



Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As promised in my previous President's message, this week I want to share an update on how the Red River Métis fit into Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew's economic vision for Manitoba, including how this province we helped bring into Canada will play a role in strengthening our country's economic position. I will also talk about the economic challenges and impacts felt by our 844 registered Red River Métis businesses through this economic war.

As our Citizens know, particularly those who are carrying on the strong tradition of Red River Métis entrepreneurship, small and medium sized businesses have long been the backbone of the Canadian economy. Even during the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic brought about for businesses across the globe, our Red River Métis business community remained optimistic about their future prospects. In many ways, Trump's economic war against Canada and indeed, the entire globe, is much like the pandemic and its effects on business, trade, and commerce. But it is our resilience, combined with the entrepreneurial spirit that is in our blood, that will allow Red River Métis business owners and entrepreneurs to meet the challenges of this new Canadian economy, with innovative ideas and the strength to find new markets, backed by your Red River Métis Government.

Still, there can be no doubt that this is a time of change and uncertainty for our business community. We know that the changes in our relationship with the United States has already begun to impact some of our businesses, either through interruptions in the supply chain, higher

costs for some of the goods their businesses need to manufacture their end products, along with the additional costs associated with selling goods across the border between the United States and Canada.

With these changes, we can see why Bill C-5, the One Canadian Economy Act is critical to meet the challenges and opportunities presented in these changing times. We can also see the wisdom of Premier Kinew in assessing areas of opportunity in Manitoba, along with exploring new ways for Manitobans to invest in this province and the broader Canadian market.

Citizens are already familiar with the establishment of the Red River Métis Power Corporation last year, and the opportunities afforded to us to secure long-term financial stability through a government-to-government procurement process. Manitoba Hydro is a Crown Corporation, and as a result, is owned by all Manitobans. It can only operate within the context of engagement with governmental partners to expand and grow.

Through Manitoba's Affordable Energy Plan, Premier Kinew and the Government of Manitoba created an unprecedented opportunity for Indigenous governments to provide utility scale electricity resource through wind power. It is as a government that the MMF and our Red River Métis Power Corporation are working toward delivering on the additional wind power the province needs.

With this precedent of the Government of Manitoba partnering with Indigenous government already set and already beginning to yield results, we can begin to see that this pattern of partnership could easily continue growing with the National Government of the Red River Métis, as we join with other orders of government to bring strength to the national projects envisioned by Canada's Bill C-5.

As a Nation, we know our history well. In the earliest times of our history as a people, our people remember that our work ethic and strong business sense turned the Red River Settlement into a centre for commerce and trade for the historic Northwest.

Through our entrepreneurial spirit, the stage was set for Winnipeg, and Manitoba, to become a hub for trade and business. When the Reign of Terror was unleashed on our people, that potential subsided for a number of years. But in the early 1900s, Winnipeg was again recognized for its potential, earning the name "Chicago of the North," due to its central location in North America, and its growth as a financial, transportation, and industry hub. Again, this potential was never fully realized, in part due to the creation of the Panama Canal and changing

trade routes across the globe.

Today, due to the threats from the South and the changing global trade patterns, Manitoba is once again uniquely positioned to play a central role in trade, transport, and commerce, and the Red River Métis stand ready to play a significant role in this development.

Canadians often forget that when they refer to coastal Canada, there is also a coastline in Manitoba – a four-hundred-mile-long coastline along Hudson Bay. With the right infrastructure supports, and investment and support from rights bearing peoples, including the Red River Métis, this could well become the Arctic Trade Corridor that shifts global trade routes once again. Earlier this year, the province announced an investment of \$36.4 million over two years to the Arctic Gateway Group. The investment will help capital infrastructure projects at the Port of Churchill that will expand international trade, create new ways to ship critical minerals and agricultural products, and create economic gains for northern communities through employment and enhanced access to more goods from the South – potentially with lower costs associated.

