



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE TO INVEST FIVE INDIVIDUALS INTO THE ORDER OF GABRIEL DUMONT

GDI holds first virtual investiture ceremony for Order of Gabriel Dumont awards

(SASKATOON, SK)— The Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Research (GDI) is proud to announce it will invest five individuals into the Order of Gabriel Dumont at a special virtual awards ceremony on March 4, 2021 at 7:00PM CST.

“The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* is awarded by the Gabriel Dumont Institute to persons who have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the Métis of Canada,” said Geordy McCaffrey, GDI Executive Director. “It is one of the Métis Nation’s highest civilian honours, awarded to Métis and non-Métis individuals based on their achievements and lifetime contributions.”

The medals, which will be presented at the virtual awards ceremony (see below for details), includes three Gold Medals and two Silver Medals.

- The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* **Gold** Medal recognizes a lifetime of outstanding service to the Métis of Canada.
- The *Order of Gabriel Dumont* **Silver** Medal honours those who have made significant contributions to the Métis.

Since its inception, 73 individuals have been invested into the Order. Appointments are made by GDI, based on nominations from the public. For more information about the *Order of Gabriel Dumont*, [please visit our website](#).

The investiture ceremony details and list of recipients with citations are presented below.

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For more information and media inquiries:

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Virtual Ceremony Details

Gabriel Dumont Institute leadership to present the insignia of the Order of Gabriel Dumont as follows:

March 4, 2021

7:00PM CST

Virtual Ceremony live-stream available on GDI Facebook & YouTube Page

www.facebook.com/gabrieldumontinstitute

www.youtube.com/user/gabrieldumontins

RECIPIENTS' CITATIONS

THE ORDER OF GABRIEL DUMONT—GOLD

Senator Nora Cummings
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Senator Nora Cummings is a proud descendant of the Round Prairie Métis settlement just south of Saskatoon. She is a mother of nine, a grandmother, a great-grandmother, and a mentor to numerous people. Nora has promoted Métis culture and rights for her entire life. As the founder of the Saskatchewan Native Women's Association (SNWA), she has also been involved in the creation of several other organizations; the Gabriel Dumont Local #11 and the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). She has always been a champion of children and as president of the SNWA, she actively challenged the Saskatchewan Government's Adopt Indian and Métis (AIM) program, a policy designed to remove First Nations and Métis children from their homes and place them with non-Indigenous families during the 1960s, 70s, and early 80s.

In 1993 she became Senator for the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. She's one of the few remaining senators. Nora has been recognized in several ways, including the Guy Bouvier lifetime achievement award; the Queen's Golden Jubilee award for her service to Canada (2002); the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal (2005); Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal; Métis Award for Lifetime Achievement from Wiichihwayshinawn Foundation (2012); inducted into the Saskatoon Women's Hall of Fame (2019); and, the Métis National Council Achievement Award (February 2020).

Wayne McKenzie
Regina, Saskatchewan

Wayne McKenzie has over 40 years of experience in Métis government and public sector change management. As a public sector employee for over ten years in the Saskatchewan government departments of Intergovernmental affairs, he has negotiated and facilitated over 100 employment development agreements between the government, private sector, unions, and Indigenous organizations. Wayne has held many positions on the Association of Métis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNSIS), including; the Executive Director, Vice-President, Southwest Regional Director, and Local President. During his terms as the AMNSIS Executive Director and



Vice-President, he led and facilitated institutional capacity building in education, economic development, and housing resulting in the establishment of The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI), the SaskMétis Economic Development Corporation (SMEDCO), and the Gabriel Housing Corp. (GHC). Wayne is an advocate for Métis-rights and was a participant in international lobbying efforts for the repatriation of Canada's constitution and the inclusion of Indigenous rights. In the late 1980s' he was a key advisor and member of the negotiating team to Métis National Council/AMNSIS President Jim Sinclair, resulting in the subsequent recognition of Canada's Métis peoples in Canada's Constitution.

Dennis and Jean Fisher
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

The late Dennis Fisher passed away on October 1, 2020. After a lifetime of contributions to the Métis, Dennis will always be remembered as a vibrant, positive presence by his loved ones and the Métis community. Prior to his passing, Dennis and his wife, Jean Fisher contributed the largest donation ever received by the Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI). Before the Batoche National Historic Site (BNHS) became a historic site managed by Parks Canada, Dennis and Jean realized the importance of the artefacts remaining at the site from the 1885 Resistance and from the Métis who lived in the area both before and after this pivotal event in Canadian and Métis history. For over 50 years, they took it upon themselves to search for, collect, document, and preserve this invaluable collection.

In addition to the remarkably generous donation to GDI, Dennis, with Jean as his greatest supporter, was also instrumental in the creation of the Louis Riel Relay event originally held in Saskatoon for many years. Recently, BNHS revived the race, now hosted on-site. The Louis Riel Relay highlights athletic skills in a friendly yet competitive way, not unlike the Voyageur Games so popular at Métis gatherings. Another milestone for the Fishers is the statue of Gabriel Dumont that is located in Friendship Park in downtown Saskatoon—a key landmark in the city. The Fishers helped raise the funds for the statue and worked with sculptor Bill Epp on its design and delivery, and even on its installation.

THE ORDER OF GABRIEL DUMONT—SILVER

William Goodon
Brandon, Manitoba

William Neal Goodon is a proud citizen of the Métis Nation. William Goodon was instrumental in securing the province-wide section 35 rights of the Métis in Manitoba through the case of R. v. Goodon. He is currently the Minister of Housing for the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) and serves on the national steering committee for innovation in Indigenous housing. He has worked extensively on the development of the Métis government, and he played a significant role in the development of the MMF. Goodon is also a successful Métis entrepreneur, owning and operating several motels in southwestern Manitoba. Beyond his work in Manitoba, William has served the Métis Nation across the homeland for more than a decade, chairing the Legislative and General Assemblies of Saskatchewan and British Columbia, facilitating numerous national, regional, and local consultations and meetings, and representing the Métis Nation internationally on lands and resources matters.



Gregory Scofield
Victoria, British Columbia

Gregory Scofield traces his Red River Métis ancestry to the fur trade and the Métis community of Kinosota, Manitoba. He considers Saskatchewan his home community as he lived in the province for many years, and he has strong ties to the Métis community. Gregory is currently a professor of writing at the University of Victoria and is considered one of Canada's foremost Métis literary figures. Gregory's literary contributions have been recognized with honours and awards. Further to writing and teaching, Gregory is also a skilled bead-worker, and he creates in the medium of traditional Métis arts. He continues to assemble a collection of mid-to-late nineteenth-century Cree-Métis artifacts, and he uses them as learning and teaching pieces. He has contributed substantially to the revitalization and renewal of Métis culture and pride through sharing his expertise as a cultural artisan, notably as a bead artisan and maker of bags and moccasins. His personal repatriation effort is an admirable action that instills pride across the Métis Nation.