

**Gabriel Dumont Institute  
Operational Highlights  
Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education (SUNTEP) Programs  
2009-2010**

**SUNTEP Prince Albert**

**Location:** GDI Centre, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

**Staff Complement:**

Michael Relland	Coordinator
Donna Biggins	Admin Support
Leah Dorion	Faculty
Bente Huntley	Faculty
Sandy Sherwin-Shields	Faculty
Corey Teeter	Faculty
Liza Brown	Faculty

**Student Update:**

As of September 1, 2009 we have a total enrolment of 86 students, enrolled as follows:

Year One	22
Year Two	17
Year Three	24
Year Four	23

We currently have 23 fourth-year students interning this fall.

**Centre Activities:**

From November 2 to 6, 2009, third-year students were out on field placements. These placements occurred mainly at schools within the city.

This year Survivors' Banquet (a celebration honouring SUNTEP students who have successfully completed their first year) was held November 13 at Parkland Hall. In total, we honoured 18 students at this year's celebration.

Late November and early December are currently the busiest time of the semester for students with most major assignments now due. To date, the vast majority of students coped quite well with the pressures of essays and

assignments. This semester, the last day of classes was December 4 and final and mid-term exams took place from December 7 to 18.

SUNTEP reopened after Christmas holidays on January 4, 2010. Full-term courses resumed while 3 credit unit courses began.

At January 14, 2010, SUNTEP faculty met with the University of Saskatchewan's College of Education. The university approved SUNTEP's new undergraduate program, which will be developed and implemented by the fall of 2011.

All SUNTEP students were out on field placements the week of February 1-5, 2010. For first- and third-year students, these placements occurred mainly at schools in or around the city. However, second-year students completed their practicum placements at First Nations' schools or in the north.

The students were out of class for study week from February 15 to 19, 2010. Classes resumed on February 22. The last day of term two classes was Friday, April 3, 2010. After completing their final exams, students completed a practicum placement in the schools before returning to class for Spring session classes which ran from May 11 to June 26, 2010.

### **SUNTEP Prince Albert 2010 Graduation**

On May 21, 2010, fourteen excited graduates entered the E. A. Rawlinson Centre to the sound of drummers Jamie Chekosis and Trevor Amyiotte, and received a single red rose from the SUNTEP third- year students. Over 300 guests helped to kick start an exciting afternoon for the 25 members of the SUNTEP Prince Albert graduating class. SUNTEP staff hosted the event and the keynote address was given by Rene Baxter. Rene, their math instructor, was chosen by the graduating class because of her compassion, dedication, passion, and humour. Métis Elder, Vivian Meabry, gave the Blessing and Coordinator Michael Relland welcomed family, friends, and special guests. Métis Nation—Saskatchewan President Robert Doucette (Gabriel Dumont Institute), Rosalie Tsanni (Prince Albert Grand Council), Lynn Lemisko (University of Saskatchewan), Allan Nunn (Saskatchewan Rivers School Division), and Gordon Burns (Student Representative Council) all brought greetings to the graduates.

A number of special scholarships were also presented. We are very proud of our students, as they excel in so many ways. The quality of our students is such that two students, Allison Tait and Holly Wiberg, were asked by the College of Education to present a workshop on how to incorporate Aboriginal content into the curriculum. Many of our graduates received numerous

other scholarships throughout the year as well. However on Friday, Mona Berg presented Ashley Bruneau with the *Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan Award*, which is given to a student who has shown growth academically, personally, and professionally. The *Sharing the Warmth Award* (a star blanket made by the SUNTEP Cultural Committee) was given to Trisha Gowan and was presented by Trish Watier from SaskEnergy. This award winner is chosen by the graduating class and honours a student who displays commitment to volunteering within SUNTEP and the community.

The final award of the evening, *the Jocelynn Lavoie Memorial Scholarship*, was presented to second-year student Jennifer Brown by Michael Relland, on behalf of the Lavoie family. This award is presented in honour of Jocelynn Lavoie, a first-year student who was tragically killed, and it is awarded to the student who volunteers the most community service hours.

In between speeches and awards, guests were entertained by two energetic groups of dancers: Robin Cameron Memorial School Hoop Dancers under the guidance of former graduate Andy Debray and Riverside School Hip Hop Dance group under the guidance of graduate Edward Benonie, who also danced for the occasion. The evening ended with a slide presentation of the graduates during their internship followed by the graduates' speeches. After this, the third-year students presented the graduates with their plaques and sashes. Elder Vivian Meabry and Coordinator Michael Relland tied the sashes to end the formal ceremonies. A wine and cheese reception followed, and this gave the graduates a chance to get photographs taken with their families. Congratulations and good luck to the graduating class of 2010.

