Fishing Lake Youth Wins Prestigious Award

A youth from Fishing Lake Metis Settlement has been honoured with a prestigious Indspire Award. Gabrielle Fayant is the co-founder of a youth-led and youth-driven organization called Assembly of Seven Generations (A7G) and Program Manager of an economic youth program called ReachUp! North in partnership with Digital Opportunity Trust.

Gabrielle has worked for a number of National Aboriginal Organizations such as the National Association of Friendship Centres, Native Women’s Association of Canada, and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, and has experience on a number of local, regional, and national advisory committees and councils, such as the Canadian Commission of UNESCO’s Youth Advisory Group, Ottawa Youth Engagement Committee, and Walking With Our Sisters Ottawa Youth Committee. Gabrielle also serves as a board member for the Odawa Native Friendship Centre, and she sings with a female drum group called Spirit Flowers and as backup for a men’s drum group called O-Town Boyz. Her family is from the Fishing Lake Metis Settlement.

Representing the highest honour the Indigenous community bestows upon its own achievers, the Indspire Awards were created in 1993, in conjunction with the United Nation’s International Decade of the
Truth & Reconciliation March

Thousands marched through the streets of Ottawa on Sunday, May 31, 2015, in an effort to “transform and renew” the relationship between aboriginal people and other Canadians.

Residential school survivors, along with friends and family, made the symbolic walk under dreary skies along a five-kilometre route from Gatineau, Que., past Parliament Hill and ended at Ottawa’s City Hall.

The walk comes as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada prepares to release its final report on residential schools Tuesday. Launched in 2009, the commission was given a five-year mandate to examine a dark chapter in Canada’s history and find out exactly how many aboriginal children died while in these schools.

For the last six years the commission has interviewed more than 7,000 people across Canada hearing testimony about the horrendous abuse carried out in residential schools across the country. For much of the last century more than 150,000 First Nations, Inuit and Metis children were taken from their families and forced to attend government funded, church run schools.

Buffalo Lake Breaks Ground on Education Centre

On Monday, May 11, local leaders, MSGC Executive members and community members were on hand in Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement for the groundbreaking ceremony of the Settlements new Education Centre.

Buffalo Lake has committed to this project in order to provide greater opportunity for their members to learn, enhance their skills, and prepare themselves for opportunities in post-secondary or trades. The Centre will offer post-secondary courses and academic upgrading for local residents. If all goes to plan, the Centre should open before the end of 2015.

MSGC wishes to extend congratulations to everyone in Buffalo Lake on this project and on continuing to invest in education.

World’s Indigenous Peoples. The Awards recognize Indigenous professionals and youth who demonstrate outstanding career achievement. They promote self-esteem and pride for Indigenous communities and provide outstanding role models for Indigenous youth.

The Metis Settlements General Council offers sincere congratulations to Gabrielle Fayant for her outstanding achievements!
My University Experience

By Carmen Chelick

I have loved school since I was very young. My inherent need to please people and do everything to the very best of my ability drove me to feel the need to excel in everything that I did. At the Gift Lake Metis Settlement School, my teachers recognized my love of school and allowed me to have the chance to develop my passion for academia further. I remember when I was in about Grade 2, a Teacher’s Assistant would take me out of class for one period a day, sit me in front of a computer, had me choose an animal from a book that I was interested in, and I was instructed to type out a report about this animal. I am grateful for my experience at the Gift Lake Metis Settlement School and I know that my love of conservation and animals was probably due to my experiences there. After we moved to High Prairie, my love of school and need to excel continued. I graduated high school as the Valedictorian of my class and was the recipient of the Governor General Award for the highest average grades.

My husband Dallas and I felt that we wanted to broaden our knowledge by attending university and chose the University of British Columbia – Okanagan because of its size and its prestige. Dallas and I entered the science program together and we immediately felt like small fish in a big pond. Although it is considered a small campus, it was bigger than anything that we had ever been a part of and we immediately felt like underdogs in our classes. I felt even more uneasy when I looked around the classrooms of 200+ students and saw maybe only one or two other Aboriginal students. Although universities pride themselves on the diversity of their student body, I noticed that Aboriginal students were very under represented in the sciences. I am a naturally shy person, but when I had to work in groups, I felt at times that people immediately underestimated me. It was my husband Dallas that helped me get through the first few years of my degree, encouraging me to be confident, stand up for myself, and to not be scared to reach higher. I started my degree as a very shy Aboriginal girl and am now at the end of my degree emerging as a more confident and educated Aboriginal woman.

Since my first year of university, I have achieved high enough grades to receive the Deputy Vice Chancellors Award from UBC-O and was on the Dean’s List for the last two years of my degree. In my third year, I was surprised to receive an Undergraduate Research Award, which allowed me to do an independent research project. I used this opportunity to do research that allowed me to contribute to the conservation of an endangered bird in Canada. Once I finished the research, I was expected to present my results at the Undergraduate Research Symposium at UBC-O and recently presented my results at the Multidisciplinary Undergraduate Research Conference in Vancouver, BC. This year, I applied for and received another summer research award from the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada.

I have learned so much since my first year of
university and had many new experiences. Along with the biology classes that I have taken, I have also had a chance to take classes like Indigenous Studies and Ethnography of the Metis in which I learned a lot about the history of our people, how the culture was developed, and what differentiates us from other Aboriginal people. In my third year, I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to work as a math tutor and mentor in the Aboriginal Centre at UBC-O. I was able to meet many of the Aboriginal students who were starting their degrees and feeling the same way I felt when I started university; unconfident and like I didn’t belong. I enjoyed interacting with these students whom I felt an instant connection too and since then, I’ve seen many of these students overcome these feelings and succeed in their degrees.

Being at university has also allowed Dallas to utilize his incredible potential. He has undertaken a double major degree in Economics and Environmental Science and has proven to be a force to be reckoned with in these fields. He has also received a number of scholarships and been on the Dean’s List for 3 years. He is under high demand as a research assistant and has recently done work on the economic benefits of First Nations governments to have autonomous tax determination. He has now received the Undergraduate Research Award and is going to be working on a project that will influence policy in the Okanagan pertaining to water usage in times of drought. Because of his big ideas and determination, I know that he is going to influence a lot of people throughout his career.

We are extremely grateful for all of the financial support that we have received from Gift Lake Metis Settlement throughout the years. We have had amazing experiences at university so far and literally couldn’t have done it without your support. Although we are so far from home, I have never forgotten where I come from and am proud to represent my family and my community, Gift Lake Metis Settlement.

Long Term Governance & Funding Arrangements Refresher

On July 4, 2013, the Government of Alberta and the Metis Settlements General Council signed the Long-Term Governance and Funding Arrangements agreement. The agreement, which totals $113.5 million ($85 million from the Government of Alberta, $28.5 million from MSGC), will be implemented over a 10-year period. This agreement will strengthen settlement governance, contribute to the long term sustainability of settlement communities, and establish a fiscal relationship with the Province comparable to that of other local governments. In addition to this commitment, access to additional funds will be made available through Government grants and other programs. Including infrastructure commitments and grants, the agreement will top $200 million.

1. ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Essential services refer to the collective treatment and distribution of potable water, waste water, solid waste management and road maintenance. The purpose of this initiative is to support the delivery of essential services by Settlements to their members in a cost-effective and sustainable manner. This schedule provides up to $9 million over 6 years.

