

The Métis Trailblazer

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**Métis
Employment
& Training**



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**Métis
Employment
& Training**

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The Métis Trailblazer Magazine is published by Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) Métis Employment & Training (MET) department which operates through funds provided by the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Agreement with Employment & Skills Development Canada (ESDC).

A message from the Manitoba Métis Federation President, **David Chartrand**



The Red River Métis are an unstoppable force that continually breaks boundaries and defies expectations. When our Government signed the first Métis Human Resource Development Agreement (MHRDA 1) with Canada, 25 years ago, we laid the foundation for a new era. One in which our people would finally get the chance to fully participate in the economy and thrive on our terms. Through this work, we have set the gold standard for employment training and workforce participation across Canada.

The impact is clear in the numbers: tens upon tens of thousands of Red River Métis have benefited from MET's initiatives over the years. We have also partnered with countless family-owned Red River Métis businesses, as well as small and medium sized enterprises – which have been the staple of our economic progress for over two decades. This record of success has attracted large industry partners across many sectors, despite the complexities of big business. Through partnerships with industry and within our Government, backed by significant investments of over \$15 million annually towards MET programs and services, our Citizens now have access

to countless opportunities to succeed in industries such as the trades, healthcare, education, security, and more.

Let me be clear - one of the many keys to our success lies in our strong partnerships with private businesses, non-profits, and the strength of the Departments and Affiliates within our Government. These collaborations have allowed us to provide our Citizens with not only valuable employment opportunities, but also with the work experiences and pathways needed to secure to long-term and well-paying careers. When we began, we worked hard to build these relationships and prove that we could succeed and help industry succeed, while allowing our Citizens to thrive. Today, we are recognized widely by industry partners who now approach us when a need is identified, instead of waiting for us to knock on their doors.

Looking towards the future, MET is dedicated to expanding our reach and impact even further. Together, we are laying the groundwork for a prosperous and thriving economic future for the Red River Métis for generations to come.

Our legacy is built on the belief that by helping to build strong families, we are building strong communities, and a strong Nation. As we continue our journey, I am confident that the Red River Métis will continue to be a force to be reckoned with, breaking barriers and creating a brighter future for our people.

Believe in Yourself – Believe in Metis.

Meeqwetch,

David Chartrand, L.L.D. (Hon.), O.M.
President, Manitoba Métis Federation

A message from the Minister of Métis Employment & Training

John Fleury



As we step into another year full of promise and potential, I'm reminded of the unwavering spirit of the Red River Métis. Our path, of both the Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department and the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), has always been about more than just survival—it's about innovation, growth, and leading the way with pride in our heritage towards an even brighter future for the Red River Métis.

This past year highlights the power of our partnerships and alliances with local and regional employers. We are paving the way for the Red River Métis to be leaders in the economy, creating opportunities for today and for future generations.

By strengthening our connections with Red River Métis businesses, entrepreneurs, and larger enterprises in the community, we are continuing to blaze a trail of opportunity and prosperity for Red River Métis Citizens.

I extend my sincere gratitude to President David Chartrand, fellow MMF Cabinet members, our Local Advisory Committee volunteers, and everyone who supports our mission. Your dedication is invaluable, and together, there are no bounds to what we can achieve for the Red River Métis Nation.

As we continue this journey, let us carry forward the spirit of innovation, strength, and resilience that has defined us for generations. Let us face new challenges head-on, seize new opportunities, and work tirelessly to build an even brighter future for the next generation of Red River Métis.

Looking back on these 25 years of Métis Employment & Training's remarkable success, let's remember—when we come together, when we work together, when we Believe in each other, believe in ourselves, and believe in the Red River Métis, there truly is no limit to what we can achieve.

Meeqwetch,

John Fleury
Minister of Métis Employment & Training

A message from the Associate Minister of Métis Employment & Training

Joan Ledoux



It fills me with pride reflecting on our journey over the past 25 years, from grassroots to the present. The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) and Métis Employment & Training (MET) department were born from the passion and dedication of Red River Métis Citizens who recognized their unique identity and vision for a better future. Despite limited resources and challenging circumstances in the early day, we never wavered in our commitment to laying the foundation to empower our people that we continue to build upon today.

Reflecting on my personal journey, starting from my involvement in local and regional boards to becoming the Associate Minister of Métis Employment & Training, I am so proud of the progress we have made. It's not just about our milestones but the vibrant Red River Métis spirit that continues to drive us forward. Our Métis Employment and Training programs have opened doors for countless individuals, providing opportunities that were once unimaginable.

A significant accomplishment was the signing of the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Agreement with the federal government in 2019, marking a new chapter of opportunity for Red River Métis Citizens to reach their full potential. Minister Fleury, President Chartrand, and the dedicated staff at MET have positioned the MMF and the Red River Métis Nation to achieve advancements and successes that have been decades in the making. This is just the beginning of what we can achieve together.

As we look to the next 25 years, our mission remains clear: empowerment through education and training, fostering a future where every Red River Métis citizen can dream and achieve without barriers. We are not just a Government, but a family, working collectively for the betterment of all Red River Métis Citizens.

Thank you all for your contributions, sacrifices, and commitment to our shared vision. Together, we continue blazing a trail of success Red River Métis excellence.

Meeqwetch,

Joan Ledoux
Associate Minister of Métis Employment & Training.
Minister of Post-Secondary Education



Empowering Red River Métis Futures Métis Employment & Training

For over 25 years, the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department has symbolized opportunity and growth for Red River Métis Citizens.

With an unwavering commitment to empowering individuals through targeted training and employment programs, MET continues to play a transformative role in the lives of thousands.

As we reflect on the successes and challenges of recent years, the MET Department stands as a testament to innovation, collaboration, and resilience within the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) framework.

Since its inception, MET has been recognized as a top ISET agreement holder, impacting over 48,000 Red River Métis Citizens through its programs and services. MET's Citizen-centric approach ensures each citizen's unique needs are met through personalized training and employment strategies.

According to Minister of Métis Employment & Training, John Fleury, "The Métis Employment & Training Department's success lies in its ability to adapt to the ever-changing labour market while staying true to the cultural and economic aspirations of our people." This adaptability is evident in the diverse array of programs offered, including skills

development, job placement services, educational support, and vocational training.

MET's training initiatives are tailored to meet labour market demands specific to the Red River Métis. Programs such as the Project-Based Training Initiatives in field such as construction and early childhood education have equipped Citizens with valuable technical and employability skills crucial for sustainable employment.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration forms the cornerstone of MET's strategy. By partnering with industry leaders, government bodies, and educational institutions,



Métis Employment & Training

MET partners with employers across our Homeland to empower Red River Métis Citizens towards success with a range of programs, services, and supports – from employment counselling to individual sponsorships, job search assistance, and MORE!

PROGRAMS & SERVICES:

MET offers programs, services and supports to help Red River Métis Citizens achieve their goals, from employment counselling to recruitment services.

INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIPS:

Funding is available for eligible programs such as certificate or diploma programs up to two years, the final year of the first undergraduate degree, apprenticeship training, and essential skills training.

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS:

We work with employers in our Homeland to offer recruitment services and wage subsidies, providing valuable work experience for our clients.

JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE:

Our staff provide guided assistance with resume and cover letter development, technology access for job search activities, and information on employment and training opportunities.