Edward Benoanie	Leanne Gunderson
Ashley Bruneau	Heather McAuley
Suzanne DePeel	Maureen McKenzie
Carleen Fosseneuve	Rose Morin
Kerri-Lynn Gareau	Crystal Ross
Trisha Gowen	Allison Tait
Cindy Grambo	Kristen Workman

Overall, although the 2009 Academic year presented a number of challenges, it was a rewarding year for SUNTEP Prince Albert.

## **SUNTEP/Gabriel Dumont College Saskatoon**

**Location:** University of Saskatchewan

### **Staff Complement:**

Murray Hamilton	Coordinator
Nicole Amiotte	Faculty
Linda Lysyck	Faculty
Kenneth Kutz	Faculty
Ruth Daniels	Clerk Steno

### **Centre Activities:**

The summer months were spent planning and implementing the SUNTEP and Gabriel Dumont College (GDC) programming for the 2009-10 academic year. It is a SUNTEP/GDC Saskatoon tradition that all first-year students, accompanied by faculty and upper-year students, enjoy an inspirational and educational visit to the Batoche National Historic Site.

The SUNTEP/GDC Saskatoon Student Council once again demonstrated a strong commitment to community endeavours. In November 2009, the SRC organized an excellent Louis Riel Day commemoration event. They also held a successful Scholastic Book Fair with the proceeds donated to Sutherland School in Saskatoon.

We are all extremely proud of Jennifer Altenberg who organized a "Year of the Métis" celebration in February 2010 at Bishop Roborecki School. The sense of pride and cultural validation created was immeasurable.

SUNTEP Saskatoon students continue to be a source of pride and inspiration for all. Tara Desroches, winner of the 2009 *SaskTel Aboriginal Youth Leadership Award* and a \$20,000 *Millennium Scholarship Award*, had four years of perfect attendance in high school: "I just set it as a goal to never miss a day of school, and only to be sick on holidays. Even in times of loss, attendance was a priority. I took one day off for my grandfather's funeral and school – he really supported me in my goal so I thought I have to go I can't let this stop me." Currently a first-year student in SUNTEP, on the road to being a teacher, Tara says her whole family is a huge support system.

This year's students excelled not only academically but also made their mark in other areas as well.

In November, 2009 SUNTEP Saskatoon alumnus, Jacqueline Lavallee, was named as Saskatoon's official Olympic torchbearer. For the past five years, Jackie has taught grades 9 to 12 full time at Oskayak High School in



Saskatoon. In those same years she began a basketball program for Aboriginal women called Team Spirit. It helps women who range from ninth-grade students to 29-year-old mothers. She won a national Aboriginal Coaching Award in 2008, and while competing for the University of Saskatchewan Huskies, was an All-Canadian in 1999 in soccer and in 2001-02 in basketball. Jackie also competed internationally in basketball and played in a German professional league.

Third-year SUNTEP Saskatoon student, Brad Brown, and GDC student, Daniel Olver, also figured prominently in the recent Olympic Games. Both were Métis youth representatives in the opening ceremonies for the Winter Olympics held in Vancouver in February, 2010. Daniel, a championship calibre wrestler, may one day be back at the Olympics. He is ranked first in Canadian Inter-University Sport in the 76-kg weight class and fifth among senior wrestlers in Canada. Daniel was also a three-time national junior champion.

Jordie Gagnon, a fourth-year SUNTEP Saskatoon student originally from Duck Lake, is a softball dynamo who had a banner year in 2009-10. He played the majority of his softball with his club team, the Bruno Merchants, who won their third consecutive Western Canadian Men's Fastball Championship in three years. Jordie also played with the West Bank Cardinals from West Bank, British Columbia in the 2009 Native Canadian Fastpitch Championships. His season also included a trip to Quad Cities IA for the ISC II Fastball Championships playing as a pickup for the Bulyea Rustlers. During the tournament, his excellent performance led to him being selected as an All World All Star Outfielder, and he won the top hitter award with a .615 batting average in the 40-team tournament.

The SUNTEP Saskatoon alumni circle of influence and achievement continues to expand. Angie Caron and Jennifer Hingley have assumed new roles with the Saskatoon Public School System. We are also pleased to report that increasing numbers of SUNTEP Saskatoon graduates are completing graduate studies in a variety of disciplines.