This activity would open incredible and unprecedented opportunities for our Citizens who live in the North, along with their neighbours and the towns and villages they call home. We know we have hardworking Citizens in the North, including our entrepreneurs and business owners, who would benefit from greater trade coming through their Regions.

This discussion about the potential of our northern coastline is not just an idea – it's a vision and a goal, one that clearly aligns with the changes we are seeing in the world, and the urgency to re-invest in Canada's economy.

As I have clearly stated before, Canada can no longer rely on our traditional partners, our traditional approaches, or our traditional global view. We must protect our natural resources, harness their value in a way that respects the environment, build internal economic engines, and create lasting and independent strength within Canada's economy.

These concepts are not new to the Red River Métis. Too often, history labelled our Ancestors as employees of Hudson's Bay Company or the North West Company who engaged in battles as proxies for these companies. In reality, we were free traders, independent and secure in our own economic strength. We did not bend to the will of outside businesses, and we worked together to build our economic strength. Today, Canada must

learn lessons from the Red River Métis and forge a new path toward economic independence.

There can be no doubt that there will be challenging times in the days, weeks, and months ahead, but your Red River Métis Government, along with the Louis Riel Capital Corporation and the Red River Métis Business Development Corporation, will be with our business community every step of the way,

lending strength where it is needed and helping find new pathways and new opportunities. There is good reason for the continued optimism of our business community, and we will ensure that this sense of hope for the future continues through these changing times.

Until we meet again, I offer my prayers to all our families, Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and

my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve. My heart is with the friends, family, and community of our lost loved ones. I ask my people to send prayers to our families and help those who are grieving. I will keep you all in my prayers, as always.

Meeqwetch,

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

TWICE AS BLESSED: MMF SUPPORTS FAMILY WITH NEWBORN TWINS DURING WILDFIRE EVACUATIONS



Rob Cormier, his fiancé Jenn Beck, three children, extended family, and pets were housed in Winnipeg during the wildfire evacuation with help from the MMF.

Imagine coming from a northern community to Winnipeg to start a new chapter in life, bringing twin sons into the world. Now, add the reality that you are unable to bring your babies back home because the government has announced a state of emergency, evacuating your community due to unprecedented wildfires in northern Manitoba. Rob Cormier and his fiancé, Jenn Beck, do not have to imagine this – they have lived through it.

The couple's circumstances weren't typical of others who were evacuated following the fires.

"Because my fiancé was pregnant with twins, she was sent down early... they don't deliver babies in Flin Flon (Manitoba). So, she came down at the beginning of May with, obviously, the thought that she'd be going home when it was all done. So, she was just packed up for the maternity side of things. And I came down mid-May to be here for the birth of the boys, so we were down here when the fire lit up," said Cormier.

While preparing to welcome their twins into the world, Cormier was also coordinating with friends and family who were still in Flin Flon to gather keepsakes and other priceless items that could not be replaced.

Facing an uncertain situation following the birth of the twins, the Red River Métis Citizen was amazed by the immediate support offered by the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF).

"When we were in the hospital, we weren't really sure where we were going," said Cormier. "We were sitting there with the babies in the hospital, and I was looking on Airbnb, trying to find somewhere to go, and then Jen's sister got a hold of us and said, 'Hey, the MMF's going to help us out and give us a home and house the whole family' and we were incredibly surprised."

Housing the family wasn't the only concern held by the MMF – making sure the family had a comfortable space that was prepared for newborn twins and equipped to meet all of their needs was also essential.

"We got here and the MMF had us totally set up with everything the babies needed, stuff that we were totally surprised to see – loads of clothing, some toys, play pens, like everything, everything to help us through this [state of emergency]," said Cormier.

The family was deeply moved by the level of care and urgency the MMF showed in supporting them during such a critical moment.

"We'd just like to generally thank the MMF and Cameron Finnsen, the property manager, for supplying this home for us. It's awesome and a huge surprise," said Cormier.

MMF Spotlight had the chance to sit down with Cameron Finnsen, President and CEO of Nest Host LTD, a Red River Métis-owned company that provides furnished rental accommodations in Winnipeg and across Canada.

