



Le Métis

President's Message



I am proud of all our Citizens who have continued to keep their families and others safe during this pandemic, paid attention to the guidance of your Métis Government and stayed close to home.

Should you require a COVID-19 test, we are encouraging all of Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) Citizens in the Winnipeg area to use the MMF's new COVID testing site, exclusively designated for Métis people. Out of an abundance of caution, I myself recently got a test at the facility. I received my negative test result very quickly. Test results for all Citizens should be available in under 24 hours after the test is administered. I can assure you the process was fast and took place in a facility that is modern and professional.

To get a test done, Citizens must contact the MMF ahead of time, by calling 1-833-390-1041. We will help you make an appointment and tell you where you need to go for the test. We expect to use the data from the testing site to know when our Citizens have been affected, so we can work with their families and provide wraparound services and support. We will be sharing the data with the province to help the province keep better track of the health of Métis Citizens.

We are continuing conversations in our push to get the Manitoba government to invite us to the table for meaningful involvement with the vaccine rollout. We hope to have our appointed members to the Tripartite Prioritization table and the Logistics table soon, hard at work advocating for the Métis people. Participating at both these tables will allow us to connect with medical experts and actively work to change the current vaccine priority list to include Métis Elders and vulnerable Citizens of the Manitoba Métis Community. I will keep you posted on our advancement of that work. Thanks to Minister Chartrand and the health team on these continued discussions.

We are continuing to receive positive feedback from our Citizens on our approach throughout this pandemic, supporting all Métis Citizens from children to our Elders. I am happy to hear reports that our families and our students are doing exceptionally well right now. To keep that going, we are working with Canada to negotiate additional student supports in the next distribution of pandemic response funds. We are hoping to earmark enough support for our students to keep them safe during these difficult times.

Our Métis small businesses are not immune to the economic impacts of this lengthy pandemic. Locally owned businesses are the backbone of our economy, but this is especially the case in our small Métis Villages. We recognize the benefits that strong small and medium businesses have on these small economies and will continue to work with our federal colleagues so that we can continue to advance our work as an economic engine for Manitoba.

We encourage our Métis entrepreneurs to keep in contact with Louis Riel Capital Corporation and the Métis Economic Development Fund. Keeping your Métis Government aware of how your business is doing and telling us how we can meet your unique needs during these stark economic times will allow us to better cater our supports to our entrepreneurs. We also want to assure all Métis ranchers, farmers, fishers and artisans, as well as others who are going through a difficult time trying to support their families – your Métis Government has your back and is ready to continue supporting you through the pandemic.

With a new variant of COVID-19 springing up in western Canada and showing early signs of being more contagious and more deadly, we sincerely hope that all provincial leaders take this new threat seriously and implement strict provincial strategy restrictions. The variant is already starting to spread quickly. All it takes is one case in one of our Villages and it will quickly rampage through the entire community. Prevention through hygiene, social distancing and not traveling or having visitors from out of province are still very necessary.

I recently attended a conference on Anti-Indigenous Racism in Healthcare. I will share more about this later, but I can tell you that the discussion was mostly centered around the experiences of the First Nations, and it is obvious as to why. The First Nations have been working with different Canadian departments for decades and have their own healthcare institutions and programs.

There is a clear lack of Métis-specific healthcare programming federally. We do not have a Métis-specific health program with nursing stations, mental health supports, or a diabetes program. Healthcare is the most prevalent example of how the Métis Nation

have been trapped in a jurisdictional entanglement – and our Citizens are the ones falling between the cracks and suffering the consequences.

Not including Métis Nation in the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNHIB) name exposes a historic policy of exclusion and systemic racism within the Canadian government. This policy of blatant discrimination has been in place since 1979, and we are looking forward to seeing it corrected.

It is no surprise that most of the discussion was around challenges and opportunities from new programs that are being developed for First Nations across Canada. But we have some very good news. Making good on a commitment by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Canada and Minister Marc Miller have announced new distinctions-based health care legislation, with negotiations starting in the spring. This has been a long road, but we are eagerly looking forward to working with Canada to develop this distinctions-based healthcare legislation for Métis Citizens.

I also look forward to working with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and negotiating the opportunity to revolutionize the healthcare programs and services offered in our Villages and families. This new legislation may allow us to broaden the bundle of healthcare programs we can offer our Citizens and includes things such as dental, optical, mental wellness resources. We will make sure to have positive negotiations and continue our strategy of protecting our Citizens and finding new ways to improve their wellness.