In addition to their academic studies SUNTEP Saskatoon students also participated in a number of culturally-relevant field and research trips. Most importantly, they had the opportunity to undertake student teaching practicums in a number of diverse education settings.

SUNTEP Saskatoon staff and faculty continue to implement a comprehensive, university-level range of courses that emphasize Métis-specific content, cross-cultural education, and critical analysis of current educational pedagogical processes and curricula.

Once again we are indebted and grateful for the efforts of those who made GDI a reality.

### **SUNTEP Saskatoon Graduates:**

The success, hard work, and perseverance of the students and staff were celebrated on May 15, 2010 at SUNTEP Saskatoon's annual graduation ceremonies. The SUNTEP Saskatoon 2009-10 graduates were: Jennifer Altenberg, Kellie Bouvier, Janaia Cote, Amber Cumberland, Alexis Fitch, Corey Frantz, Jordie Gagnon, Helen Germann, Christine Ginter, Elise Hoey, Jannell Loranger, Karen Lavallee, Cindy MacKenzie, Charnalle Skjeie, and Kent Waker.

### **Gabriel Dumont College (GDC):**

The 2009-2010 academic year saw 289 students enrolled in GDC courses. These courses not only benefit our students, but also serve to educate other students about Métis and First Nation issues. Tuition from GDC sections generates significant income for the Institute.

## **SUNTEP Regina**

**Location:** University of Regina

### **Staff Complement:**

Joanne Pelletier	Coordinator
Lorri Melnechenko	Faculty
Christina Johns	Faculty
Russell Fayant	Faculty
Erma Taylor	Clerk Steno

SUNTEP Regina has enjoyed and benefited from staff stability over the course of the last year. All staff members are from the Métis community and four are graduates of SUNTEP Regina, a testimony to the continuing necessity and long-term benefits of a culturally-relevant education program, such as SUNTEP. SUNTEP Staff bring a wealth of professional and cultural experience. All have school-based classroom/administrative experience, and are proficient at incorporating Métis content into their respective subject areas. In addition to the full-time staff, the program also employed approximately 30 sessional instructors, faculty advisors, lab coaches, and tutors over the course of the academic year.

### **Student Update:**

Year 1	12
Year 2	8
Year 3	10
Year 4	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

### **2010 Graduates:**

The 27th annual SUNTEP Regina Graduation ceremony was held at the Delta Regina on Friday, May 6, 2010 for 13 SUNTEP students. The gathering included approximately 280 family, friends, students, and invited guests. The theme for the graduation was "... education is our new buffalo." This year's graduates were:

Lucas Blondeau \*\*  
Leah Corbett  
Jed Huntley \*  
Brittney Johns \*\*  
Erin Kramer\*\*  
Jon Lafontaine  
Holly Minovitch,

Nicole Morrow \*  
Kelly Parisien  
Dana Sinoski  
Coralee Starlight  
Jessica Wesaquate\*\*  
Jade Yee\*

\*Graduated with Great Distinction (average 85% or better)

\*\*Graduated with Distinction (average 80% or better)

Awards and Scholarships presented at the graduation included:

- The *David Amyotte Scholarship* was presented to Nicole Anne Morrow.
- The first annual *Spirit of SUNTEP Award* went to Jessica Wesaquate.
- The first annual *Lebret Métis Cultural Days Award* went to Joni Racette
- Métis sashes in SUNTEP and University of Regina colours were presented to the students.
- Leather briefcases handmade by SUNTEP staff were also presented to the graduates.

### **Student Employment:**

Of the thirteen graduates, nine are working as classroom teachers, one is self-employed, two are unemployed (on maternity leave), and one's status is unknown. Of the nine students working as classroom teachers, eight are working in provincial schools and one is working in a Band school.

### **Program Highlights:**

#### **Student Achievement/Awards/Scholarships**

Over the course of the 2009-2010 academic year, SUNTEP Regina students have excelled and won a disproportionate amount of scholarships and awards in relation to the larger education student body. Of the 13 graduates, seven graduated with either Distinction or Great Distinction.

The centre had 11 students on the *Dean's Honour List Education* for the 2009-2010 academic year. To be included on the *Dean's Honours List* for a given semester, students must take a full course load (15 credit hours) and achieve a term grade point average of at least 85% on a minimum of 12 gradable credit hours.