• $2 million provided to Settlements in 2013-14 (approximately $250,000 each) for essential service operations.
• Another $1.8 million was provided in 2014-15 for Settlements that met household contribution targets.
• There is $1.650 million for essential services grants in fiscal 2015-16.
• A complete review of the household contribution amounts in each Settlement is near completion.
• The review will determine a more accurate way of setting contribution targets in each community.
2. **INFRASTRUCTURE**
   The purpose of this initiative is to enable settlements to access provincial infrastructure programs and develop and maintain the infrastructure required to provide essential services on par with neighbouring communities. Up to $138 million will be provided over 10 years, including grant funding.
   - $3.2 million added to Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP) in 2014-15.
   - A total of $8.8 million currently available in the CIP fund to cover Settlement portion of cost of capital infrastructure projects.
   - $3.2 million was added to the CIP fund in 2015-16, bringing the total available to around $12 million.
   - $3.250 million will be added in 2015-16 bringing the to-date total to $15.250 million.
   - Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) established with initial capitalization of $3 million (will replace CIP after ten years).
   - $1 million was added to CRF in 2014-15.
   - $2 million will be added to the CRF in 2015-16, bringing the to-date total to $6 million.
   - Significant number of capital infrastructure projects are moving forward, starting with the design phase.

3. **HOUSING**
   The purpose is to provide settlement members with access to housing on a sustainable basis. Sustainable housing refers to individual ownership of housing accommodation, not including subsidized housing accommodation. Funding of $15 million will be provided over 7 years.
   - A pilot project on the Kikino Settlement was approved for 2014-15 and is underway.
   - Gift Lake and East Prairie have been selected for housing builds in the 2015-16 fiscal year.
   - Work on developing the Metis Settlements Housing Authority (MSHA) has started.
   - $4.288 million will be transferred to MSGC for housing in 2015-16.

4. **GOVERNANCE**
   The purpose of this schedule is to undertake specific initiatives to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of the settlement governments. Funding of $3.5 million will be provided over 10 years.
   - Joint Accountability Review Committee (JARC) was established and a draft report was submitted to the Minister and General Council on June 30, 2014.
   - $170,000 has been budget for 2015-16 to begin a systematic review of MSGC policies.
   - Policies to meet legislative requirements will also be developed in 2015-16.
   - A council governance workshop will be held October 14-16. The workshop will provide professional development and skills enhancement opportunities.

5. **CAPACITY BUILDING**
   The purpose of the initiative is to strengthen and develop the governance, administrative and service delivery capacity of Metis Settlements. Funding of $3.45 million will be provided over 10 years.
   - Assessment of the training and certification needs of key Settlement positions completed.
   - Priority focus in 2014-15 was development of a program for Settlement Administrators.
   - Administrators completed the introductory course for The National Advanced Certificate in Local Authority Administration Program (NACLAA).
   - Programming for public works staff and councils is being developed in 2015-16.
   - A Settlement LTA Implementation Capacity Program was developed to provide $119,250 to each Settlement for LTA related work.
   - There is $1.372 million available this year in Capacity Building.
6. EDUCATION
The purpose of this initiative is to develop and implement strategies and initiatives to improve educational attainment levels of settlement members. This initiative is inclusive of Kindergarten to post-secondary and adult literacy. Funding of $7.6 million will be provided over 10 years.
  • A community engagement process on K-12 education was designed and a Project Coordinator was recruited in 2014-15.
  • $15,000 was provided to each Settlement to hire a local engagement coordinator for 5 months.
  • The first round of engagements concluded in May. The second round will be completed by end of June.
  • A roll up report will be presented to all eight Settlements throughout the summer.
  • A planning session will be conducted in October to develop a plan to implement recommendations.
  • $680,000 is available in 2015-16.
  • Advanced Education has made plans to expand an Adult Literacy Program to all Settlements.

7. TRAINING
The purpose of this initiative is to undertake training initiatives to improve settlement members' employment-related skills and knowledge, and increase their participation in Alberta's economy. Funding of $7.35 million will be provided over 10 years.
  • Subject matter experts were contracted to help develop a Training-To-Employment plan.
  • An engagement with Alberta Human Services is ongoing to identify partnerships.
  • Assessment of the Metis Settlements Strategic Training Initiative (MSSTI) will be completed 2015-16.
  • The assessment will determine how to support MSSTI and enhance capacity to deliver programming.
  • $560,000 is available in 2015-16.

8. SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
The purpose of this initiative is to develop and implement strategic initiatives to make settlements safer and healthier. Funding of $13.6 million will be provided over 10 years
  • Memorandum of Understanding between RCMP and Settlements signed on October 3, 2013 and local service agreements signed by RCMP and each of the Settlements.
  • Eight officers (one per community) are now in place.
  • $13.6 million in funding being provided by the GOA for the ten-year period.
  • A review of the RCMP/Settlement service agreements is underway.
  • Approval from Alberta Health to proceed with a Health Needs Assessment and $300,000 to fund it.

9. CONSULTATION
The purpose of this initiative is to develop a Metis Settlements Consultation Policy that increases certainty for Alberta, the Metis Settlements and Industry. Funding of $9.7 million will be provided over 10 years.
  • Historic presence and activity research completed for all eight Settlements.
  • Settlement consultation plan is being implemented and local consultation coordinators have been hired.
  • Traditional Use and Consultation training is underway with local coordinators.
  • $85,350 has been provided to each Settlement to set up consultation offices and hire coordinators.
10. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
The purpose of this initiative is to ensure the long term financial sustainability of the settlements through:

**Future Fund Sustainability:** In order to achieve future fund sustainability, MSGC agrees to limit withdrawals from the future fund.

**Household Contribution Targets:** The parties agree that Household Contribution Targets will take into account the ability of households to pay and phases in the increase in household contributions over time.

**Reduction of Revenue and Expenditure Gap:** MSGC on behalf of the settlements, agrees to provide a short term plan to the Minister to reduce the current revenue/expenditure gap in addition to the longer term plans.

**Long-Term Sustainability:** An assessment of the long-term financial sustainability of the settlements over the long term.

- Reviews of essential service costs and independent assessments of Settlement finances undertaken.
- Most Settlements are addressing issue of household contributions.
- Majority of Settlements have developed detailed revenue-expenditure gap reduction plans.
- Preparations being made for an assessment of the long-term financial sustainability of the Settlements.

### Key LTA Progress Updates

**Education**

The education engagement is well underway. The turnout at the community meetings has been good and the discussions have been very productive. Settlements members have voiced real concerns and those concerns are being captured in a report for discussion at a planning session in the fall. As part of the consultation process, the Settlements have each been provided with $15,000 to help with organizing and conducting meetings. This also includes a five month contract for local engagement coordinators who have been working hard to make the engagements extremely productive.

**Infrastructure**

Infrastructure plans have been organized under the Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP) and approved by the MSGC Vice President and the Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations & Metis Relations jointly. The top priority for this year is water treatment facilities and any infrastructure that is absolutely necessary to the health and safety of the Settlements. With millions of dollars available to get projects underway, infrastructure is a top priority this year. A member from Fishing Lake Metis Settlement has also been contracted to work on the infrastructure file, with the communities, to ensure that priorities are determined and projects begin in a timely manner.

**Housing**

Housing will continue this year with Gift Lake and East Prairie moving forward with housing builds this summer. The Kikino project is still underway and nearing completion. MSGC, Habitat for Humanity, and Kikino Metis Settlement have been working together to review progress on the project and to also identify ways to improve it. Work has also begun on developing the Metis Settlements Housing Authority (MSHA). This work is in the preliminary stages but, once completed, will have an organizational framework for the Settlements to operate the LTA housing program with Habitat for Humanity only serving as a project manager.
Settlement Education Engagement Underway

The LTA includes ten schedules that focus on specific issue areas. These issue areas range from housing, to infrastructure, to long term sustainability. Education is identified as schedule F and the first initiative being undertaken is a process to strengthen outcomes in kindergarten to grade 12 education. Throughout the negotiation of the agreement, as well as in public meetings since it was signed, Settlement members have consistently raised concerns about the quality of education that their children are receiving in the Settlement schools and in the non-Settlement schools that service the eight communities. As a result, the K-12 education engagement initiative project plan was developed and is now being carried out.