MET ensures comprehensive support for its clients. Notable partnerships with organizations like Stanley Electric, Knutson Building, and NRG Management exemplify MET's commitment to providing meaningful employment opportunities. These partnerships extend into various sectors, ensuring diverse career paths for Red River Métis Citizens. By aligning with industry trends, MET not only addresses labour market needs but also strengthens economic stability within the Red River Métis Nation.

SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

The Summer Student Employment Program (SSEP) is pivotal in introducing Red River Métis Youth to the working world, fostering skills, and instilling a strong work ethic. By funding over 300 student positions annually, MET supports young citizens' economic advancement and invests in the Red River Métis Nation's future.

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING INITIATIVES

Through the Single Seat Sponsorship and University Degree Granting Programs, MET demonstrates its dedication to educational advancement. These initiatives provide financial support for citizens pursuing post-secondary education, bridging the gap between education and employment.

In addition to the robust training and partnership programs, MET is exploring further opportunities to expand its reach. Initiatives like enhancing early childhood education and supporting Red River Métis caregivers reflect MET's comprehensive approach to addressing community needs.

Strategic plans also involve expanding technological integration within programs, offering virtual workshops and online resources to increase accessibility and engagement. By embracing digital tools, MET aims to provide flexible learning and support options, particularly for those in remote communities.

THE LOUIS RIEL BURSARY ENDOWMENT

Since its establishment in 1999, the Louis Riel Bursary Endowment Fund has stood as a beacon of educational support and opportunity for Red River Métis students across Manitoba. Created under the first Métis Human Resources Development Agreement (MHRDA 1), the fund was meticulously designed to

turn an initial financial investment into a sustainable resource that provides lasting educational benefits.

The endowment operates on a straightforward yet powerful principle: the initial capital generates interest, which is then channeled into scholarships and bursaries. This not only ensures sustainability but also commits to a legacy of empowerment and educational access for future generations of Red River Métis Citizens.

“The foresight behind the creation of the endowment emphasizes the critical need for continuous learning and development,” notes Kerry Smith, Senior Director of Métis Employment & Training. “Every dollar invested in our students is a step towards future growth that benefits the entire Red River Métis Nation.”

In just one year, nearly \$976,000 was awarded in bursaries, underscoring an unwavering commitment to education within the Red River Métis Government. These funds have supported countless students across sectors such as healthcare, education, and trades, turning aspirations into achievements.

Minister Ledoux, Associate Minister of Métis Employment & Training and Minister of Provincial Education, underscores the fund’s 25-year success by stating, “Our Government remains steadfast on the future—ensuring that the successes enabled by the Louis Riel Bursary Endowment Fund continue to resonate through the next generations of the Red River Métis.”

The transformative stories of fund recipients illustrate the significant impact of these educational investments. Recipients are not just numbers; they have become leaders and innovators in their respective fields. This success highlights the importance of investing in the education of Red River

Métis Citizens, proving that such investments yield fruitful outcomes.

As MET commemorates the milestone signing of MHRDA 1, the organization remains dedicated to expanding the reach of the Louis Riel Bursary Endowment Fund, fostering more equitable opportunities for education and economic prosperity for the Red River Métis Citizens.

Looking forward to 2024-2025, MET aims to enhance its programs to align further with industry needs and increase Red River Métis participation in the labour market. Hosting a Workforce Symposium is among its strategic plans, connecting employers with job seekers and reinforcing its role as a hub for career development and community support. Associate Minister Joan Ledoux emphasizes, “Our vision is to continue building on our legacy of success, adapting and innovating to meet the needs of our citizens, while preserving and promoting our rich Red River Métis heritage.”

Through continued dedication and strategic planning, the MET Department aims to further enhance its impact, ensuring that every program and initiative contributes to the vibrant growth of the Red River Métis Nation. For those looking to build a future rooted in opportunity and cultural pride, MET stands as a guiding force, embodying the promise of a brighter tomorrow.

➤ For more information on MET’s programs and services, and to learn how you can participate, visit our website at mmfemployment.ca or contact us directly at 204-586-8474



Champions of Strength

The Impact of Our Volunteers

As the Manitoba Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department celebrates its 25th anniversary, it is time to reflect on the profound impact that the Provincial Management Board (PMB), Local Management Boards (LMB), and Local Advisory Committees (LAC) have had on its success.

These governing bodies have not only shaped policies and practices but also cultivated leadership within the Manitoba Métis Federation (MET), continuously driving MET's mission to empower Red River Métis Citizens, opening up doors for training and employment opportunities.

The effective governance strategy of MET is ensured by a carefully structured framework of the LMBs, and LACs. This structure allows strategic oversight and local input to coexist, facilitating programs that are both well-conceived at a provincial level and fine-tuned to meet local needs.

Historically, the PMB, along with LMBs and LACs, played a critical role in shaping the strategic direction

of MET, making sure that our initiatives are not only compliant with national employment training standards but resonate locally. This collaborative approach has enabled the adaptation of programming to the evolving socio-economic landscape within the MMF's seven regions, ensuring that remains both locally and holistically effective.

The progression from local to regional and national leadership roles within MET epitomizes the nurturing of talent within the organization.

Minister Anita Campbell, a former LMB chair and now a minister in the MMF cabinet, shares her journey.

"Starting out at the LMB level, I witnessed firsthand the specific needs and challenges our community faced. Now, being in Cabinet, I bring those insights into broader policy discussions, ensuring that our strategies are built from real, on-ground experiences," she said.

This seamless transition of leaders from grassroots

roles to top-level management ensures that the leadership remains connected to the community's roots, enriching decision-making processes with practical experiences.

The impact of leadership reforms initiated by PMB, LMB, and LAC can be seen in the success stories of numerous Métis individuals who have benefited from MET's programs. The personal and professional growth of these individuals contributes to the socio-economic upliftment of the entire community.

"We have seen countless individuals move from training to meaningful employment, thanks to the programs shaped by the insights from our LMBs and LACs," said Jack Park, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure at MMF.

Looking ahead, the leaders within MET are focusing

not just on maintaining the momentum but on innovating and adapting to future challenges. The ongoing mission, as outlined by the organizational leaders, is to ensure that the Métis community not only survives but thrives in the changing economic landscape of Manitoba and beyond.

The leadership provided by the PMB, LMBs, and LAC over the past 25 years has been transformative for the MET. They have been champions of change, not only in shaping robust employment and training programs but also in molding leaders who carry forward the legacy of empowerment and advocacy for the Manitoba Métis community.

As we reflect on the achievements of these bodies, it's clear that their impact will resonate for many generations to come, continuing to guide MET towards new heights of success.



Many leaders are in this picture. Some are no longer with us, but all represent a time of growth.

A Legacy of Success



As the Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department celebrates its 25th anniversary, we recognize this milestone as a reflection of a legacy of impact, social innovation, and success for the Red River Métis Nation.

Born out of a profound need to address the economic disparities faced by Red River Métis people, who historically have been marginalized within Canada's workforce, MET set out to move beyond short-term solutions, focusing on creating long-lasting change through skill development and job creation.

Since 1999, the MET Department has directly impacted over 48,000 Red River Métis - including, 16,168 individuals employed, and 9,924 individuals returned to school. At the heart of MET's achievements are the stories of individuals whose lives have been

changed. From enabling people to gain meaningful employment and build careers to fostering educational advances, the contributions of MET have been life-altering.