In addition to the Dean's List, the students also qualified for *Academic Gold Scholarships* (6) and *Academic Silver Scholarships* (5). Students who qualify for *Academic Gold Scholarships* must have a minimum of an 85% term

grade point average and be in the top 1% of their faculty. Students who qualify for *Academic Silver Scholarships* must have a minimum of 85% term grade point average and be below the top 1% of their faculty.

SUNTEP students and faculty attended the annual *Celebrating Outstanding Academic Achievement* reception hosted by the Faculty of Education. Of the 213 students receiving awards, 15 were SUNTEP students.

<b>Fall 2009</b>		
Year 1	Wynter Ducharme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• Academic Gold Scholar</li> </ul>
	Jenel Markwart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• Academic Gold Scholar</li> </ul>
	Michael Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>University of Regina Out of Province Entrance Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
Year 2	Jolie Brewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Silver Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
	Joni Racette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elizabeth and Grant Holden Bursary</li> </ul>
Year 3	Alison Kimbley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Gold Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
	Kaitlen Yee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Silver Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
Year 4	Lucas Blondeau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Silver Scholarship</i></li> <li>• <i>Saskatchewan Teachers' College Reunion Book Prize</i></li> </ul>
	Jed Huntley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Gold Scholarship</i></li> <li>• <i>Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan Scholarship</i></li> <li>• <i>CIC Aboriginal Bursary</i></li> </ul>
	Brittany Johns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Silver Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
	Erin Kramer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Gold Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
	Nicole-Anne Morrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Silver Scholarship</i></li> <li>• <i>C.D. Howe Mature Student Achievement Award</i></li> <li>• <i>University of Regina Undergraduate Single Parent Bursary</i></li> </ul>
	Jessica Wesaquate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Gold Scholarship</i></li> <li>• <i>CIC Aboriginal Bursary</i></li> </ul>
	Jade Yee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Gold Scholarship</i></li> </ul>

Winter 2010		
Year 1	Jenel Markwart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Gold Scholarship</i></li> <li>• <i>CIC Aboriginal bursary</i></li> </ul>
Year 2	Joni Racette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's List Education</li> <li>• <i>Academic Silver Scholarship</i></li> </ul>
Year 4	Lucas Blondeau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Distinction</li> </ul>
	Leah Corbett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Distinction</li> </ul>
	Jed Huntley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Great Distinction</li> <li>• <i>CIC Aboriginal Bursary</i></li> <li>• <i>Myrtle A. McGee Prize</i></li> </ul>
	Erin Kramer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Distinction</li> <li>• <i>CIC Aboriginal Bursary</i></li> </ul>
	Brittany Johns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Distinction</li> </ul>
	Nicole-Anne Morrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Great Distinction</li> <li>• <i>C.D. Howe Mature Student Achievement Award</i></li> </ul>
	Jessica Wesaquate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Distinction</li> <li>• <i>CIC Aboriginal Bursary</i></li> </ul>
	Jade Yee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduated with Great Distinction</li> </ul>

Orientation for 16 new students was held on August 31, 2009. The students were given an opportunity to meet and interact with fellow students and faculty, were introduced to the university environment, and were given an overview of the program as well as what expectations are placed on SUNTEP students.

Russell Fayant, Christina Johns, Lorri Melnechenko, and third-year students joined SUNTEP Prince Albert for the Off-Campus Residential Experience at Christopher Lake. This was the second year that SUNTEP Regina has joined SUNTEP Prince Albert for the OCRE/Culture Camp, and by all reports it was a great success. Students thoroughly enjoyed and eagerly participated in the sessions organized by SUNTEP Prince Albert. It was also a great way to get to meet students and staff from another centre and participate in joint activities. Students were also able to visit the Batoche Historical site, the Duck Lake Regional Interpretative Centre, and Fish Creek.

Second-year students participated in a research trip to Winnipeg as part of the Métis history (INDG221) class. While in Winnipeg, students conduct research on their genealogies at the Hudson Bay Company Archives and at the St. Boniface Historical Society. Students also visited many local historical sites, such as Riel House and Louis Riel gravesite, Lower Fort

Garry, St. Boniface Museum, and stopped at Connie's Corner Café for the famed BBLT (Bannock, baloney, lettuce and tomato) sandwich.

The centre was unable to host its annual SUNTEP Regina Christmas Party. Less than a week before the event we were advised by the Manager responsible for booking the multipurpose centre that we could not hold a potluck meal on the University of Regina Campus because of possible health risks. In subsequent conversations and in a meeting with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, we were unable to convince the university of the importance of community gatherings to our program.