Dr. Marie Delorme, a Metis consultant with significant experience in education, facilitation and Aboriginal issues, was contracted to lead the community engagements in all eight Settlements. Dr. Delorme developed a rigorous engagement process that includes two, four hour working sessions in each Settlement and a third session to present and discuss the contents of her final report with recommendations. Each community was also provided with LTA funding to hire a local Education Engagement Coordinator on a five month contract to assist Dr. Delorme with the process on the ground in the Settlements.

The Settlement sessions began on April 25th in Elizabeth Metis Settlement. The first round of engagements concluded May 25th in Peavine Metis Settlement. Following each session, Marie compiled a report based on what was heard from community members and that report was then provided to this who attended for review and feedback. Each report is also available to all the members in each Settlement.

The second round of engagements began on May 26th in Kikino and are currently underway. Following the presentation of the final report to each Settlement in July and August, the fourth step in the K-12 engagement process will be to hold a strategic planning session with Settlement leadership, Government of Alberta representatives, and school board representatives, to take the information gathered, as well as Dr. Delorme’s recommendations, and develop a plan of action. The Education Schedule in the LTA provides more than $7 million over the life of the agreement to address key educational issues. This money is not meant to solve the problem but it is meant to get the ball rolling on initiatives designed to improve the quality of Settlement education.

Once the K-12 initiative has been completed, the focus will shift to post-secondary education. While elementary, junior high, and high school provide a foundation for success, it is opportunities in post-secondary education that will open doors for Settlement youth. In addition, the LTA has co-funded, with Alberta Advanced Education, a grant program to provide money to each Settlement for initiatives related to Adult Literacy.
Alberta NDP Sweep to Victory

Tuesday May 5th, 2015, was a historic night in Alberta politics. Rachel Notley and the Alberta New Democratic Party swept Jim Prentice’s Progressive Conservatives out of office in a decisive victory that ended 44 years of PC rule. The NDP won 53 ridings. Wildrose took 21 seats, while the PCs took 10. Progressive Conservative Leader Jim Prentice reduced that count by one on election night, resigning both the seat he won in Calgary-Foothills and the PC Leadership.

There was a tie in one Calgary riding, Calgary-Glenmore, between the PCs and NDP. A recount, as well as a judicial recount have taken place since May 5th and both affirmed an NDP victory. This leaves the PCs, who entered the election with 70 seats, with just 8. Not nearly enough to claim even official opposition status. The Liberals and the Alberta Party each claimed one seat. Notley also noted that the election was record-setting in terms of the number of women elected.

Premier Notley, Cabinet, Sworn In

Originally reported by the CBC, May 24, 2015

Rachel Notley was sworn in as the 17th premier of Alberta in a ceremony that took place in front of an enthusiastic crowd of thousands in Edmonton on Sunday, May 24th. The 51-year-old former labour lawyer, who led the NDP to a 54-seat majority earlier this month, was sworn in by Chief Justice Catherine Fraser on the steps of the Alberta legislature. The public was invited to take part in the event, which drew a crowd that packed the grounds of the legislature despite the hot temperatures.

At times during the ceremony, Notley found herself drowned out by the crowd chanting her name. Afterwards, she said was "flabbergasted" by how many people showed up. Notley was also sworn in as the province's international and intergovernmental affairs minister. The other 11 members of the cabinet, some of whom are handling multiple portfolios in the slimmed-down cabinet, were also sworn in:

- Hon. Rachel Notley - Premier, International and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Hon. Joe Ceci - Finance/Treasury Board president
- Hon. Sarah Hoffman - Health/Seniors
- Hon. Kathleen Ganley - Justice/Aboriginal Affairs
- Hon. David Eggen - Education/Culture and Tourism
- Hon. Margaret McCuaig-Boyd - Energy
- Hon. Shannon Phillips - Environment and Parks/Status of Women
- Hon. Brian Mason - Infrastructure/Transportation
- Hon. Deron Bilous - Municipal Affairs, Service Alberta
The new cabinet is heavily weighted towards Edmonton, where the NDP saw their strongest support during the election. Six ministers, including Notley, represent ridings in the city, compared with three from Calgary and another three from the rest of the province. Notley, Mason, Eggen and Bilous — the party's only incumbent MLAs — were all assigned high-profile portfolios. Mason, a 15-year veteran of the legislature and the party's former leader, will also serve as government house leader.

The newly minted premier highlighted the fact that the new cabinet contained an equal number of women and men; she said the new government's make-up was a better reflection of the people of Alberta. Notley said creating her cabinet was a challenge, telling reporters after the ceremony she could have appointed a complete second group of ministers from the depth of talent in her caucus. The fact that she and five of her 11 cabinet ministers are from Edmonton has already been criticized online. Notley said she did her best to take many factors into consideration.

Federal Minister Appoints Special Representative to Lead Metis Engagement

The President and Vice President of the Metis Settlements General Council (MSGC) attended a meeting of the Métis National Council Board of Governors on Thursday, June 4th in Calgary, AB. In attendance was also the Federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Hon. Bernard Valcourt, who announced the appointment of Mr. Tom Isaac as the Ministerial Special Representative (MSR) on Métis reconciliation.

Mr. Isaac is a nationally recognized authority in the area of Aboriginal law and leads Osler’s Aboriginal Law Group. He also advises clients across Canada on Aboriginal legal matters and related environmental assessment, regulatory, negotiations and constitutional issues affecting major projects.

The MSR has a mandate to engage in a process with Metis Stakeholders to address Métis rights under section 35(1) of the Charter. Further, the MSR has been tasked with establishing a framework for negotiations with the Manitoba Métis Federation in response to the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in MMF v. Canada, 2013.

Over the coming months, the MSR will engage with MSGC, the MNC, and the Provinces, reporting to the Minister by December 18, 2015. The Federal Cabinet, MSGC, and the MNC will then have an opportunity to respond to the Special Representative’s recommendations and a more formal process of negotiations could follow should the stakeholders agree to move forward. It was noted that the process will involve Métis communities that are Powley compliant.
MSGC Meets With New Provincial Minister of Aboriginal Relations

On Wednesday, June 3rd, the MSGC’s President and Vice President, Randy Hardy and Stan Delorme, met with the Hon. Kathleen Ganley, Minister of Aboriginal Relations.

In the meeting, the President and Vice President offered some background on key issue areas currently of concern at MSGC. These issue areas included the Metis Settlements Consultation Policy, The LTA review, and a meeting between MSGC, the Minister and the Premier. In addition, they offered an invitation to the Minister to attend an MSGC Board meeting and to visit each Settlement.

The Daniels Case: Update

On April 17, 2014, the Federal Court of Appeal released its decision in Daniels v Canada. The Court was asked which level of government – Canada or the provinces – has the power (or “jurisdiction”) to make laws relating to Métis and Non-Status Indians. This required the Court to determine whether the word “Indians” contained in section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867 included Métis.

In January 2013, the trial judge at the Federal Court concluded that Canada has jurisdiction to make laws that relate to Métis people. Canada disagreed with the trial judge’s ruling and appealed to the Federal Court of Appeal. The Federal Court of Appeal rejected Canada’s arguments and confirmed the trial judge’s decision. This is an important ruling because it will give Métis people certainty with respect to which level of government they should be dealing with when addressing Métis rights and issues.