The MET Department has quite literally rebuilt the economic engine of tens of thousands of Red River Métis Citizens and businesses. Through the hard work and dedication of our volunteers and leadership, MET has forged success stories that resonate deeply within the Red River Métis Nation, inviting others to seek opportunities through MET.

Critical to MET's success has been its leadership. Under the guidance of the MET leadership team, through the consistent self-governance of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), MET has navigated through challenges and adapted to ever-evolving economic and industrial landscapes.

The vision and transformative leadership of President David Chartrand and Minister John Fleury have propelled the MET Department from its humble beginnings to the gold standard in Indigenous employment and training initiatives.

President Chartrand, who has been at the helm for over 27 years, recalls the program's humble beginnings and the obstacles it faced. Minister Fleury, who has been a cornerstone of the MET Department since its inception, emphasized their approach.

"We listened, adapted, and delivered. That's how we ensure our programs truly benefit our community," Minister Fleury said.

Over the past 25 years, the MET Department has scored numerous successes, charting a progressive path that other organizations look to for inspiration.

President Chartrand proudly outlines some of these achievements: "We've seen thousands of our people not just get jobs, but build careers and secure their family's futures." This success is evidenced not just in employment statistics but in the enhanced quality of life for many Red River Métis families.

The legacy of President Chartrand and Minister Fleury through the MET Department is a testament

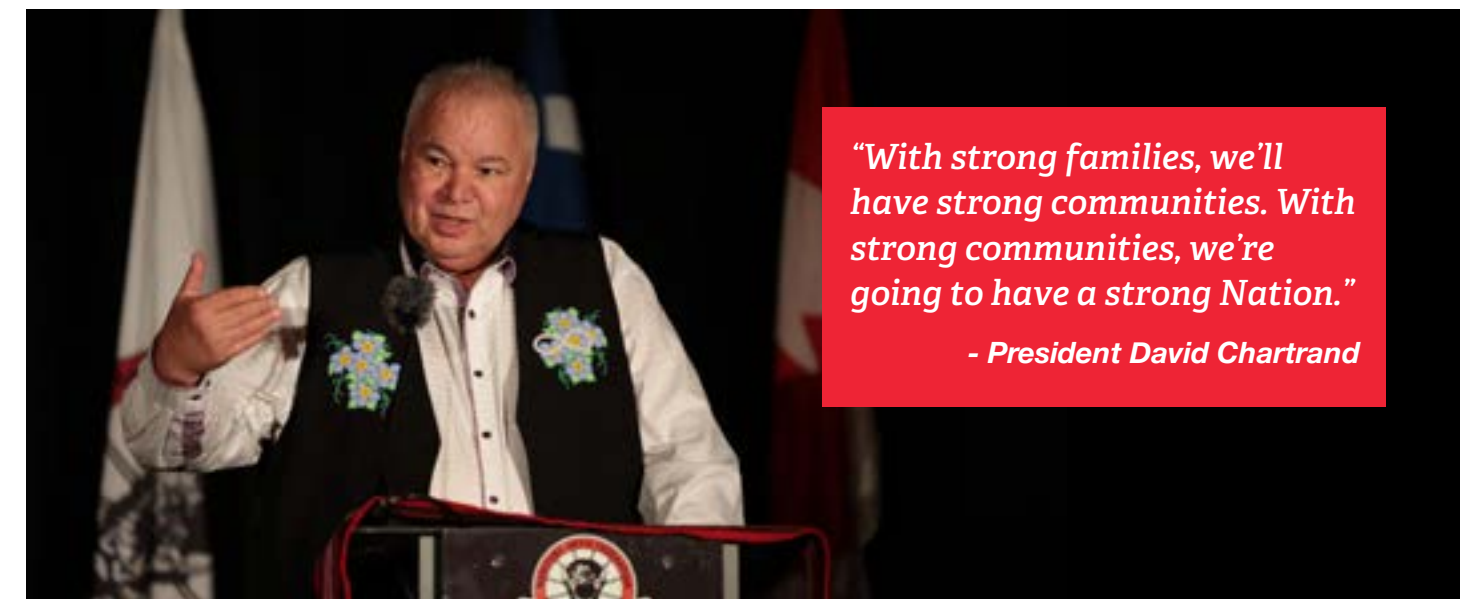
to visionary leadership and the power of self-determination in community development and social innovation. They have set a benchmark in the intersection of education, training, and empowerment that will inspire future generations.

As MET looks towards the future, the focus remains steadfast on expanding and enhancing its programs to meet new market demands and address the changing socio-economic needs of Red River Métis Citizens.

Reflecting on the past 25 years, the Métis Employment & Training Department stands as a remarkable example of what visionary leadership, community engagement, and steadfast commitment to education and employment can achieve.

A quarter century of success marks only the beginning for MET, with the promise of continued growth and prosperity for Red River Métis Citizens, ensuring their rightful place in the economic and cultural fabric of Canada.

As Red River Métis Citizens and our allies celebrate this milestone, there is a collective knowledge that the path ahead is bright with this legacy of success lighting the way.



"With strong families, we'll have strong communities. With strong communities, we're going to have a strong Nation."
 - President David Chartrand

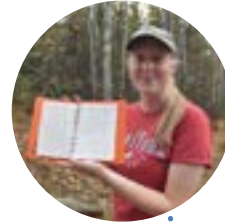
48,568 Success Stories Across Our Homeland

Danica Langan The Pas Region

Education: Natural Resource Management Technology –University College of the North, The Pas, Man.

Occupation: Resource Technician - Manitoba Government

“With the help and encouragement of MMF, I was able to successfully graduate. Their guidance and kindness was unmatched, and I greatly appreciate their financial support. I am proud to be a Metis woman working in the outdoors to preserve our environment, fish, and wildlife for generations to come. Thank you MMF, I will forever appreciate this opportunity!”



Sara Gareau Northwest Region

Education: Primary Care Paramedicine - RRC Polytech

Occupation: Paramedic

“MMF, along with my Metis Employment & Training counsellor helped and supported me with my decision to attend school. They helped me achieve my goals because I never could have done it alone. Before I started school I didn’t have a lot of confidence that I would be successful in my studies, everyone at MMF made that a lot easier for me. If I have any advice for someone who is thinking about attending post secondary school, do it! You can do absolutely anything you set your mind to!”



Joshua Thorne Southwest Region

Education: Automotive Technician Program - ACC

Occupation: Light/Heavy Duty Mechanic

“My journey at Assiniboine Community College was made successful with the incredible support from the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) and Metis Employment & Training (MET). MET helped me with tuition, tools, and provided programs that let me focus on my studies without the stress of a job. Every interaction with MMF was a delight, and I sincerely thank them for their invaluable assistance.”



Angel Lefebvre Thompson Region

Education: Bachelor of Nursing Program, University College of the North & University of Manitoba

Occupation: Registered Nurse - Thompson General Hospital

“My journey with MET has not only allowed me to achieve my dream of becoming a nurse, but it has also given me the confidence to believe that anything is possible with hard work and determination.”



Braeden Yurkiw Interlake Region

Education: Construction Labourer Certificate - MITT

Occupation: Project Coordinator - Métis N4 Construction

“With the support of Métis Employment & Training, I got the help I needed to get through the entire program stress free. I am now working full-time at Métis N4 Construction and I couldn’t be happier, I have a great Mentor and great colleagues who treat me like family. I am very grateful for the support from the MMF which led me to starting this amazing journey.”



