



Le Métis



President's Message

We have cause for celebration as Finance Minister Bill Morneau presented the 2019 federal budget to the House of Commons yesterday. This budget demonstrates Prime Minister Trudeau's commitment to reconciliation with the Métis Nation. This budget reconfirms the direct funding initiatives of Budget 2018 and commits an additional \$442 million in direct-support to the Métis Nation.

Of note, this budget includes a commitment of \$30 million to Métis Veterans. We have fought hard for justice for our Veterans who were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our country. When they returned home, the country they served abandoned them. Now we will be able to consult with our Métis Veterans and their families on how best to support them with this funding.

Other budget highlights for the Métis Nation include the direct investment of \$50 million in economic development over the next five years, \$362 million for Métis post-secondary students and continued support for Métis housing, early learning and childcare. There is also a commitment, in principle, to support Métis health initiatives including prescription drug supports for seniors. As you know your Métis Government, the MMF, created the Prescription Drug Program to ensure our seniors do not have to go without medication. There are also opportunities for Michif language revitalization and youth initiatives. This is truly a budget for the Métis Nation.

Finally, I am proud to share with you that for the first time in our history, the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) is mentioned specifically in the budget: "Canada and the Manitoba Métis Federation have committed to work together to reach a self-government agreement that implements the Manitoba Métis Community's vision of self-determination." This commitment is true acknowledgement of the Manitoba Métis Community place as partners in Confederation.

Along with this exciting budget news, the MMF is continuing its work with Métis Sixties Scoop Survivors. In fact this weekend, the MMF is hosting a Sixties Scoop Engagement Session in Winnipeg on March 22-24 at the Clarion Hotel. This is the second of six sessions across the Métis Nation Homeland. The first was held last weekend in Swan River at the Elbert Chartrand Friendship Centre. These sessions are an opportunity for Métis Survivors of the Sixties Scoop to share their stories and their needs for healing and their vision for justice. All Survivors and their families are invited to attend these sessions.

Last week MMF also hosted a consultation session focused on three-pillars of environmental sustainability: the MMF's Boreal Forest Initiative, Climate Change Issues, and Wildlife Issues. In the heart of our Homeland, the Métis are stewards of our land, water and our environment. We rely on all three for our livelihood, our access to food, and our health and well-being. The Three-Pillar consultation session was an important opportunity to hear from Métis Citizens where the MMF needs to focus our conservation and sustainability efforts.

The Louis Riel Capital Corporation (LRCC) and the Metis Economic Development Fund (MEDF), two MMF Affiliates, held a conference for Métis businesses and entrepreneurs. The Métis People have a long history as successful business owners and entrepreneurs. This conference helps grow the Métis business directory and helps connect Métis businesses to one another and to potential clients. When Métis businesses can work

together the whole Métis Nation benefits. To this end, the MMF is focused on a Métis first procurement policy.

Furthermore, with their expertise, MEDF and LRCC help launch and support Métis businesses. Whether a Métis business start-up or an established Métis business, the experts at MEDF and LRCC can help your business grow and thrive. We encourage Métis to go into business for themselves and grow our resources as a Nation.

Last weekend I attended the Family Fun hockey tournament at the arena in St. Malo where I presented a donation on behalf of the MMF to the St. Malo Arena for \$25,000. In St. Malo, as in many small towns, the arena is a community hub. When the MMF heard they needed help purchasing a new Zamboni we were proud to step-up and support them. I hope there are many more weekends like this one at arena, weekends filled with quality family time spent enjoying one of Canada's greatest pastime.

This past week was marked by tragedy and violence as terrorists attacked unarmed Muslim worshippers in the middle of their prayers at Mosques in New Zealand. As President of the MMF, I condemn this violence, this racism, and this cowardice. The MMF stands against Islamophobia and other acts of racism. For this reason, your Métis Government flew our flags at half-mast on Friday in solidarity with those who needlessly lost their lives and those who are grieving the senseless acts of violence.

As always, I am proud of the work of the MMF. I am proud of the People of the Manitoba Métis Community. Remember who you are and where you come from. We are the descendants of the Founders of Manitoba. We are partners in Confederation. We are hardworking taxpayers and we are born of this land. Hold your heads-up high as proud Métis. Look out for one another and care for those who are sick and shut-in.

Meeqwetch,

∞ President David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.

Race Shifting: The “Eastern Métis” Movement

Saint Mary's University associate professor Darryl Leroux has studied over 5,000 genealogical records as part of his research into the “Eastern Métis” movement: a phenomenon where white, French descendants use or invent an Indigenous ancestor hundreds of years back in their genealogy in order to claim Métis identity, rights, and cultural symbols. On March 7, Leroux traveled to Winnipeg to share some of his findings with post-secondary students and members of the public at the University of Manitoba.

