



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE TO INVEST SEVEN INTO *THE ORDER OF GABRIEL DUMONT*

(SASKATOON, SK)— The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI), a Métis-owned post-secondary and cultural institution based in Saskatoon with campuses across Saskatchewan, is proud to announce it will invest seven individuals into the Order of Gabriel Dumont at a special awards event on March 22, 2023 in Saskatoon.

The Order of Gabriel Dumont is one of the Métis Nation's highest civilian honours. It is awarded by GDI to Métis and non-Métis individuals who have served or continue to serve the Métis of Canada with distinction. "This year, we are pleased to honour five recipients with an Order of Gabriel Dumont Gold Medal and two recipients with a Silver medal. The accomplishments of these individuals are remarkable and we are proud of their dedication to the Métis community," said Tim Roussin, Chair, GDI Board of Governors.

The Order of Gabriel Dumont Gold Medal recognizes a lifetime of outstanding service to the Métis of Canada and the Order of Gabriel Dumont Silver Medal honours those who have made significant contributions to the Métis. "Each of this year's recipients are pillars in their community with a special focus on preserving, promoting, and revitalizing Métis culture in their own way," said Lisa Bird-Wilson, Executive Director, GDI.

Since its inception in the 1980s, 98 individuals have been invested into the Order. Appointments are adjudicated by a selection committee, based on nominations from the public. The last investiture was held in March 2022, where two gold medals and one silver medal was awarded. For a list of past recipients and other information about the Order of Gabriel Dumont, [please visit our website.](#)

The investiture ceremony will be held in conjunction with GDI's National Michif Speakers Gathering on March 22. The Michif gathering is by invitation only. The list of recipients with citations are presented below.

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RECIPIENTS' CITATIONS

THE ORDER OF GABRIEL DUMONT—GOLD

Margaret (Sophie) McDougall

St. Louis, Saskatchewan

Margaret (Sophie) McDougall was born on December 22, 1928, in St. Louis, Saskatchewan, a small Métis community. As a mother of 13 children, Sophie finds joy in watching her 36 grandchildren, 46 great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren grow up. Sophie's family tree consists of deeply rooted Michif ways, and her Michif pride has carried forward to her entire family. Sophie is an educator and began her teaching career in 1945. She is an active Elder and Language Keeper for the school in St. Louis, and it is through her guidance and support that the students are learning their traditional language, traditions, values, and ways of life. Sophie remains passionate and committed to guiding and supporting the continuity of the Michif language and traditions for the many generations of today and tomorrow. She is still actively involved with the Head Start Program, the Prince Albert Métis Women's Association, and supporting various language, harvesting, and preservation efforts within our Métis Nation. Sophie is also now a Youtube star, having shared some of her stories as a Métis woman with the world. She has also been the guiding force in the creation of a Michif French mobile app that will capture the language and voices of our Language Keepers and provide the ability to be shared for years to come.

Harriet and Edwin (Ed) St. Pierre

Yorkton, Saskatchewan

Harriet and Edwin St. Pierre have spent their lifetimes working to preserve, promote, and revitalize the Métis culture and Michif language. Michif was the first language for both of them growing up on road allowances near Yorkton (Crooked Lake and Crescent Lake). Edwin has been active in Michif cultural gatherings for several decades. His memories of growing up on the Crescent Lake Road Allowance, *Remembering My Métis Past: Reminiscences of Edwin St. Pierre*, were published by the Gabriel Dumont Institute in 2012. The book—the first published account of the Crescent Lake Road Allowance community—reveals Edwin's pride in his culture and his family, and amply demonstrates the strength of his character. He is both a veteran and a community-minded Elder who tirelessly serves at various Métis cultural events across the province. Harriet has always been passionately involved in sharing her wisdom and Michif language. She translated most of Edwin's book into Michif herself and dedicates much of her time to revitalizing the Michif language through other translation projects and language classes with students. She was a part of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education Following Their Voice initiative, which supports teachers in implementing a pedagogical curriculum that helps engage Indigenous students. Harriet consistently engages with the youth of all ages, supporting and inspiring them to be active, engaged learners while becoming fluent Michif language speakers as her top priority.