Jenna Campbell Southeast Region

Education: Bachelor of Social Work

Occupation: Veterans Service Agent - Veterans Affairs Canada

“MMF has truly transformed my life by financing my final year of school, allowing me to graduate without student debt as a proud Métis graduate. They have shown me the immense support the Métis community offers its students, and I am inspired to give back and support others just as MMF has supported me. This funding lifted a weight off my shoulders, allowing me to focus on my studies, athletics, and community involvement without financial stress. Because of MMF, I am on a path of self-discovery and learning about my Métis culture and heritage, striving each day to be a proud, kind, and strong Métis woman.”



Breanna McLennan Winnipeg Region

Education: Integrated Bachelor of Education University of Winnipeg

Occupation: Teacher - Pembina Trails School Division

“MET’s financial support over my five-year post-secondary journey was transformative. It allowed me to volunteer in elementary schools, coach competitive hockey, and play in the MWJHL, enriching both my professional experience and personal well-being. This support removed financial stress, enabling me to focus on my studies and community, ultimately helping me secure permanent employment. Moreover, MET’s training courses and opportunities helped me embrace my Métis identity, bringing it into my teaching and guiding me towards personal and professional growth.”



MET Success Stories

Red River Métis graduate Julia Greer's education journey has been a testament to dedication, resilience, and the impact of community support.

As she completes her Bachelor of Education Degree, Julia reflects on the transformative role that the Métis Employment & Training (MET) program played in her final year.

The financial assistance provided by MET was instrumental in Julia's academic success. With funding for tuition, supplies, and a living allowance, she was able to focus on her studies without the stress of financial strain.



Photos Provided by Julia Greer

"Without this financial support, I would not have found as much success as I did this year,"

Julia shares. Additionally, the local MMF office ensured she was aware of scholarships,

job opportunities, and provided much-needed encouragement through regular communications.

This year marked the culmination of thirteen years of public schooling and seven years of university education for Julia. As she transitions from student to educator, she acknowledges the bittersweet nature of closing this chapter. "I'm excited to move forward and begin a career, but I will miss university too!" she admits. The support from MMF has not only allowed her to excel academically but to savor and fully experience this pivotal year.

Balancing the demands of coursework, student teaching, and maintaining a personal life proved challenging, but Julia overcame these obstacles through motivation and support from her community.

"Having so many balls up in the air is difficult, but having motivation and support from those around

me made it possible," she reflects. This support network has been crucial to her ability to thrive in a rigorous academic program. Looking ahead, Julia is excited to begin her teaching career and is eager to give back to her community. Her goal is to secure a teaching position in her local area, particularly focusing on middle or senior years. "I hope to create an inclusive, positive classroom for all students," Julia envisions.

Through her academic journey and personal growth, Julia Greer has exemplified the power of perseverance and community support. Her story is a reminder of the importance of programs like MET, not only in providing financial aid but in fostering a supportive environment where students can truly flourish.

As she steps into her role as an educator, Julia is poised to inspire and nurture the next generation, bringing her passion for education full circle.



Red River Métis Roofer's Career Pivot Leads to Passion

Originally published in *Le Métis* - June 19, 2024



Brianne Pearase's life took a transformative turn when she decided to pursue her passion for occupational health and safety with the support of the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) Métis Employment and Training (MET) Department.

During high school, the Red River Métis Citizen was interested in the automotive industry, which helped lead her to where she is today.

"I took power mechanics with the hope that I would end up in the automotive industry, but I found out I had some allergies to solvents and oils, so it wasn't going to be a career path for me anymore," she said.

Pearase met her husband while working in the office of an automotive shop.

"We have two children together," she said. "I was a stay-at-home mom for 17 years, which was wonderful because I was immersed in my children's lives every day. And it was beneficial to them and for me."

With her children all grown up, Pearase decided to re-enter the workforce. She ended up working as a receptionist for a commercial production company, where she learned more about workplace safety. With her interests piqued, the Red River Métis Citizen decided to reach out to the MMF to see what kind of training they could help her access so she could earn a Health and Safety Professional (HSP) designation.

"I met a beautiful, wonderful woman: Gloria, my MET counsellor. We had never met in person. We just talked on the phone all through COVID. We worked together to try and find a program they could help me with," she said. "(Gloria and MET) believed in me."

The MMF's MET Department operates through funds provided by the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Agreement with Canada. The initiative links employment and training programming to current and future

labour market demands and ensures that Indigenous people can fully participate in employment and economic opportunities.

While obtaining her HSP, Pearase also accepted a full-time position at Transcona Roofing, a Red River Métis-owned business.

"It's an incredible blessing to work here and have landed here amongst all these people. Rich (Marchetti, president and owner of Transcona Roofing) is an amazing person. He believes in all of us, and I always come back to the quote, 'believe in yourself, believe in Métis.' Rich believes in all of us. He is willing to pour into us if we're going to pour into ourselves," she said. "(My coworkers) are my second family. It's a pleasure to get up and come



here every day and work amongst these people. We are encouraged to be striving for further education, further training."

As safety coordinator for the roofing contractor, Pearase's responsibilities include creating safety policies, reviewing procedures, and liaising with contractors. She said her favourite part of the job is outside of the office.

"That's where I'm communicating and building relationships with my crew members. I go out and I do inspections. When I'm out there on the roof

climbing ladders, I got my hard hat and work boots on, that's where I enjoy it the most," she said. "You're building relationships with these team members. It's not just about the physical safety. When you build relationships like that, it's also striving for mental wellness too."

Pearase is one of many Citizens working on the MMF's Red River Métis National Heritage Centre at Portage and Main. Set to open in 2026, the heritage centre will showcase the history of the Red River Métis, highlighting the rich heritage and contributions of the Métis people to the development of our province. The Citizen felt a sense of pride when she first heard that Transcona Roofing would be working on the site.

"I knew I would get to come here, being in the safety position that I'm in. I spend half my time in the office and half in the field. So, I was like 'oh, I get to see the progress of it, not just the roofing part, but everything else that's going on,'" she said. "With all the buildings the MMF has been acquiring lately, it's exciting to be a part of it."

The Red River Métis Citizen's hard work and dedication was recognized after winning the Construction Safety Award of Merit. The award was presented by the Construction Safety Association of Manitoba and given to her at the annual Safetys Gala in November 2023. The gala is intended to celebrate individuals and businesses committed to workplace safety in Manitoba. Pearase noted you have to be nominated to receive this award.

"There were two nominations that came in from my colleagues," she said. "I also learned other colleagues inquired and said, 'hey, we should nominate Brianne.' It was heartwarming to know so many people wanted to make sure I was recognized, and people were willing to take the time to write those nominations."



“You just have to dig deep and go for it,” she said. “If you’re not happy in what you’re doing, you need to shift something, even if it’s scary. People have found their way to their passions and are living better lives because of it. We’re happy, and that’s when we can give back to the community even more because we are ourselves, we are whole. If it seems scary, you probably need to do it.”

For Pearase, being proud of her Red River Métis heritage means learning more about her culture, including attending the recent Infinity Women Secretariat wellness weekend.

“I like staying connected with my Red River Métis, and learning about these things is all about community. I’m thankful that our Red River Métis Government shares a lot of information through social media, emails, and through Le Metis,” she said.