In October of 2013, the Government of Canada appealed the decision of the Federal Court. Metis Settlements General Council was granted “intervener status” in the appeal which allowed MSGC to make written and oral arguments to the Court. The case is important to all Métis and is of particular interest to the Metis Settlements. The Federal Court of Appeal upheld the Federal Court’s decision on Métis people but did not make a ruling on jurisdiction over non-status “Indians.” As a result, in June of 2014, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC). The SCC agreed to hear the appeal and that hearing will take place in October of 2015.

In April, 2015, 15 interested persons applied for leave to intervene in the Daniels case. On June 1, 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada granted intervener status to the following parties:

- MSGC
- Gift Lake Metis Settlement
- Métis National Council
- Attorney General of Alberta
- Attorney General of Saskatchewan
- Métis Federation of Canada
- Te’mexw Treaty Association
- Native Council of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council, Native Council of PEI
- Native Alliance of Quebec
- Assembly of First Nations
- Chiefs of Ontario
- Aseniwuche Winewak Nation
Hello Everyone:

**Congratulations to all the Graduates of 2015!!**

MSSTI would like to acknowledge all the Graduates of 2015 for the hard work and effort put forth into your educational successes. It is fantastic to have so many graduates! Good luck with your future endeavours. Should you decide to enter College or University, please feel free to meet with your respective Settlement Human Resource Officer if you require any assistance in achieving your future career goals.

MSSTI provides services in your Settlement such as: Career Decision Making, Skills Enhancement, Job Search and Employment Maintenance.

Client Eligibility for Individual Sponsorships or Group Training Projects are: Metis physically residing on a Settlement, or a Settlement Member on an authorized leave of absence as defined by the Metis Settlement Act, section 85 and:

- Legally entitled to work in Canada
- Have a SIN number prior to approval
- In good standing with the previous funding with the Metis Settlement Strategic Training Initiatives Society’s program
- Must require assistance to overcome existing or anticipated labour market barriers

How to apply for Sponsorship:

- A letter of acceptance from a training or education institution, including start and end dates, course outline for the complete year, outline of all costs (include tuition, books, supplies, student fees, etc.)
- Completion of Application
- In the event of a disability or injury, a letter from a medical doctor confirming ability to enter into the training or occupation you are choosing
- Students must apply a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the start date of the program

MSSTI would also like to let everyone know that Service Canada has announced another year’s extension. The ASETS Agreement will now expire in 2017.

Sheila and I have been very busy at MSSTI Central Office with year end reporting as well as preparing for the Financial Audit for the 2014-2015 fiscal year for the ASETS Agreement and Service Canada.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. My number is: 780-822-4069 (OR) 780-887-1939. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you and have a great day,

Dianne Desjarlais, Director – MSSTI
ASETS (Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training) Partnership Forum Update

MSGC, MSSTI, Settlement Councils and HRO’s had the opportunity to attend an Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnerships Forum in Vancouver, B.C. from May 27-29, 2015.

There were approximately two hundred people in attendance from the Metis and First Nation Agreement Holders across Canada. The agreement holders had the opportunity to meet with Federal Government Partners, including Employment & Social Development Canada to discuss best practices and promising approaches that will enable Agreement Holders to provide opportunities for greater education, employment and training for Aboriginal people and to strengthen their role in the Canadian Economy.

The Executive Director of MSGC had an opportunity to present the benefits of the ASETS Agreement while also discussing areas of concern.

During this forum, we also discovered that there will be extra dollars available in the Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF). The Director of MSSTI will be contacting Service Canada’s Senior Development Officer and ask that MSSTI be considered for these extra dollars.

Overall, the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Partnerships Forum was a great success. I think there is a real opportunity to put forward some recommendations for the renewal of the ASETS Agreement Post 2017.

METIS SETTLEMENTS OF
ALBERTA 2015 POST-SECONDARY
GRADUATES

Congratulations to the Metis Settlements Post-Secondary Graduates of 2015!!!

Buffalo Lake
Kaileen Gordon   Health Care Aide
Larissa Gordon   Health Care Aide
Carlee Joe McGurie 2nd Year Community Social Work
Amy Patenaude 3rd Year Community Social Work

East Prairie
Lawrence Andrews Digital Media Production
Chad Haggerty Criminal Justice (Bachelor of Arts Degree, Honours Distinction)
Taylor John Health Care Aide
Hope L’hirondelle Oilfield Operator
Heather Patenaude Class I Driver Training
Metis Settlements General Council

Elizabeth
Elena Blyan 1st Year University Transfer
Darren Cardinal 2nd Year Millwright
Adrienne Desjarlais Esthetics
Elizabeth Jacknife Business Accounting
Jared Jacknife 1st Year University Transfer
Jasmine Jensen Hairstylist
Kandi Jensen Power Engineering - Part C

Fishing Lake
Tamara Anderson EMR Certification
Wayne Anderson Sr. Firefighter Training
Diahann Aulotte Human Services in Administration (Applied Degree)
Guy Brosseau Faller Certification Level 3
Gregory Calliou Faller Certification Level 3
Jeanette Calliou Local Governance
Jeremy Calliou Faller Certification Level 3
Leslie Callioux Firefighter Training/Class I Driver Training
Ronnie Cardinal Faller Certification Level 3
Glen Durocher Heavy Equipment Operator
Jerrika Durocher-Barthel 1st Year Apprentice Baker
Julian Durocher 3rd Year Welder
Kelly Gwin-Durocher Occupational Health & Safety Officer
Cheyenne Flamond Faller Certification Level 3
Charles W. Gladue Faller Certification Level 3
Stacey Laboucane Security Guard
Michael Lajimodiere Faller Certification Level 3
Ben Thomas Class I Driver Training
Jamie Tremblay EMR Certification
Jeff Turcotte Firefighter Training/EMR Certification

Gift Lake
Carol Anderson Oilfield Operations Training
James Anderson Oilfield Operations Training
Matthew Anderson Pre-Employment Millwright
Michael Anderson Human Resource Management
Carmen Chelick Bachelor of Science Degree
Christie Courtorielle Human Resource Management
Laura L’hirondelle Camp Life Living
Karla Lamouche Acting Essential
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn Lamouche</td>
<td>Community Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Letendre</td>
<td>Early Learning &amp; Childcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chase Bruno</td>
<td>2nd Year Welder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Cardinal</td>
<td>Conservation Wildlife Officer Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Collins</td>
<td>1st Year Welder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tara Collins White</td>
<td>1st Year Culinary Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Cornelius</td>
<td>1st Year Auto Mechanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cole Littlechilds</td>
<td>Motion Picture Acting Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landon Littlechilds</td>
<td>Audio Engineering Adv. Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley McDonald</td>
<td>1st Year Bachelor of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colton McDonald</td>
<td>4th Year Carpentry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jodi McDonald</td>
<td>1st Year Conservation &amp; Restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentra McDonald</td>
<td>2nd Year Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tessa McDonald</td>
<td>1st Year Bachelor of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristy Schell</td>
<td>1st Year Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayna Thompson</td>
<td>3rd Year Bachelor of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Trimble</td>
<td>3rd Year Aboriginal Teacher Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordyn White</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candice Calliou</td>
<td>Early Learning Childcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerome Chalifoux</td>
<td>3rd Year Welder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Ferguson</td>
<td>3rd Year Welder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordin Gaudet</td>
<td>Bachelor of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karmen LaChance</td>
<td>3rd Class Power Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler McGillivray</td>
<td>3rd Year Welder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vannah Anderson</td>
<td>Child &amp; Youth Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janelle Cunningham</td>
<td>Early Learning &amp; Childcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Cunningham</td>
<td>Early Learning &amp; Childcare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"I hope your dreams take you... to the corners of your smiles, to the highest of your hopes, to the windows of your opportunities, and to the most special places your heart has ever known."
METIS SETTLEMENTS OF ALBERTA 2015 GRADE TWELVE
GRADUATES

Congratulations to the Metis Settlements Grade Twelve Graduates of 2015!!!