Third-year SUNTEP students participated in a tipi raising workshop, conducted by Elder Glen Anaquod. This, and other modules, prepares students to confidently work with Elders in future teaching placements.

## **Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP)**

### **Student Testimonials**



#### **Jessica Basaraba**

My name is Jessica Basaraba, and I am currently enrolled in my first year of studies at SUNTEP in Prince Albert. SUNTEP is offered through the Gabriel Dumont Institute and the University of Saskatchewan. The teacher preparation program takes four years to complete, and when I am finished, I will be proud to have my Bachelor of Education Degree. I was born in Prince Albert and have lived here for my whole life.

I have known that I wanted to be a teacher for quite some time, but I always seemed to find an excuse to not go through with it. My main reason for not going forward was my responsibilities that I had in raising my three children. But, the more I thought about it, I realized that they are the reason why I should follow my dreams and apply to become a teacher. My main goal is to successfully complete the next four years, and take in the whole SUNTEP experience along the way. As we have been told by others who are now our instructors, one of the most rewarding discoveries in SUNTEP is finding oneself and truly being the person you are as you prepare to be a teacher.

In the future, I would like to teach youth at risk. I want to teach in this area because I want to show these students that no matter where you come from, you can succeed with hard work and determination. I prepared myself for being a student by pushing myself to bring in my application, and I kept reminding myself



that hard work and determination will result in me being a teacher. The toughest part so far has been putting my two youngest sons in daycare, but I know that if I want to be a full-time student, it had to be done. It seems that this was a lot harder on me than it has been on them.

Honestly, I was very scared when I first came into the SUNTEP program. At the same time, I was also very excited. Now that the scary feeling has passed, I am still very excited, and I am very committed to finishing the program. I want to be able to give back to the community, and show the gratitude that I have for my family, especially my mom because she encourages me every day. Without the support of my family, it would be very tough to follow through with my commitment.



### **Jennifer Brown**

In 2008, Jennifer Brown was enrolled in the SUNTEP Prince Albert program. After having spent ten years volunteering and working for the Métis Nation at various levels, Jennifer decided that the right career path for her lay in the field of education, specifically teaching. Having been out of school for such a long time, there was some hesitation as to what success could be achieved. Through hard work and dedication to her studies Jennifer managed to thrive. In the 2009-2010 school year, Jennifer's academic achievement was recognized by the University of Saskatchewan when she was the recipient of the *Undergraduate Scholarship* for students entering the College of Education.

SUNTEP Prince Albert has provided Jennifer with numerous opportunities for growth as well the challenging task to represent the face of Métis teachers with pride and integrity. In her first year she taught both Native Studies 20 and Christian Ethics 30 at St. Mary's High School in her home town. The following year Jennifer found herself in the Northern Métis community of Ile-à-la Crosse teaching English 10, 20 and 30 at Rossignol High School. These two experiences have allowed Jennifer to grow into her own teaching style, and they have shown her that her passion for education is field specific to Native Studies and History.

Jennifer will graduate in 2012 from the SUNTEP Prince Albert program, and when she does so, her gratefulness to GDI, DTI, SUNTEP and the Métis Nation will not be forgotten. Jennifer believes that is an extraordinary opportunity to have been chosen by the selection committee, and she is committed to repay their show of faith through her work in the classroom, and in her pursuit to further education and the Métis cause.



### **Leslie Choumont**

For many years, I dreamed of becoming a teacher. In reality, I was working to support my family and so I pushed the thought of schooling into the background of my life. After an unexpected surgery, I needed six weeks of bed rest and during that time I realized that life is too short to not follow my dreams. Somehow, somehow, I knew that I would be going to SUNTEP in the fall.

My name is Leslie Choumont and I am from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I am currently enrolled in my first year of studies at SUNTEP in Prince Albert. SUNTEP is a teacher preparation program offered through Gabriel Dumont Institute and the University of Saskatchewan. In four years, I plan to finish my Bachelor of Education Degree and fulfill my dream of being a teacher.

The decision to follow my dreams and further my education has led to changes in my life. I needed to quit my job, find a part-time job, be available for full time studies, raise my two sons, participate in extra-curricular activities, and continue to volunteer in the community. My heart knows that I can be successful because I have watched how other Aboriginal women work hard to accomplish their dreams. By example, they have paved my path to success.

My friends and family have been my greatest support system. I am very grateful for their help because they make my path to becoming a teacher smoother. Even though I feel overwhelmed at times, I also know that I will be successful because of the support given from the close knit SUNTEP family and community.