For the CEO, the decision to house the Cormier family came without any hesitation.

"When we heard that families were being evacuated due to the fires, we knew we had the resources and capacity to help. Nest Host is built to offer short and medium term furnished accommodations, and this was a way to put that to use for something truly meaningful," said Finnsen. "After learning more about Rob Cormier's story, it became even more personal – we wanted to make sure his family had a safe, comfortable, and welcoming place to land during a really uncertain time."

Finnsen felt the importance of readiness and compassion was reinforced through his work with the MMF during the state of emergency.

"Emergencies don't come with warning... our ability to mobilize our team quickly – to clean, furnish, and prepare a suite in a matter of hours – showed how crucial it is to be organized and responsive," he said. "More than that, it reminded us that housing is about people. It's not just units and logistics; it's about making someone feel safe and at home, especially during a crisis."

Noting the importance of community, the CEO hopes to see more businesses working with the MMF to best serve the Red River Métis Community.

"On our side, we're just grateful to be part of a community that is looking out for one another," said Finnsen. "Supporting the Cormier family was a small gesture in the grand scheme of things, but it speaks to what's possible when businesses can work alongside, especially with the MMF and the different departments that are within the government here... we're committed to continuing this work and growing these partnerships and finding new ways to support the Métis community through housing and other initiatives beyond that as well."



Cameron Finnsen, President and CEO of Nest Host Ltd., was grateful to offer his support to Red River Métis families who were in need during the state of emergency. He also encourages other businesses to work with the MMF – especially in times of crisis – to best serve the Red River Métis Community.

The story of Rob Cormier and Jenn Beck demonstrates the importance of having a strong Red River Métis Community and Government to lean on when safety and uncertainty hits the Red River Métis Nation. The response of community members, Citizens, and your Red River Métis Government is a heartwarming display of Red River Métis' culture of togetherness.

NEW NAME, SAME RED RIVER MÉTIS SPIRIT: LOUIS RIEL COLLEGE CELEBRATES FIRST GRADUATION SINCE REBRAND



Among the Dignitaries were Minister Peter Fleming, who emceed the event, Minister Andrew Carrier, Minister David Beaudin, Minister Joan Ledoux, and Senior Director of Louis Riel College, Sharon Varga. Minister Ledoux shared gratitude towards Varga for having built Louis Riel College from the ground up in 2013.

As the tassels shift from right to left, Louis Riel College (LRC) graduates celebrate an exciting new chapter in their journey, and they aren't the only ones.

On Saturday June 28, LRC, the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF)'s affiliate educational institution, celebrated its largest graduating class yet; it's also the first graduation ceremony following the official rebranding of the college from Louis Riel Vocational College to Louis Riel College.

"The Louis Riel College [is] grassroots-driven by the Red River Métis government, it also has a distinctions-based approach to education... It's important to have our own college so that we can drive our own programs that our Citizens need," said David Beaudin, Minister of Agriculture and Associate Minister of Education.

Academic Director of LRC Wayne Palendat explains that it was a necessary next step for the college.

"It became apparent that vocational is a term that's no longer relevant in today's marketplace, particularly for the programs that we're running here at the college; we're teaching in [the] faculties of health and education, in areas where "vocation" may not fit as much anymore. We looked at ways that we could be more modern, more up-to-date, and what a proper name would be for that – while still keeping the homage and tradition of the Louis Riel name," said the director.

The growth, both in programs offered and increased enrollment, is one of the aspects that drove the rebrand.

"LRC gets over 90 per cent of its new students as references from graduates. Graduates are talking

about us... that recognition [is] a good place to be in... spreading the word has really helped the college grow exponentially," said Palendat. "It shows in our graduation rates and our employment rates after graduation... the successful graduation [rate] from our program is over 95 per cent... after graduation, 95 per cent of our students find employment in their chosen field."

The academic director attributes these tremendously successful numbers to the personalized and close-knit nature of their programs.