Buffalo Lake
Destiny Auger
Daniel Berard
Kyle Blyan
Alicia Cardinal
Alex Delorme
Amber Gordon
Kashton Gordon
Destiny Howse
Kyle Joe
Dale Ladouceur
Kelly LaRose
Robin LaRose
Darcy Larocque
Dylan Larocque
Charity Lavallee
Dyna Reid
Marissa Reid
Lacey Scanie-Patenaude
Hailey Sinclair

Elizabeth Cont’d.
Bradley Lanceleve
Christopher Nolan
Kayla Solway
Teaya Solway
AJ Swan

Fishing Lake
Greydon Allotte
Taylor Calliou
Renee Christiansen
Tristan Durocher
Mary Dustow
Mikey Fayant
Ateleka Harper
Jessica Iron Eagle
Mackenzie McLean

Gift Lake
Dakota Anderson
Delauren Anderson
Glenn (Terry) Anderson
Kailyn Cardinal
Jennelle Laderoute
Mathew Jaden Thunder

Kikino Cont’d.
Nicholas Erasmus
Shania Erasmus-Brereton
Calen Houle-Houle
Kashina Houle-Houle
Darien Ladouceur
Megan Lorie
Legacy McAdam
Natasha Minoose-Erasmus
Tanisha Pruden
Kirkland Stevenson
Taylor Thom
Lauren White
Ashton Whitford
Bailey Whitford
Jonas Whitford
Kennedy Whitford

Elizabeth
William Baldwin
Samson Collins
Usini Orvis Collins
Hannah Desjarlais
Payton Desjarlais
Cheyanne Durocher
Austin James

Kikino
Sasha Bruno
Cailin Cable
Courtney Cardinal
Dalton Cardinal
Kirkland Cardinal
Elijah Cardinal-Whitford
Jesse Collins
Gary Elaschuk
Nicholas Elaschuk

East Prairie
Luke Bellerose
Tristyn Haggerty
Rae-Ann L’hirondelle
Mathew Patenaude
Brandon Supernault

Paddle Prairie
Taryne Dachuk
Morgan Ducharme
Naomi Ghostkeeper
Pearson McGillivray

Peavine
Sonya Deynaka
Allyson Gauchier
Chelsea Gauchier
Jenna Gauchier
Kaitlyn Gauchier
Laurel Gauchier
Mckayla Gauchier
Eric Hallet
Daren Mearon
Daeton Noskey
Brennan Walker
Congratulations to the Peavine Aboriginal Headstart Program in Celebration of 20 Years of providing exemplary Educational Services to the children of the Peavine Metis Settlement.
A Metis Hero

On June 10, 2014 a great man passed away, like a whisper on the wind, quietly and peacefully in a small town in France not far from the beaches he had landed on 70 years earlier. His name was Charles Emile St. Germain. This is an attempt to recreate parts of Charlie’s life story and leads us to his passing in a far off land. It was his final journey.

Charlie was born at Grayling Creek in the Peace River region in Northern Alberta on July 8, 1924. He had 5 siblings, four sisters and one brother: Joe. Charlie grew up hunting, fishing and trapping with his brother Joe, as he put it, Joe taught him the facts of life. Charlie idolized his brother who was eight years older than him. Joe joined up in 1939 and fought with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment (the Loyal Eddies) of the famed Canadian 1st Division.

Lance Sergeant Joe St. Germain was on the front lines for most of the war and fought in North Africa, Sicily and Italy in some of the toughest campaigns of the war. The invasion of Sicily and Italy in particular posed extra difficulties due to the terrain being perfectly suited to the German defence. From time to time, Joe would send a letter home, and one time he told his parents, “don’t let punk (Joe’s nickname for Charlie) join up. It’s pretty rough over here.”

Charlie joined up in 1942 and served with the 2nd Division, 5th brigade, 1st battalion Calgary Highlanders. Charlie said “they called us the fighting fifth” by the end of the war the Calgary Highlanders had suffered the highest number of casualties of any Canadian infantry battalion in Northwest Europe; 403 killed in action and 1354 wounded. The high casualty rate was the direct result of the battalion’s repeated role as the leading element in the campaigns of the 5th brigade.

The 1st Battalion Calgary Highlanders arrived on Juno Beach on July 6, 1944 and saw their first battle on July 18 at a place called Versailles ridge (hill 67). They were ordered to take the ridge from the German’s. Charlie was in C Company and was part of the assault across the wheat fields and he recalled that the wheat was about waist high and he said “you could hear the bullets cutting the grass, whish whish.” And then he’d give his head a shake and say “Pete!” and give a smile and a chuckle which was his way of making light of a pretty scary situation. That first night C Company was on the outer edge of the ridge and engaged in heavy fighting all night. German tanks and infantrymen attacked C Company and Canadian tanks tried to fend off the Germans. The fighting was in close and under constant shelling. In the first 36 hours of fighting 24 men were killed and 54 men wounded. In the 3 days of fighting that it would take to secure and hold hill 67, 31 men were killed and 110 wounded out of a battalion of just over 800 men.

Charlie told me one time they were having a break when the sergeant came up and said you, you, you and you are being sent to take out a sniper who’s taking out a lot of our guys from a church steeple. Charlie was one of those selected to do the job. They walked up to a point where they could see the church and make a plan and decided that three of them would sneak around back and Charlie would try keep the snipers head down by shooting at the steeple and windows which he did. After awhile one of the other three soldiers appeared and waved Charlie forward. They searched the church and the steeple and no one was to be found. One of the men fired a burst of machine gun fire up into the floor of the steeple and they decided that the sniper had gotten out ahead of them. They decided to leave and as they departed the church bell rang. Charlie said “the hair on the back of my neck stood up”. They went back in and the German soldier dropped his weapon down and
surrendered. It turned out he was out of ammunition. One of the guys wanted to “just finish him” but the others didn’t agree and took him prisoner instead.

Another time the company was ordered to attack out of their trenches, as they did Charlie noticed that his foxhole buddy was slumped over so he lifted his head to check and found he had been shot between the eyes. It was during one of these assaults that the company was passing through an apple orchard when suddenly they came under attack from mortars and heavy artillery. Charlie used to say that he had a big foxhole buddy who he really appreciated because Charlie was quicker and faster than him so when they would get shelled Charlie would beat him to the foxhole and the big guy would jump over him and provide additional cover. However on this occasion the big guy jumped under cover ahead of him and Charlie had to jump in on top of him. As he was laying there he suddenly felt a sharp pain on the back of his hip. He thought I’m hit and then felt some relief as he realized it might be the million dollar wound (the one that got you sent home) but as he reached back to check his butt, he suddenly realized he had been hit by an apple.

Charlie and a soldier named Collins got caught behind enemy lines and separated from the rest of the company during fighting in one of the villages they were in. They were cut off and alone. In order to reconnect with the company they had to cross a street but the problem was that there was a German machine gun nest positioned at the end of it. They made a plan to cross separately, each providing covering fire for the other. They decided Collins would go first so Charlie shot up the machine gun nest and Collins ran for it. He was almost across when he was hit multiple times in the chest and dropped out of sight. Charlie made a run for it and got across to find him lying in a bit of a dip on the side of the street. He was hit diagonally from his shoulder to his hip, across his chest. As he lay there bleeding he tried to take his watch off and give it to Charlie to send to his parents in the event he didn’t make it. Charlie refused and told him to hold tough and he’d go get help which he did. Years later he said that he went to get a pair of shoes while he was in Edmonton and low behold there was Collins, alive and well.