The event, titled *Race Shifting, DNA Ancestry Testing, and Kinship Aspirations: The “Eastern Métis” Movement*, was hosted in partnership between the University of Manitoba Press and the MMF Bison Local. Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier traveled from Ottawa to attend.

Leroux has counted approximately 50 Eastern Métis organizations in Canada, and he follows five of them closely. His research has found that 80% of the members in these organizations claim indigeneity on the basis of one ancestor from the 1600s, and about 30% have no Indigenous ancestry at all.

The rise of “Eastern Métis” is not about individuals who have been displaced and dispossessed by colonial policy and are now trying to reconnect with their culture. Rather, it is about white, French descendants who claim indigenous ancestry on the sole basis of an Indigenous ancestor born 300-400 years ago, usually thousands of kilometres from the traditional Homeland of the Métis Nation.

The largest of these organizations now has over 20,000 registered members. Leroux has looked into the history and formation of this particular group and learned that it started out as a nine-person hunting rights association that opposed the rights of the Mi'kmaq in Quebec. Through Leroux's research, he has identified the Powley decision as a key to this race-shifting phenomenon.

The Powley decision affirmed the hunting rights of Steve and Roddy Powley, two Indigenous hunters charged with breaking Ontario law when they killed a moose in 1993. They argued that section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, protected their right to hunt for food because they identified as Métis. The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Powleys in 2003, but the definition and “test” they adopted to identify rights-bearing Métis people did not completely align with the National Definition of Métis adopted by the MNC one year earlier in 2002.



MMF Minister Will Goodon introduces Darryl Leroux at the *Race Shifting, DNA Ancestry Testing, and Kinship Aspirations: The “Eastern Métis” Movement* event held in Winnipeg on March 7, 2019

According to the MNC definition, “Métis” means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation. The definition clarifies that the “historic Métis Nation” was based in west central North America.

Under the Powley decision, the term “Métis” may refer to any people of mixed ancestry who developed a distinct community and culture separate from both their Indigenous and European ancestors. While all Métis Nation Citizens who fall under the National Definition meet the Powley criteria, not all those who meet the Powley definition have the historic Métis Nation ancestry required by the National Definition.

This has left a loophole allowing non-Métis people with mixed ancestry to claim Métis identity and rights without having to verify ancestral ties to the historic Métis Nation. Members of these eastern groups may have distant Indigenous heritage, but mixed ancestry is not the same as Métis Nation ancestry.

“Some people will say that it’s a linguistic thing, because in French “Métis” means “mixed race”. But these organizations aren’t claiming to be mixed race, they are claiming to be a distinct Indigenous People under the Constitution,” said Leroux. “These organizations are making quite a bit of headway, and I think that it undermines Métis peoplehood in all kinds of different ways. For the Métis people I’ve spoken to out in Halifax for instance, it does create a lot of tension with Mi'kmaq people who are clearly opposed to there being any other rights-bearing Indigenous people in their territory, in the sense of, like, there is no Nova Scotia Métis population. They are very clear about that on all kinds of different levels. It does definitely create boundaries among Indigenous

people in terms of the solidarity that can be built.”

According to Leroux, eastern groups have grown exponentially in recent years to include tens of thousands of newly self-identified Métis who bear no connection to the historic Métis Nation of the prairies, its culture, its political resistance, or its struggles under discriminatory practices such as the scrip system, residential and day schools, or the Sixties Scoop.

A number of these groups have gone to court in an attempt to assert legal status as rights-bearing Métis peoples under the *Constitution Act*. To date, no case has succeeded. As part of his research, Leroux has created a database of these court decisions in Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. He has found that out of 80 court decisions between 2001 and 2019, the average claim of an Indigenous ancestor went back 10 generations (born between 1680-1710), and that at least 28% of them had zero Indigenous ancestry.

In October 2018, the MNC and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs signed a Memorandum of Understanding respecting each other's nationhood and agreeing to work collaboratively on the issue of individuals claiming Métis ancestry in Nova Scotia. They continue to work together to establish cultural awareness and educate the public.

Leroux has an upcoming book on the “Eastern Métis” movement called *Distorted Descent*, which will be available for purchase in September 2019. For more information, visit www.uofmpress.ca.

A full stream of Leroux's talk can be accessed on the University of Manitoba's Indigenous Student Centre Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pg/IndigenousStudentCentreUofM/videos.