In honour of her accomplishments, Pearase’s daughter surprised her with a gift before the award ceremony.

“When my daughter learned I was going to be the recipient, she made me a ribbon skirt specifically for this event,” she said. “Being able to have my name called and walk across to receive this award in my ribbon skirt as a proud Métis woman was exhilarating.”

Aside from the award, Pearase is honoured to go to work every day and do what she loves.

“I care about our crews (that) are out in the field. I want them to go home safely to their loved ones. It’s kind of the mom in me, and I think that’s why I love this job so much is because I care so much about everybody, and I’m able to make a difference in their lives and make sure they work here in a healthy environment and stay healthy and safe, so it’s rewarding,” she said. Pearase knows a career change later in life can be a daunting experience and offered advice to those considering making the change.

The Citizen remains connected to her community by engaging with prominent Red River Métis individuals through social media.

“Following other Métis entrepreneurs is a great way (to build community), because they’re sharing their experiences on their social media platforms,” she said. “After all, we are allowed to be proud, we are allowed to use our voices to share these shining moments that we have, our accomplishments, and what we’re learning.”

Pearase graduated in 2023 at the age of 43, proving that you can pursue post-secondary education at any age.

“Being recognized was huge. I got all dolled up. I didn’t have a grad dress, but I had my ribbon skirt, and I think that was better,” she said. “We pulled up and saw all those faces from our Métis community. Celebrating myself and all the other grads was quite overwhelming.”

Métis Employment & Training

Where Your Potential Meets Opportunity

The Manitoba Métis Federation’s (MMF) Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department guides Red River Métis Citizens towards a future where their skills, heritage, and ambitions merge to thrive in the modern labour market.

Operating under the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISET) agreement between the MMF and Canada, MET offers a variety of employment and training programs and services, including job search assistance,

and individual sponsorship for skills training to support Red River Métis Citizens on their path to success.

Our focus on forming partnerships with industry employers is essential, and ensures Red River Métis Citizens have access to the best possible career opportunities. MET has a proven track record of fulfilling labour market needs of employers while securing employment opportunities for Red River Métis Citizens.

Services Available

- Student Sponsorships
- Project-based Training Initiatives
- Job Creation Partnerships
- Targeted Wage Subsidies
- Labour Market Partnerships
- Job Search Assistance & Supports
- Referrals to employers for direct employment opportunities

Eligible Training:

- Occupational or Industry recognized skills training
- Trades and Apprenticeship training
- Co-operative education programs
- Final year of study in a first undergraduate degree program
- Academic upgrading

Who Can Participate?

- Open to Red River Métis Citizens seeking skill development, training and employment.

For more information on MET’s programs and services, and to learn how you can participate, visit our website at mmfemployment.ca or contact us directly at 204-586-8474 or MET@mmf.mb.ca



Resilience & Perseverance

Alyssa McDonald's Path to Education & Advocacy

Alyssa McDonald has carved a path of resilience and perseverance in her pursuit of education and mental health advocacy.

With her family living two hours away from her university, Alyssa had to navigate the challenges of moving out and living independently to pursue her studies.

"I didn't know about Métis Employment and Training (MET) when I started university; I heard about it through my friend who had a great experience with them," Alyssa explains, crediting MET as a crucial support system in her academic journey.

The support from MET provided her the financial means to complete her final year and live close enough to attend classes—an opportunity she is incredibly grateful for. "Without MET's assistance, I wouldn't have been able to complete my final year," she reflects, grateful for the opportunity to live close to campus and focus on her studies.

Graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work in 2023, Alyssa is now pursuing her Master's in the same field. Inspired by her family's history in helping professions, Alyssa was motivated to follow a similar path. "Knowing I can be there for people and foster hope in their lives is what I wanted to do with mine," she shares. MET's support proved to be a game-changer for Alyssa, not just financially but also emotionally.



Photos Provided by Alyssa McDonald

"The financial assistance alleviated a significant burden, and the emotional support made me feel truly recognized and valued as a Red River Métis Citizen," Alyssa reveals, emphasizing how the program allowed her to focus on her studies without constant financial stress.

As a proud Red River Métis woman, Alyssa feels deeply connected to her family's history and the impacts of colonization. "It was painful knowing my family went through cultural genocide, but they worked really hard to get me where I am today," she reflects. Completing her degree was not just an educational milestone, but a personal triumph over historical adversities. "I am blessed to have chosen an education I love and was fully supported through," she says proudly.

Like many post-secondary students, Alyssa grappled with mental health challenges throughout her studies. By learning how to



manage these obstacles by involving herself in community, talking to friends and family, and seeking professional support, she was able to persevere and achieve her goals. "I have learned to be patient, compassionate, and empathetic towards myself and others," Alyssa notes.

"Coming from a family where my great grandparents were forced into an education system that destroyed much of their culture, being able to CHOOSE my education and have the support to do so is a significant achievement for me."

Currently thriving in her role as a clinical therapist working with Indigenous youth and adults, Alyssa credits the education and support she received for her professional success. "This is the best job I've ever had," she says with enthusiasm, grateful for the chance to make a meaningful impact. River Métis culture and influence.

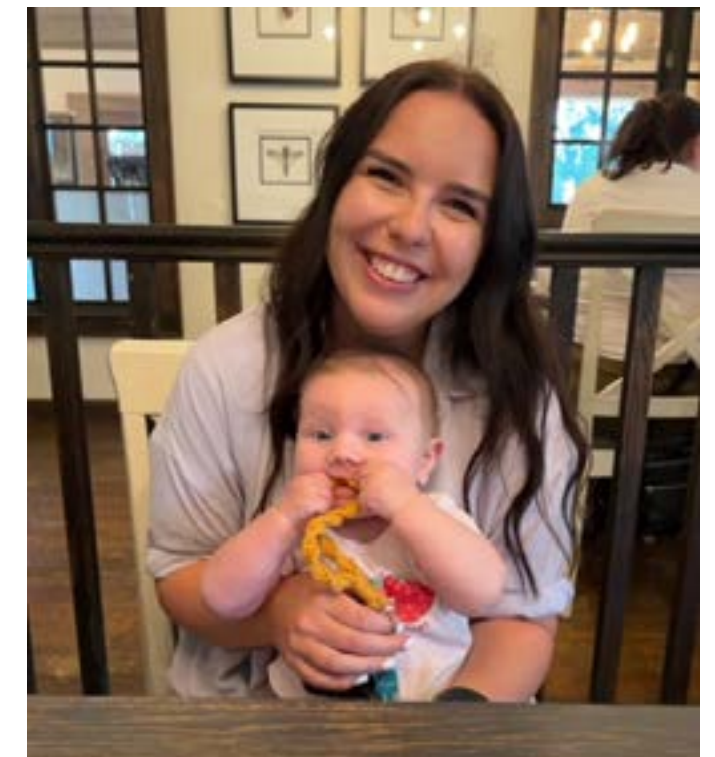
Looking ahead, Alyssa dreams of opening her private practice and furthering her influence on social and mental health services. "I'm eager to contribute to community betterment and touch lives positively," she asserts, emphasizing her devotion to fostering systemic change, especially in mental health care for Indigenous populations.