After returning from the war Charlie married his wife Edith and they had 12 children together 7 boys and 5 girls. He told me one time that the thing he was most proud of was that his children always had clothes on their backs, a roof over their head, and food on the table. He spent 17 years working in the arctic and there was not a region in Alberta that he didn’t work, running heavy equipment, building roads and cutting seismic graph lines. He was a top notch welder and he used to say that the only thing he couldn’t weld was a broken heart and the crack of dawn. Those that knew Charlie can attest to his wit and sense of humour and there was never a dull moment when you travelled with him.

One time I was over visiting Charlie at his home on Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement. He looked me straight in the eye and said “I joined up and went to war with one objective: to go meet up with my brother Joe.” He continued, “I got over to England and was stationed near where Joe was so I went to the company commander and asked for a leave to go see him. I got the leave and got on the bus to go find him. But by the time I got there Joe had been shipped out to the frontlines an hour or two before.” Lance Sergeant Joe St. Germain was killed outside Ortona Italy on December 14, 1944. He had 10 days left to serve. Charlie never did see him.

In the spring of 2014 Charlie received a call from Veteran Affairs asking him to attend the 70th Anniversary for the D-Day invasion June 6, 1944 in France. Charlie and 8 other Canadians were to be awarded the French
Foreign Legion medal. France’s highest medal awarded to a non citizen. He asked if I wanted to go with him and of course I agreed.

We travelled to France along with around 140 veterans with their family members, friends, and caregivers. It was such a powerful experience to be in the presence of such people. All these men and women, of all shapes and sizes and colours, all doing the same thing; their duty. Representing their fallen comrades and paying tribute to the sacrifice of their youth. There was one Métis gentleman, a former paratrooper from Ontario, who I observed looking for anyone who was a paratrooper, hope alive in his eyes.

The French people provide so much honour to veterans that it’s hard to describe to someone who hasn’t experienced it. Where ever you go folks are always taking the time to express their gratitude. Those with their children get them involved as well. At one cemetery we visited a family who approached us to see if they could get a picture with Charlie. Their little girl was so cute and gracious to my buddy, that it just made our day. Everywhere we went people were so respectful it couldn’t help but make you feel emotional.

Charlie insisted that I should see the Juno Beach museum. So during our visit there I took the time to go through the museum. At the end of the tour through the building there is a movie, it is a powerful film documenting the D day landings and the Normandy campaign. At the end of the short film the last images you see are of a young soldier walking off, his back to you, down the beach into the fog. Other men follow him in small groups of twos and threes until they all fade away…

**By Alden Armstrong**

“He passed away quietly, like a whisper on the wind.”
Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal

Here for You

The Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal (MSAT) continues to work with the settlements and their members to resolve disputes and to promote Metis culture and self-governance. Since the appointment of the new Board earlier this year, the Appeal Tribunal held 10 hearings (as of June 24) and issued 5 decisions. In addition to this, the Appeal Tribunal remains committed to outreach on the settlements. Most recently, Lorne Dustow, Tribunal Chair, participated in Fishing Lake Metis Settlement’s Justice Fair.

The Appeal Tribunal would also like to thank everyone who attended this year’s MSAT/MSLR Golf Tournament. With your help and support, it was a great success once again.

Please visit our website http://www.msat.gov.ab.ca/ for more information, or give us a call at 1-800-661-8864.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Network Update

The Metis Settlements FASD Network exists to enhance the capacity of our Communities to prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and support those impacted by FASD through coordinated planning, collaboration, education, service delivery and advocacy. The strategic direction and goals are influenced by the Provincial FASD Network core operating values in collaboration with the Metis way of life. Components to Metis way of life and other components that make us unique include but are not limited to, the following:

- We, as Metis people, know who we are in terms of our own identity and it is very different than who so many people think we are (identity tied to Canadian history)
- We, as Metis people, have our own unique government (only legislated Métis government in Canada)
- We, as Metis people, have our own land base (we are the only Metis to have this distinction)
- We, as Metis people, have a value system of family, humor, hard work, community involvement/participation, humility, respect, equality, etc.
- We, as Metis people, have a close connection, and both positive and historic relations with provincial government
- The structure of the community & the dynamics within each community

We are the only Métis land-based Government in Canada. Our culture guides and shapes our partnerships. Respect, hard work, creativity, and commitment are the hallmarks of our present and future relationships. We are in a unique position to lead by example by building enriching partnerships that yield economic and social prosperity.

Programs and Services Offered

Assessment & Diagnosis

- Assessment services include appropriate screening and assessments to guide planning. Assessment and diagnostic services may or may not lead to a confirmed diagnosis under the spectrum of FASD.
Assessment includes medical, cognitive, behavioural screening, and referrals to professionals who provide diagnosis.

- Diagnostic services include medical, cognitive and behavioural assessments by a multi-disciplinary team whose members will vary depending on the age and/or presentation of the individual being assessed. Diagnosis includes assessment services as well as a formal diagnosis on the FASD spectrum provided by a physician and multi-disciplinary team, or a multi-disciplinary diagnostic team.

Supports through the Lifespan

- Supports are considered to be programs and services in the community, aimed at enabling individuals affected by FASD to reach their potential, as well as supports and assistance to families and caregivers of individuals affected by FASD.
- Supports include the following areas but are not limited to: information, service coordination/case management, supports for daily living, rehabilitation/behavioural, opportunities for meaningful activities, and respite services.

PCAP (Parent-Child Assistance Program)

- The Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP) model has been chosen in Alberta to provide services for targeted and indicated prevention of FASD.
- The primary goal of PCAP is to prevent future births of alcohol and drug exposed children. We do this by addressing the needs of the mothers – and getting them stabilized in a variety of ways. We envision a province where women with substance abuse issues are well supported in their communities to have healthy pregnancies and healthy families.

Métis Settlements FASD Network Service Areas

- Buffalo Lake, Gift Lake, East Prairie, Kikino, Elizabeth, Paddle Prairie, Fishing Lake, and Peavine.

Contact Information

Anita Anderson, FASD Network Coordinator
Métis Settlements FASD Service Network
Suite 101, 10335-172 Street
Edmonton, AB T5S 1K9
Toll Free: 1-888-213-4400 ext. 4078
Office: 780-822-4078
Cell: 587-336-5683
Email: Aanderson@msgc.ca

First Nations and Metis Women’s Economic Security Councils

In 2013, the Elected Secretary (Loretta Calliou) and Treasurer (Sherry Cunningham) were appointed by Ministerial Order to serve on the Metis Women’s Economic Security Council. Please see the attached update as provided by the Government of Alberta, Aboriginal Relations Ministry.

Introduction:

Talks on barriers to Aboriginal women’s economic security started in August 2013 with Metis women. Two more meetings were held before the Council was formally established by Ministerial Order in December 2013 to provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Alberta and interested stakeholders on strategies to improve the economic security of Metis and Inuit women. Barriers to economic security are many and
complex; therefore, the Council was purposeful about starting small and building on existing resources. We asked for and were provided an inventory of Government programs and services that are intended to benefit Aboriginal women.

The Council held two meetings in 2014 and monthly conference calls on issues impacting Metis and Inuit women’s economic security and established a small working group to develop an advisory framework based on the Council’s findings in its first year of operation.