Dale McAuley
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Dale McAuley has been a community leader and active in the Métis community for over 30 years. He was born and raised in the Métis community of Cumberland House. Dale is a proud husband, father, and grandfather. From the time he was young, Dale has proudly been connected to his culture. He speaks Cree and would hunt, fish, and trap alongside his dad for years. Dale's political career began in the early nineties, and since then, he proudly served with honour and integrity as area director for Eastern Region II, Minister of Northern Affairs, Mayor of Cumberland House, trustee for Northern Lights SD #113, Métis Nation—Saskatchewan Minister of Education, and former chair of the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI). He was instrumental in the establishment of harvesting rights for Métis in Saskatchewan, the Cumberland Bridge, and takes pride in the role he played to help build and stabilize GDI. Dale is a strong advocate for Métis youth, sports, and recreation. Having competed professionally as a canoeist, he volunteered as a Head Coach in the 2017 North American Indigenous Games.

Michael (Mike) Relland
Christopher Lake, Saskatchewan

Michael Relland was born in Northwestern Saskatchewan and is a Métis Educator with 37 years of teaching experience. He attended the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon earning a Bachelor of Education Degree (1985), a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education Psychology and Counselling (1995), and a Masters of Education (1998) in the area of Indian and Northern Education. Michael has devoted his career to the betterment of Métis education and students. He excelled as an educator by creating meaningful connections with students, making them feel welcomed, supported, and believed in. After spending several years instructing middle- and high-school students, Mike took on a role as an instructor with Gabriel Dumont Institute's (GDI) Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) in Prince Albert. From there, he became a Gabriel Dumont College (GDC) Program Head, working closely with the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan to deliver community-based undergraduate and graduate-level programs. Mike retired from GDI in 2022. Over the years, Mike has continued to learn about traditional wisdom and Indigenous worldviews through connecting with a number of Elders. Using this knowledge, he has taught and inspired thousands of Métis, First Nations, and non-Indigenous students at the undergraduate and graduate levels.



THE ORDER OF GABRIEL DUMONT—SILVER

Margaret Harrison

Zenon Park, Saskatchewan

Margaret Harrison is an accomplished Métis textile artist. She grew up in the Katepwa Lake road allowance community in the Qu'Appelle Valley. She is a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She was taught to sew, embroider, and make hooked rugs by her mother and then mentored by other women in her family. She practices Métis-style floral embroidery and is one of the few remaining Métis women who continue to make hooked rag rugs. Margaret continues to practice these art forms as a way of honouring the artistry, creativity, hard work, and dedication of Métis women. Margaret's embroidery and rug work are part of the Gabriel Dumont Institute's (GDI) permanent collection. Her work was showcased in two exhibits of traditional Métis hooked rugs at Batoche and Motherwell National Historic Sites in 2022 and is currently a part of exhibits at Calgary's Nickle Gallery and Saskatoon's Remai Modern Art Gallery. Margaret is dedicated to passing these art forms on to younger generations. She has conducted countless sewing, embroidery, and rug hooking workshops across Saskatchewan in partnership with Métis communities. She is also passionate about educating others on Métis history, recently creating a Michif traveling library and mentoring two young Métis women in creating a children's colouring book.

Verna Demontigny

Brandon, Manitoba

Verna Demontigny is a proud Métis, born and raised at Fouillard's Corner, or Li Kwayn, as it is known in Michif, a small Métis community near Binscarth, Manitoba. She grew up immersed in the Michif language, traditions, and beliefs. She is a mother of five children and a grandmother to 10 grandchildren. Verna is a fluent Michif speaker and knowledge keeper of her ancestral language and culture. Since the 1990s, Verna has been dedicated to the preservation, promotion, and revitalization of the Michif language. Verna has taught Michif for various programs and community groups. She was the coordinator of the Michif Language Program for the Manitoba Métis Federation, where she delivered Michif language programs in six southwest Manitoba communities. Verna has also hosted and taught students in the Master-Apprentice Michif language program. She assisted in developing the Michif language teacher's manual published by the Louis Riel Institute. Verna has also offered her voice to the online Turtle Mountain Michif Dictionary, which is currently being developed. Verna's knowledge has also been recorded and disseminated on the National Center for Collaboration in Indigenous Education resource website. At present, Verna is teaching Michif with the Prairie to Woodland Revitalization Language Project and works as a translator of the Michif Language with various linguists. She is also a visiting Elder at Assiniboine Community College.