"We have a special requirement we have of all our instructors: that they're available to the students virtually 24/7. All our students receive a lot of one-on-one support and assistance through the program as they need it," he said. "To anybody that's interested in improving their career, their job, looking for an opportunity for growth, LRC (has) a personal feel and personal assistance for students. You are definitely not a number here."

The rebrand honours the hard work and dedication staff and students have contributed alike. This graduation ceremony, we invited Red River Métis Citizens to celebrate the accomplishments of both the LRC graduates and LRC as an institution.

Other leaders at LRC and the MMF presented their own congratulations to the graduates, showing appreciation for the families, friends, and loved ones who came to support.

"The college started in 2013, at that time we had 12 students start off in our college... bringing us up to today, we had approximately 300 students that graduated in different fields of interest," said Joan Ledoux, Minister of Education and Associate Minister of Métis Employment & Training (MET). "Education [is] a huge, huge word and to me, I always say 'education is power.' That's what education is... education gives you the power to be whatever you want to be."

The 2025 LRC Convocation marked another momentous occasion: the first graduating class of the Ukrainian cohort. In 2023, the MMF and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) Manitoba created a training and employment program to support Ukrainian refugees working at the MMF's child care centres. The MMF and the Province of Manitoba pledged \$1.5 million (for a total of \$2.5 million) toward hiring and training 23 Ukrainian refugees. The class was run in partnership with the Early Learning & Child Care Department.

"In that group [of 300], we had a group [of] approximately 23 Ukrainian students that moved to Canada in light of what was happening in their country, and we had the opportunity to train them

in early learning and childcare and they were successful and graduated today," said Minister Ledoux.

Ukrainian refugee and graduate Natalia (Natalie) Ploishcuk received the honour of being class valedictorian and addressed her peers in a moving and heartwarming speech.

"What I see is not just students but strong, thoughtful, resilient professionals. People who have faced challenges, including the drama of war, and still found strength to show up with open hearts... we can now better understand the pain carried by the Red River Métis and First Nations people; these stories of injustice [intertwine] like threads in a shared song," said Ploishcuk. "Today, our class goes forward, with our heartfelt thanks to the Manitoba Métis Federation, to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and the Government of Manitoba for having the vision and working hard to create this incredible program."

Ploishcuk graduated from the Indigenous-Focused Early Childhood Education Program – one of many vital educational options LRC offers.

Minister Ledoux highlighted the wide-ranging impact graduates will have with the completion of these important programs.

"Being a graduate, you can be whatever you want in the world, you can make your dreams happen. It makes you a better person for yourself as an individual, for your family, for your friends, and for your community. The benefits of having that education doesn't stop with just you, it's not only yours. You don't own it by yourself, because you're a role model for people around you," she said.

Any one of us can make waves in our communities through the power of education. LRC will ensure you put your best foot forward to accomplish that goal. If you'd like to learn more about the variety of opportunities at LRC, visit our website at louisriecollege.ca/.



The energy of the graduates was reflective of the well-supported community. Graduates excitedly gathered backstage, collecting in groups to celebrate one another's great accomplishments and hard work.



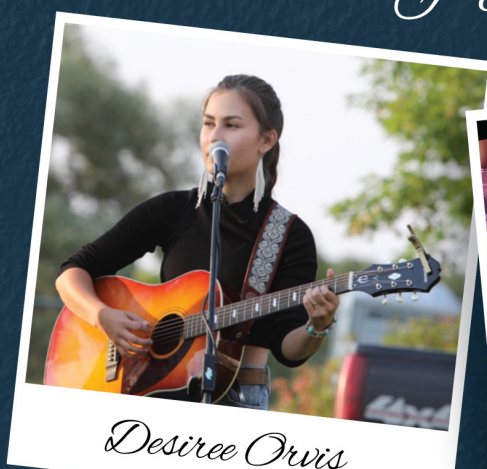
STE. MADELEINE HERITAGE LOCAL MÉTIS DAYS

JULY 18 - 20, 2025

Brought to you by the Ste.
Madeleine Heritage Local,
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