- April 28, 2014 – The Council held its first face-to-face meeting at the Metis Settlements General Council offices. The meeting was facilitated and included a team-building exercise, finalizing the Council’s Terms of Reference and identifying priorities.
- June 2014 – The small working group distributed a draft advisory framework on the Council’s priorities, barriers to success and proposed solutions and received feedback from the Council.
- September 8 and 9, 2014 – The Council heard presentations from Service Alberta on the progress of connectivity to all Metis communities and the web portal for Government of Alberta programs and services. The Aboriginal Development Branch from Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour presented on support for individual entrepreneurs and the Council provided feedback on the draft Justice Framework to Address Violence against Aboriginal Women and Girls.

On November 25, 2014, the Council presented its reports and recommendations to the Associate Minister of Aboriginal Relations and the Legislative Secretary, Aboriginal Education, and Jobs Skills and Training. This was the same day we supported a partnership between the Government and the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association to launch the Moose Hide Campaign, which encourages all men to take a stand against violence towards Aboriginal women.

In March 2015 the Government accepted all of the Council’s recommendations. The link to the report with its recommendations and Government’s response can be found at www.aboriginal.alberta.ca. Some actions the government will take include:

- Continue funding for training and work experience for Metis and Inuit women through the Aboriginal Training to Employment Program and support for entrepreneurs through the Small Business Centre Website.
- Assist with development of a plan for a Metis Women’s Social Enterprise Cooperative to promote, protect and sell authentic Metis arts and crafts through Business Link’s Aboriginal Business Development Services program.
- Work on developing a user friendly portal to programs and services for Aboriginal people on www.alberta.ca.

The Council is supported by a division in Aboriginal Relations, Aboriginal Women’s Initiatives and Research, and a cross-ministry committee on Aboriginal women’s economic security. The committee will report back twice a year on government’s progress on our recommendations. These groups are working hard to provide us with the information and support we need to do our work. For example the Alberta Craft Council presented to us in March about ways it could support the social enterprise of Metis arts and crafts. We also met with representatives from Alberta Health Services to discuss improvements to the health navigator recommendation.

Last October, our co-chair represented the Council at the National Aboriginal Women’s Summit in Cape Breton. There is plenty of interest in the work of the Council and this is only the beginning. The Council has a five-year mandate. We are determining our priorities for 2015 and look forward to the government’s progress on our 2014 recommendations.
Advisory Framework Metis Women’s Council on Economic Security

Priorities

Through in-depth discussion of the myriad of issues facing Metis women in Alberta, reviews of existing literature and the collective expertise and experience, the Council identified the following three priorities to address the economic security issues of Metis women in Alberta:

- Education and Training
- Health and Wellness
- Employment and Entrepreneurship

One major theme emerged related to each of the priority areas which must be considered as part of all solutions proposed. The theme centered on “navigational” support for access to both existing and new programming. Navigation was defined as both electronic and human navigational support.

The Council is aware that Metis and Inuit women face challenges at every stage of the continuum in each of these priority areas. Rather than try to address the issues broadly, the Council proposes to target specific challenges within each priority area.

Education and Training:

For the priority of Education and Training the Council chooses to focus on the challenge of Metis and Inuit women having increased support and access to basic education; the Council coined this as The First Step. The challenge was chosen because there is a demonstrated recognition that Metis and Inuit women want to advance themselves but lack awareness of existing resources, courage and support to do so. It is also recognized that many women fail to qualify for any level of post-secondary education and struggle with basic skills to prepare themselves to enter any type of formal education. The First Step focus can be the bridge between the desire and the skill gap to be able and ready to qualify for more advanced training and education.

Recommendation One

(A) Develop a phased-in approach with Service Alberta to improve the existing link to Aboriginal programs and services, and review existing government assessment tools that may further refine an individual’s search for appropriate supports. As part of this review, identify gaps and adjust the assessment tool as needed for the target audience. The goal is that the portal combined with the assessment tool will refer the user to appropriate resources based on their state of readiness. (Service Alberta, Corporate Website Sponsor, and steward of the infrastructure/platform and Aboriginal Affairs would work collaboratively with Cross-Ministry teams who are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the content (ensuring links are functional and up-to-date) on the portal.

(B) It must be recognized that there are members of the Metis community who would not have the skills, technological resources, and/or motivation to access even the most user-friendly GOA portal. For these members of our community who have otherwise been left behind, an outreach service through the Settlements, Metis Nation of Alberta or the Friendship Centres may assist these women in making the first step by helping them navigate the information on the GOA portal.

Rationale:

A Government of Alberta portal to Aboriginal programs and services with an assessment tool can serve as a gathering place and provide referrals appropriate to each woman’s stage of life and readiness to contribute to the economy.

There are degrees of readiness for education, mentorship and employment programs. Women with criminal records, financial barriers and mental health issues will require additional supports to develop financial acumen and build their confidence and self-esteem before they are able to access existing programs.
Service Alberta has a link to Aboriginal programs and services and it is timely to complete a content review to ensure information and services are relevant. It is still possible to build from the existing system and refine existing assessment tools that identify readiness based on some of the following criteria:

- Needs upgrading
- Needs rehabilitation, treatment, life skills training
- Needs work experience
- Needs support (start-up capital) for entrepreneurship
- Needs advanced education or professional development

Depending on the needs, the woman is referred to the appropriate resources. It must be recognized that "pan-Aboriginal" programs are not always accessible to Metis people because where there is funding through the First Nations and Inuit health departments there is most often a complete lack of funding for Metis people to attend "Aboriginal programs". In order to make "referrals to appropriate resources" meaningful for Metis people, there must be appropriate funding for Metis people to access these resources. Mapping the links is one way of identifying gaps among existing programs and could lead to further recommendations.

The Council acknowledges this does not address the issue that many Metis and Inuit women do not have connectivity, access to technology or know how to use it. This is a gap that may be addressed in upcoming recommendations.

**Government of Alberta Response:**

1A) ACCEPT BUT MODIFY

Public Affairs Bureau will lead a phased-in approach to improve awareness of and access to Aboriginal programs and services under the one Government of Alberta public website (alberta.ca).

Alberta Supports has an online assessment tool that all Albertans can use to assist them in identifying their needs. The same assessment can be done over the phone or in person at one of the Alberta Supports sites. Further enhancements to the assessment tool are being developed.

Innovation and Advanced Education will support this recommendation through the Small Business Centre Website, which compiles several resources for Aboriginal entrepreneurs, including one specifically targeted to First Nations, Metis and Inuit Women.

1B) ACCEPT

Options to support this recommendation will be developed and implemented using existing resources. In the meantime, Alberta Supports Click, Call or Come In provides different avenues for Albertans to obtain information on social-based programs and services offered by the Government of Alberta.

**Recommendation Two:** Provide ongoing government funding of proven partnerships and proven Metis run programs that provide Metis and Inuit women with training, work experience and mentorship opportunities.

**Rationale:** An inventory of government programs and partnerships with non-profit organizations revealed a wide array of programs available to help Metis and Inuit women take that first step towards economic security, but are they achieving the desired results? Some of the programs lack a formal evaluation process, which leads to difficulty in gathering data that can support the argument for sustainable government funding.

