June 13 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for June 13 Payday	Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student June 13 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices Staff Payday	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for June 27 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop PMTS on Student June 27 <u>Direct Deposits</u> Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for June 30 Payday		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
29	30					
	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for July 11 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	

Employee contracts due prior to payroll cutoff date.



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index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/browse/index.php/833)

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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