Annual Metis Business Conference hosted in Winnipeg on March 7

On March 7, over 150 Métis business leaders and entrepreneurs met at the Metis Business Conference in Winnipeg, hosted by the Metis Economic Development Fund (MEDF) and Louis Riel Capital Corporation (LRCC). Juno award-winner and front-man for the band Moist, David Usher, was the keynote speaker and encouraged those in attendance to use multiple points of view when considering different aspects of a business. The event brought Métis professionals from all backgrounds together for round-table discussions and networking sessions.

"We can't ever forget the community or the Citizens when we are building our nation's economy, and that's why we're here," said

David Chartrand, Manitoba Metis Federation President and Minister of Economic Development. "If you're successful, we're successful, and when your business is booming and expanding, don't forget about your Métis community and making an impact on the Métis business leaders coming behind you."

MMF Minister of Metis Employment and Training John Fleury spoke at the event, calling it a point of pride to see the growth in Métis businesses over the years.

"We look for employers willing to partner with us to provide employment opportunities for our Métis Citizens, and I can't think of a better employer partner than a Métis employer," said

Minister Fleury. "We have been training and preparing our people for many years, and our department is proud to say we have assisted over 35,000 clients with employment supports."

One of the MMF's recent employment initiatives was created through a partnership between Metis Employment and Training and Enbridge. Through working with Metis N4 Construction, Enbridge, subcontractors, unions, and a training partner, the MMF was able to help recruit, train, and employ nearly 200 Métis workers.

For more information on supports for Métis businesses, please visit: www.medf.ca or www.lrcc.mb.ca.

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Metis
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Student Eligibility

- Students age 15 to 30 at the beginning of employment.
- Must be a full-time student in the previous academic year who is returning as a full-time student in the upcoming academic year.
- Must identify as Metis, Non-Status, or Inuit.

Do you need assistance updating or creating a resume?

Contact the Regional Office in your area:

www.mmfemployment.ca/contact.php

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN
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Email your resume by April 15, 2019 to
metresumes@mmf.mb.ca

www.mmfemployment.ca

MMF hosts Three-Pillar Consultation on Climate Change, Wildlife, and Boreal Forest Initiatives

One of the major priorities of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) is protecting wildlife and natural resources in Manitoba. With this in mind, the MMF hosted a Three-Pillar Consultation on March 13 to discuss environmental priorities with Métis Citizens from across the province. The three pillars of the consultation were Boreal Forest Initiatives, Climate Change Issues, and Wildlife Issues.

Elder Oliver Boulette gave the opening prayer, followed by welcoming remarks from Leah LaPlante, MMF Minister of Natural Resources & Citizenship; Vincent Parenteau, MMF Minister of Environment & Mining; and Denise Thomas, MMF Minister of Consultation, Sixties Scoop, and Tripartite Self-Government Negotiations. MMF President David Chartrand was also in attendance to give the welcoming address before kicking off the full day of consultations.

The day-long consultation began with presentations from MMF staff and invited guests on a variety of topics that fall under the three pillars, including the Metis Youth Boreal Forest Stewardship initiative, Indigenous Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program, and the Métis Nation-Canada Joint Table on Clean Growth and Climate Change.



On March 13, the MMF hosted a consultation to introduce Métis Citizens and communities to recent and upcoming environmental priorities the MMF has been working on including forestry, climate change, and wildlife issues.

One of the MMF's new environmental initiatives is the Manitoba Métis Lake Winnipeg Basin Community-Based Monitoring Program, which was created in partnership with the Lake Winnipeg Foundation. Through the program, Métis Citizen volunteers are trained to test water in the Lake Winnipeg Basin to identify phosphorus "hotspots" and reduce phosphorus levels in the water. The goal of the program is to slow down the degradation of water resources in the region.

In the afternoon, attendees broke into groups to discuss wildlife, natural resources, and climate change priorities. Discussions focused on what concerns Métis Citizens had regarding the environment and wildlife, what they would like to see done to protect species and the environment, and their thoughts on the

MMF's current and upcoming work related to environmental priorities.

The intention of the consultation was to introduce Métis Citizens and communities to recent and upcoming files the MMF has been working on related to climate change, environment, wildlife, and natural resources. In total, 93 Citizens from across the MMF's seven regions attended the event.

The MMF will continue to pursue opportunities to ensure the Métis Community plays an active role in Canada's environment and climate change priorities, and to ensure that Métis rights are protected. For more information on the Three-Pillar Consultation or the MMF's natural resource initiatives, contact info@mmf.mb.ca.

We're hiring!

- **Administrative Assistant - Housing**
Application deadline: March 29, 2019
- **Director of Housing**
Application deadline: March 29, 2019
- **Policy Analyst - Housing**
Application deadline: March 29, 2019
- **Project Officer - Housing**
Application deadline: March 29, 2019
- **Property Management Coordinator - Housing**
Application deadline: March 29, 2019



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