Other programs may have an evaluation process, but they are pilot projects involving one-time funding. An opportunity to improve socio-economic outcomes for Metis and Inuit women is lost without transitioning successful pilot projects to projects that receive ongoing funding.
Alignment to Government of Alberta Priorities and Connecting the Dots: An Aboriginal Workforce Strategy

- Increasing Albertans’ quality of life by becoming the leader in the areas of health care, education and skills training. (Government of Alberta News Release, Sept 16)
- Recommendation 25: The Government of Alberta explore ways to improve communications with First Nations, Metis and other Aboriginal communities and organizations about provincial programs and services for Aboriginal people, and to improve awareness and linkages across ministries that serve Aboriginal people. (Connecting the Dots, 2010)

Government of Alberta Response:

ACCEPT

Alberta is committed to working towards improved outcomes for all Albertans, including Aboriginal people. Human Services currently supports organizations to build essential and employment skills of Aboriginal people. Ongoing funding for training and work experience is available for Metis and Inuit women through the Aboriginal Training to Employment Program. ATEP partnerships assist unemployed or marginally employed Aboriginal people gain the necessary skills training and/or work experience in projects to obtain and maintain long-term employment.

IAE places a high priority on ensuring access to quality advanced learning and training opportunities for all Albertans, including Aboriginal Albertans, and is committed to working with partner ministries and stakeholders to support educational achievement of Aboriginal students in Alberta.

IAE is working on a number of strategies to increase opportunities and participation in the apprenticeship system. For example, IAE provides funding to the Northeast Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative which connects Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to careers in the trades through mentorship.

IAE also supports this recommendation through other initiatives:

- The Small Business Centre website which compiles several resources for Aboriginal entrepreneurs, including one specifically targeted to First Nations, Metis and Inuit women.
- Careers: The Next Generation Aboriginal Youth Initiative, which helps motivate Aboriginal youth to enter trades and tracks and supports their progress through the system. Finally, IAE places a high priority on ensuring access to quality advanced learning and training opportunities for all Albertans, including Aboriginal Albertans, and is committed to working with partner Ministries and stakeholders to support educational achievement of our province’s Aboriginal students.

Health and Wellness

Having an array of programs and services available is of little value if Metis and Inuit women do not feel worthy of participating fully in their communities and the Alberta economy. Self-worth is achieved through a healthy mind, body and spirit. Health and wellness is a process and initiatives need to address treatment and support for those who suffer mental health issues, abuse and addictions. We must build capacity within the Metis and Inuit community to provide services, improve performance and solutions must be community-based.

The Health Status of the Metis Population of Alberta report states the following:

In a study that conducted focus groups with Metis women, Bartlett (2004) reported that Metis women’s conceptions of health and well-being could be grouped into spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual/mental dimensions of well-being; however despite these conceptions of health and wellbeing, they are not incorporated into health or social programs for Metis women (Bartlett, 2004). Additionally, it was observed that neither the presence nor the absence of disease was directly
conveyed as factors related to health or well-being (Bartlett, 2004). Bartlett suggests that culturally appropriate services, programs, and research further explore the inclusion of spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual/mental dimensions of well-being, rather than the current approach of a primarily physical well-being.

**Recommendation Three:** Establish health navigators who can serve as guides to health and wellness supports through the Settlements, urban and rural communities and who can help bridge the cultural gap with Alberta Health Services to develop more culturally relevant health care.

**Rationale:** The health system is intimidating and complex for many Metis women. *Culturally Responsive Care* is gaining ground in the medical field. Rather than patient-centred care, culturally responsive care takes a world view. Questions on health beliefs, expectations of care, and cultural history are important skills in the health care provider’s toolbox and the navigators can assist in the development of improved cultural competency among health care providers. Culturally appropriate services require a commitment of long-term funding to adequately measure results.

**Alignment to Government of Alberta Priorities**
- Increasing Albertans’ quality of life by becoming the leader in the areas of health care, education and skills training (Government of Alberta News Release, Sept 16).

**Government of Alberta Response:**

ACCEPT IN PRINCIPLE

Different initiatives focused on navigation and cultural awareness are underway in the province with the intent to address unique challenges of Aboriginal people, including Aboriginal women and girls. Communication of the current initiatives may serve to ensure awareness, increase service update, and improve quality of services. The Councils’ input and clarification are needed, especially on culturally relevant health care.

**Employment and Entrepreneurship**

Some Metis and Inuit women participate in the economy via the sale of their arts and crafts. Particularly in remote communities where transportation and child care are significant barriers to economic security, there is an opportunity for women in rural and urban Alberta to turn their craft into a home-based and medium sized businesses. For a variety of reasons, participation in this activity is limited. The women need to develop their knowledge of marketing their products, protecting their work, as well as how to develop and manage a small business.

**Recommendation Four:** Form a working group with representation from government, the Metis and Inuit community and business to develop a business plan for a Metis Women’s Social Enterprise Cooperative to promote and connect crafters and protects the authenticity and integrity of their work.

**Rationale:** The Council cited instances in which retailers in Alberta’s major tourist destinations are selling Aboriginal arts and crafts produced in China. A 1997 study found 81 percent of Canadian Indigenous artisans had experienced some form of misappropriation or misuse of traditional Aboriginal designs.

A 2004 Parliament of Canada report on *Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Property Rights* notes, “For indigenous peoples such as Aboriginal Canadians, the rationale for protecting traditional knowledge centres on questions of fundamental justice and the ability to protect, preserve and control one’s cultural heritage. There is also the concomitant right to receive a fair return on what these communities have developed: many areas of traditional knowledge have potentially lucrative applications.”

Providing Metis and Inuit women with the support to protect traditional knowledge through the creation and marketing of their arts and crafts is a business opportunity that increases economic security.
Alignment to Government of Alberta Priorities

- Increasing Albertans’ quality of life by becoming the leader in the areas of health care, education and skills training. (Government of Alberta News Release, Sept 16)
- Recommendation 14: The Province continue to support and foster urban Aboriginal partnerships and initiatives that address the employment, education and economic developments priorities of urban Aboriginal communities. (Connecting the Dots, 2010)
- Recommendation 20: First Nations, MSGC, MNAA, and other Aboriginal organizations work with all levels of government and partner organizations to create an environment for encouraging more entrepreneurial activity in Aboriginal communities across Alberta. (Connecting the Dots, 2010)
- Recommendation 26: Employment and Immigration ensure Aboriginal people in Alberta can access provincial career counseling and employment services that are available to all Albertans. (Connecting the Dots, 2010)

Government of Alberta Response:

ACCEPT

Aboriginal Relations will lead the establishment of a working group of Government, the Metis and Inuit community, and business to explore the feasibility and potential development of a business plan for a social enterprise or cooperative to promote, protect and sell authentic Indigenous arts and crafts.

Innovation and Advanced Education supports this recommendation through Business Link. Business Link has an Aboriginal Business Development Services program that could assist with the development of the Metis Women’s Social Enterprise Cooperative.

Government of Alberta – Next Steps:

The Aboriginal Women’s Economic Security Cross Ministry Committee will report semi-annually to the Councils and government on the progress made in the implementation of the accepted recommendations.

There are currently Board positions available for Metis women who are interested in making a strong contribution to the work of the Council.

For further information or to submit an application, please contact:

Tracy Balash
ADM, Aboriginal Women’s Initiatives and Research
Alberta Aboriginal Relations
Phone:  780-638-5656
Email:  tracy.balash@gov.ab.ca

*Deadline:  August 15, 2015
*Must include a biography, resume and letter of support
METIS SETTLEMENTS GENERAL COUNCIL ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY JULY 10, 2015

THE LEGENDS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

www.thelegends.ca

SHERWOOD PARK, AB

Contact Brenda Sayers @ 1-888-213-4400 or 780-822-4096

ENTRY FEES:
$125.00 PLAYER/$500.00 TEAM (Includes: Green Fees, Cart Rental, BBQ Dinner)

2:00 P.M. SHOT GUN

RAFFLES

50/50 DRAW

PRIZES

A Big Thank You To

Servus Wealth Strategies

For Sponsoring The Hole In One Contest And The $10,000 Prize!!!