As she embarks on her master's program at the University of Manitoba, she looks forward with

optimism, knowing that each step she takes is not just for her advancement but for the benefit of those she aims to serve. Her ultimate goal of opening a private practice is not just a career milestone; it represents her commitment to providing accessible and culturally sensitive mental health services that support individuals in finding their own strength and resilience.

Envisioning a future where mental health services are inclusive and reflective of the diverse communities they serve, Alyssa is poised to contribute to this vision, driven by her passion for mental health advocacy and the empowerment of individuals within her community.

She remains committed to making a lasting impact through her work, not just at a personal level, but on a broader, societal scale. Her advice to fellow Red River Métis students navigating their educational or personal challenges is straightforward and wise: "Don't be afraid to ask questions and trust your instincts. You are the expert of yourself."



Heritage & Empowerment

Ashley Haub's Journey in Early Childhood Education

Ashley Haub, a proud Red River Métis citizen from Grande Pointe, Manitoba, is a testament to the transformative power of education and community support. As an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) II, Ashley had always aspired to advance her career and make a significant impact in her field. However, the financial burden of furthering her education while raising a family seemed insurmountable. That changed when the Métis Employment & Training (MET) program offered her a lifeline.

In January 2022, Ashley enrolled in the Early Childhood Program Management program through Assiniboine Community College, facilitated by MET. The program provided her with the financial support she needed, covering tuition and books, and alleviating the stress that had previously held her back. "Without MET, I could not afford to complete the program, the financial piece of it was too costly while trying to raise a family," Ashley reflects.

Balancing her studies with raising two young children, including a three-month-old, and navigating her partner's shift work schedule was a challenge. Yet, the support and understanding from her peers and instructors created a nurturing environment. "The group as well as the instructors were so accepting of everyone's individual situations and were willing to work with us when we needed a little bit of patience or support," she says.

Ashley's commitment and perseverance paid off.



Photos Provided by Ashley Haub

She graduated with honours in June 2023, an achievement that has opened numerous doors for her. As the director of the Louis Riel Child Care Center, she is now in a position to provide better for her family financially and to make a profound impact in her community.

"Completing my ECE III diploma has opened up the door to so many more options for employment, which in turn has better-paying positions," she explains.

But Ashley's journey is about more than personal success. It's about reclaiming and celebrating her Red River Métis heritage—a heritage that she always knew about but never fully understood. "My dad always told us we were Métis but we

never really talked about it because it was never really looked upon with pride back in those days," she recalls. Today, she is determined to change that narrative.

As an educator and leader, Ashley is passionate about integrating Métis culture into early learning. "I always wanted to lead and be a leader with Red River Métis culture in early learning. I want children to know where they come from, bring the culture back, and thrive off it," she says with conviction. Her goal is to ensure that Métis children are proud of their heritage and see themselves as survivors and contributors to a vibrant culture.

Looking forward, Ashley sets her sights on expanding her skills in Business Management, aiming to further develop her professional care in Early Learning and Child Care within the National Government of the Red River Métis. She credits MET not only for the financial and academic support but also for reigniting her drive and confidence. "The opportunities are endless, and being part of this program re-ignited my drive to do better and develop as a professional," she notes.

Ashley's advice to others considering furthering their education is simple yet profound: seize the opportunity. "I would encourage anyone to get their ECE III because it opens up more doors for you that you didn't even know existed," she advises. Her story is one of resilience, community, and the power of education.

In recognition of her hard work and dedication, Ashley recently received a certificate of recognition from Minister Fleury on behalf of the MMF Winnipeg region. This acknowledgment is not just a personal triumph but a celebration of the collective strength and potential of the Métis community. As Ashley proudly states, "To be Red River Métis is to be a survivor."

Ashley Haub's journey from ECE II to ECE III is a shining example of how targeted support and determination can lead to personal and community transformation. Her story serves as an inspiration for all Métis citizens to pursue their dreams and contribute back to their communities, proving that with the right support, the possibilities are endless.



Building a Bright Future

Kiara Kerwin's Journey in the Construction Industry

A recent graduate of the Construction Management program at Red River College Polytechnic, Kiara Kerwin is breaking down barriers to build a successful career in the construction industry.



Photos Provided by Kiara Kerwin

Kiara Kerwin's journey into construction management is a testament to grit, passion, and the power of supportive networks. Graduating high school at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Kiara faced uncertainty about pursuing higher education amid unprecedented global challenges. I wasn't sure about pursuing

education with the restrictions and shifts to online courses," she recalls. Juggling part-time work at Sport Chek and educational aspirations, she eventually took the leap to enroll in the Construction Management program at Red River College Polytechnic.

Supported by the LR Bursary through the Post-Secondary Education Support Program (PSESP) and later by the Métis Employment & Training (MET) program in the Southwest region, Kiara was able to overcome financial burdens and focus on her academic goals. MET, in particular, played a crucial role in her final year by covering tuition, books, and other essential costs. "MET helped me achieve my dream and focus on what I love to do," she emphasizes.

Kiara's passion for construction was ignited at a young age, inspired by her father's career in the industry. "I always tried to help — even if it was just small tasks," she reminisces. Seeing her father build and create instilled in her a fascination for the construction process, leading her naturally towards a career in construction management.

Her educational journey included three co-op terms with Bird



Construction, where she gained invaluable hands-on experience working on construction sites. "You learn so much more by doing than just sitting in a classroom," Kiara notes. Today, she stands as a project coordinator with Bird Construction in Neepawa, where she contributes to building the new hospital—a role she landed after proving her abilities and dedication during her co-op placements.

Despite the challenges, especially as a female in a traditionally male-dominated field, Kiara is witnessing and embracing the industry's evolving landscape. "The construction industry is beginning to shift, and I'm fortunate to work for a company with female leaders I can look up to," she shares. With a strong presence in both her college classes and her workplace at Bird, where female mentors have guided her, Kiara feels supported.

Her involvement in an applied research project during her studies further revealed the vast potential for diversity to address labor shortages in construction. "We learned that diversity—whether women, youth, immigrants, or Indigenous people—

can bring about much-needed solutions," she says. The project underscored the current gender disparity in the industry, with women constituting only a small fraction of the workforce. It also explored initiatives such as transferring immigrants' credentials and training Indigenous communities through collaborations with organizations like the Manitoba Construction Sector Council.

Determined to advocate for and lead this tide of change, Kiara aspires to become more involved in industry boards, such as the Manitoba Women in Construction Board or the Young Construction Leaders in Manitoba Board. "I want to surround myself with like-minded women and support others going through similar experiences," she explains. Her ambition is to mentor the next generation of female construction professionals, demonstrating that gender diversity strengthens the industry.

As she reflects on her journey, Kiara is proud of how she adapted to online schooling during the pandemic and thrived in a field where women are still underrepresented. Her advice to individuals considering a career in the construction industry is straightforward: "Work hard, don't be afraid to ask questions, and always keep learning."

The industry is ever-changing," she encourages. With resilience and a pioneering spirit, Kiara Kerwin is not just building structures in Manitoba; she's helping build a more inclusive and diverse construction industry for future generations.



Shining a Spotlight on Success

This year, the Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department celebrates the remarkable accomplishments of the Red River Métis community through the “Celebrating Red River Métis Achievements Contest” (CRRMA). Supported by the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program, individuals had the opportunity to share their success stories, highlighting personal and professional growth achieved between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024.

Each participant who bravely shared their journey was rewarded with a Participation Incentive of \$250. Beyond this, MET also offered additional recognitions to three grand prize winners, who were selected via an randomized electronic draw process and each received an additional \$500 cash award.

“We are so proud of all our clients who took the time to share their stories with us. They are a true testament to the resilience and determination of

the Red River Métis, and a shining example of what can be achieved with the support of the Métis Employment and Training Department,” said Minister John Fleury, Minister of Métis Employment & Training. “We encourage all Red River Métis Citizens to continue pursuing their goals and aspirations, and the Métis Employment and Training Department is here to support you every step of the way.”

MET would like to thank and congratulate all participants and winners for sharing their inspiring stories, and for their passion, determination, and hard work.

For more information about MET and available programs and services, visit our website at mmfemployment.ca

Meet the Grand Prize Winners:



KIARA KERWIN

Supported by the Southwest MET Office for her Bachelor of Technology in Construction Management at Red River College Polytechnic (RRC Polytech), Kiara is excited to follow in her father’s footsteps and work in the construction industry. According to Kiara, “MET has provided immense support to me throughout my four-year degree, allowing me to focus on my academic goals and achieve success. This has truly been a dream come true.”

Kiara looks forward to what her future holds as she continues to take pride in making an impact as a Red River Métis woman in the construction industry. Her career goal is to become a project manager, emphasizing the program’s role in breaking barriers in traditionally male-dominated fields.



SASHA SMITH

Supported by The Pas MET for her Early Childhood Education Diploma at the University College of the North, MET provided Sasha with the financial security and ability to focus on her studies without the stress of worrying about making ends meet. “The support of MET has allowed me to focus on my academic goals and achieve success. This has truly been a dream come true,” she said.

The support provided by MET allowed her to focus on her studies and embrace her culture and heritage. Despite being away from her family, Sasha excelled in her program and looks forward to a future where she can open her own childcare center. Her journey underscores the program’s role in promoting early childhood education and preserving Red River Métis culture.



AIDEN SMOLINSKI

Supported by the Southeast MET Office for his Electrician Apprenticeship training, Aiden is set to become a proud Red River Métis Red Seal electrician.

“The support from the Manitoba Métis Federation allowed me to be comfortable and stay on top of everything,” Aiden shared.

“The MET Department took away the financial stress that comes with not working while going to school for apprenticeship training. I was able to focus on school work much better without the worry,” he added.

His experience highlights the program’s significant role in reducing financial stress and enabling participants to concentrate on their education and career goals.

Métis Employment & Training Celebrates 25 years of Excellence



Metis Employment & Training Minister John Fleury has been an instrumental part of the department since its inception.

The Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department has spent the last 25 years empowering Red River Métis Citizens through their wide range of programs and services - from career counselling to job search assistance, to financial aid for skills development and training.

On April 25, MMF President David Chartrand, 21 MMF Cabinet Members, and Red River Métis Citizens came together to celebrate MET's 25th anniversary at the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg, MB.

John Fleury, the Minister of MET, has been an instrumental part of the department since its early inception. He oversaw the development of the Metis Human Resources Development Agreement (MHRDA 1) in 1999, which was the

first coordinated effort between the MMF and the Government of Canada to support Red River Metis individuals' labour market success. "When we first started, it was a 30-day type of monitoring system that we were under with the federal government. And today we've signed a 10-year agreement," said Minister Fleury. "So that's progress, and that's confidence from Canada in our government's ability to do this."

Since 1999, the MET Department has directly impacted over 48,000 Red River Métis - including 16,168 individuals employed, and 9,924 individuals returning to school.

"It's not just a job to us, it's a purpose. You know, it's a dream come true. What better service can you be to other people than helping them change their lives?" said Minister Fleury. "We provide our

Citizens the opportunity to build a career that they want and even dream of. We help make it a possibility." Volunteers, program participants, and employees from the past 25 years made up the over 200 guests in attendance, including former MMF lawyer Paul Edwards. "I had the great pleasure of being the lawyer for the Manitoba Métis Federation 25 years ago when we were trying to get this funding back for the MMF and to negotiate the first agreement," said Edwards.

The lawyer spoke to the hard work that took place to get MET to where it is today. "I think sometimes people forget that this was not given easily to the MMF. The MMF had certain funding available for labour and workforce improvement, and (then) it was taken away," he said. "There were many opponents at the political level and the bureaucratic level, but (President) David Chartrand was so persistent, and that ended up being the most important thing. He wanted it back and he was going to get it back."

Edwards acknowledged the vision that was in place for MET programming, specifically its grassroots, "bottom-up model" and the resistance it faced.

"(The MMF) insisted on these funds being controlled at the local level. That was very hotly resisted by the bureaucrats and by the political level we were dealing with," he said. "They didn't see it working. They were consistently saying, 'there won't be enough people, they won't have enough time, (or) ability to control these funds on a local level; it's a nice idea, but it's never going to work.' So, this again was the uphill battle."

With the persistence of President Chartrand and members of the board, they eventually negotiated an agreement that reflected true Red River Métis values. MET's success under the MHRDA agreements eventually became "the poster child" of the country for Indigenous employment and training programs.

"It had been so incredibly successful that the federal government was using the MMF as an example across the country of what could and should happen, so this is an incredible success story tonight," said Edwards. "And I think that history, which I had the opportunity to be involved in at the very beginning, is important to remember today."



MMF President David Chartrand gave the keynote speech at the MET 25 Celebration event.

Jesse Vogen, owner of Stanley Electrical & Mechanical LTD. and one of the speakers of the night, has worked diligently with MET staff to create employment opportunities for Red River Métis Citizens interested in apprenticing for their Red Seal certifications.

“We’ve been able to access (MET’s) targeted wage subsidy program, which is beneficial for us when it comes to onboarding and training apprentices,” said Vogen. “So, we get them for these six months, and we get subsidized, and it’s worked out well moving them into our program.”

Vogen currently has 16 Red River Métis employees, ranging from apprentices to management positions.

“Our collaboration with MET has been a win-win for all involved. They’ve helped me to build a strong team and give opportunities to Red River Métis Citizens,” he said.

The Red River Métis entrepreneur urges individuals to tap into the opportunities MET can offer.

“It’s definitely a go-to program. The resources they have are very sound and there’s a quick turnaround. Everyone on their team is willing to help you and assist you with any type of questions you have. It’s really helpful,” he said.

Andrea Canada, a Red River Métis Citizen in attendance at the event, has been involved with MET since the early 2000s when Manitoba Hydro and the MMF first developed an employment working group.

“I got to work directly representing Hydro with MET,” said Canada. “And then I ended up on the Winnipeg Region Local Management Board, or I guess it’s now called the Local Advisory Committee, and I still am involved with employment and training. I’m very



Left to right: Ministers Shawn Nault, David Beaudin, and John Fleury.



Joan Ledoux, Associate Minister of MET, sees great things for the department following the evening's celebrations.



Jesse Vogen, a true MET success story, shared his experiences with MET at the event. Left to right: Vogen, Minister Peter Fleming emcee.

passionate about helping build people up to the person that they’re going to be through training and employment (opportunities).”

Canada emphasized the significance of investing in the education of Red River Métis Citizens.

“There’s no end to where you can go in your life; you need education, you need a skill set, and you need confidence, and that is what Métis Employment and Training has done. They’ve built up the community by building confidence and building skills and by helping people fight for who they want to be,” she said. Describing MET as a family, Canada hopes more Citizens will connect with the department to get a head start on their careers, and has even encouraged her son to reach out for their services.

“Get involved with your community. Get involved in any way that you can,” she said. “My son is 19 years old and he’s starting to figure out what he wants to do. He’ll be coming to MET to help with education and launching his career, so I encourage all our Citizens to do so (as well).”

As Red River Métis Youth begin to explore opportunities provided by MET, Minister Fleury shared his excitement about this next chapter for the department.

“Let us carry forward the spirit of innovation, strength, and resilience that has brought us this far. Let us embrace new challenges, seize new opportunities, and build an even brighter future for the next generation of Red River Métis Citizens,” he said.

Looking to the future, Joan Ledoux, Associate Minister of MET, sees great things following the evening’s celebrations.

“I’ve been here for a good amount of our 25 years, and as I reflect on what we’ve accomplished to date, I can only see bigger and better things happening as we move forward,” said Minister Ledoux. “The doors are wide open now for Métis Citizens, and whatever we want to do, the opportunity is there. There’s no barrier, and if barriers come up, we will knock them down.”

“**LET US CARRY FORWARD THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION, STRENGTH, AND RESILIENCE THAT HAS BROUGHT US THIS FAR. LET US EMBRACE NEW CHALLENGES, SEIZE NEW OPPORTUNITIES, AND BUILD AN EVEN BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THE NEXT GENERATIONS OF RED RIVER MÉTIS CITIZENS.**”

- MINISTER JOHN FLEURY

Pioneering Red River Métis Prosperity

Jesse Vogen's entrepreneurial journey, marked by a humble beginning and fueled by a fierce determination, embodies the spirit of resilience and innovation characteristic of the Red River Métis Nation.

The founder of Stanley Electrical & Mechanical Ltd., Jesse transitioned from a skilled tradesman to a strategic business owner, a transformation supported significantly by Métis Employment & Training (MET) initiatives. In 2016, Jesse set out to make his mark in the electrical and mechanical industries.

Reflecting on the genesis of his business, he shares, "Back when I started, all I had was a truck, some tools, and a strong desire to build something for our community. The MET department wasn't just a support system; it was a growth catalyst for both my business and for the Red River Métis workforce we're working together to build."

The collaboration between Stanley Electrical & Mechanical and MET has been a game-changer, enabling Stanley to tap into a pool of skilled, dedicated Red River Métis workers eager to advance their careers. "Our collaboration with MET has been a win-win for all involved. They've helped me build a strong team and give opportunities to Red River Métis Citizens."

Vogen calls on fellow Red River Métis business leaders to recognize the immense potential of partnerships with our Government. "The more businesses engage, the more the Red River Métis Nation will prosper," he advocates.

Through his ongoing work with MET, Vogen not only continues to propel his business forward, but also continues to strengthen the economic fabric of the Red River Métis Nation.



Jesse Vogen

"The MET Department wasn't just a support system, it was a growth catalyst for both my business and for the strong Red River Métis workforce we're working together to build."

The Journey of a Red River Métis ECE

Ellen Sanderson's journey from managing a lively household bustling with youth to becoming an early childhood educator (ECE) is a testament to resilience, cultural pride, and the transformative power of community support. A proud Red River Métis Citizen, Ellen's story is not just about personal achievement, but is deeply woven with her heritage and a strong sense of advocacy for education.

Ellen's babysitting duties—caring for her own and her brother's and cousins' kids—sowed the seeds for a career she had never envisioned. It was at a point of uncertainty, after six long years working at Tim Horton's in Dauphin, MB, that Ellen's career path took a pivotal turn. She sought advice at the local friendship center, still in her Tim Horton's uniform, marking the end of one chapter and the start of another. Guided by her will to turn her passion into her career, Ellen, with the help of the Métis Employment & Training (MET) Department, embraced the opportunity to reorient her career towards early childhood education. As she recalls, "If it wasn't for MET, I never would have taken that first step."

Ellen credits Minister Frances Chartrand with believing in her ability to reach her potential. "The day I decided to focus on my career was the day I ran into Minister Frances Chartrand in the parking lot of the Dauphin Friendship Centre," says Ellen.

"I asked her for advice on what education field I should pursue, and as soon as she suggested early childhood education, something 'clicked' inside," she said. "I knew immediately that it was the right path for me: knowing that she believed in me helped me believe in myself."

Ellen's decision was strongly tied to personal motives as well; inspired by her father, a committed Red River Métis man who took pride in his identity long before it was widely acknowledged. "He was a very proud Red River Métis man – before it was cool to be Métis. Now

that he's gone, I do my best to make him proud," she reflects.

For aspiring Red River Métis educators, Ellen advises leveraging the resources available, like those from MET. "Look for the resources out there. I didn't even think to reach out, you just have to look for them," she counsels. She also advocates for more robust support systems to aid early childhood educators, emphasizing that well-supported educators are pivotal to the holistic development of young minds.



Ellen Sanderson

"If it wasn't for MET, I never would have taken that first step."

Angel's Path to Nursing

Angel Lefebvre, a 34-year-old nursing student, is set to graduate this summer from the University of Manitoba Bachelor of Nursing Program Collaborative University College of the North Cohort.

"My journey with MET started this year because they support students in their last year of a four-year university program. The MET Department covered tuition, books, scrubs, shoes, transportation costs, internet. It was quite a bit, I think it was over \$11,000 for the year," she said.

Living in Thompson, Man. and realizing the shortage of professionals in the health care system, Angel had the desire to become a nurse and help her community. "It's hard to get people to come here and stay here and lay down their roots and start their families. It is isolated. We have quite a small hospital here in Thompson and we service all the outlying communities... which is a large population for the resources that we have at our hospital," she explained. "So just seeing that and how the health care system needed help. And I like caring for people."

Raising her 10-year-old daughter, going to school full-time, and working part-time can take a toll on someone's education journey, but the support Angel received from the MET Department eased some of the financial stress and was essential for her success. The MMF understands the importance of holistic support for the unique needs of Red River Métis Citizens. Beyond academic and vocational assistance, the MET Department offers guidance on personal development, mental health resources, and access to community support services.

By addressing the diverse needs of Red River Métis students, the MMF ensures that they are equipped to thrive both academically and personally. "The (nursing) program itself is very heavy course-load, so having that stress relieved on the financial side helped. I haven't had to take on a large amount of debt. A lot of my classmates have massive student loans. I don't have to worry about

it once I'm done and start working," she said. Angel's goal is to stay in Thompson and contribute to her community. "I definitely think I am needed here just because of the state of the shortage crisis, especially in the north. I would like to stay here and work for the hospital," she said.

Angel's advice for those who are thinking about signing up for the MET Department is to take the leap. "Take the leap of faith. There are so many more supports. If you are thinking about your career, or maybe you have tried and are struggling, it is worth it to try again. Talk to MET."



Angel Lefebvre

"If you are thinking about your career, or maybe you have tried and are struggling, it is worth it to try again. Talk to MET."



**Métis
Employment
& Training**

UNLEASH YOUR FULL POTENTIAL

From financial assistance and career counselling to job search assistance and recruitment services, MET supports clients and employers to empower Red River Métis Citizens.

-  **LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMS & SERVICES**
-  **INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIPS**
-  **EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS**
-  **JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE**

CONNECT WITH MET!

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