I am so proud to be working with a leader like Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who is committed to making real steps toward a distinctions-based approach to healthcare for the Métis people.

We know this approach can work. Even before this legislation was around, your Métis Government here in Manitoba was already ahead of the curve and working hard to build healthcare programs and services for our Citizens.

We've already opened one pharmacy in Winnipeg and our next location in Dauphin is nearing completion. I encourage all Métis people and Manitobans to use our MEDOCare pharmacies for prescriptions. All profits from our MEDOCare pharmacies go back into Métis programs and services, so by supporting our pharmacy, you support the Métis in Manitoba.

The success and continued growth of MEDOCare, along with other programs and services for Citizens will help us transition to a successful partnership with Canada as they work to develop and implement this legislation.

I cannot end this message without again thanking our Local and Regional leadership and staff who have continued to work hard to keep the Métis Nation safe and supported. I would also like to thank the MMF's COVID response team for continuing to look after our Citizens through this pandemic.

I offer my prayers to all of our Citizens, friends and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

Thank you, the Citizens of our Nation, who believe in your Métis Nation and your Métis Government. Stay safe, look after each other as much as you can from

a distance, and be confident we will keep fighting for you.

If there is something you need to keep safe and well during this time, reach out to your government. We have your back.

President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. D.M. ∞

President Chartrand visits the COVID-19 testing site for Métis Citizens

It's no secret to Citizens that your Métis Government has been working hard to make sure you are safe and well through this pandemic. From hampers to financial aid for businesses and students, to mental health supports and fighting for vaccines for our Elders and vulnerable community members, your government never stops working for you.

Because your Métis Government doesn't stop, neither does Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) President David Chartrand or the Cabinet. Even with careful social distancing, minimizing contact, cleaning and hand washing, doing the business of the people means that there is occasional risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Recently, in an abundance of caution, President Chartrand went to the new testing site for Métis Citizens.

"I want people to know what it's like to get a COVID-19 test at our new site," said President Chartrand. "I was very pleased by how the whole experience went. I booked an appointment that day and because I didn't have any symptoms, I walked right into the facility. The people there were ready for me. I didn't have to wait at all, and I got my test

quickly. The results came three hours later, telling me it was negative.

"The facility was clean and very modern looking. The people there were very professional and took the swab right away. There was a little sting in my nose with the swab, but it was over quick," he added.

"It was so fast, I'm glad to know that the Métis people will receive first-rate treatment from a first-rate facility if they need to get a test."

The MMF is looking to help Citizens who may need a speedy return of their COVID-19 tests to assist with their working environment. The MMF can also help



Citizens, their families, and their communities in the case of a positive test, if we know who they are.

If you need a COVID-19 test, make sure you call your Métis Government at **1-833-390-1041** so we can arrange your appointment and give you directions to the site.

For more support during this pandemic, Citizens should contact:

Metis Employment and Training
Teresa at (204) 898-5190

Metis Community Liaison Department
Ileana at (204) 290-2184

Housing
Shelley at (204) 229-3865 or Josie at (204) 229-6279

Louis Riel Capital Corp/MEDF
info@lrcc.mb.ca

Mental Health Wellness Support line
1-833-390-1041

MMF COVID-19 Testing Site
1-833-390-1041

MEDOCare Pharmacy
204-942-7220 or 1-877-635-5931

Métis entrepreneur Troy McLennan celebrating 30 years of business with HUB Technology Solutions

When Troy McLennan and his colleague at a local electronics manufacturing company got laid off in 1991, they were already providing part-time IT work on the side together. McLennan, who graduated from Red River College's Electronic Technology program, worked at the company as a Technologist. The layoff prompted McLennan and his partner to start working on their own business – now HUB Technology Solutions, an IT service provider – full time.

"I didn't like the feeling of not being in control of your own success or failure. I was working in a position where I was just a number," said McLennan, now the majority owner of HUB Technology Solutions. "Your input didn't really matter very much or your work ethic. You were just a cog in a big machine, and ultimately that really proved itself out when I got laid off because they just were basing it upon hire dates. They didn't care how well you performed, or how smart you are, or your ambition.

"So, starting my own business is a way to have control over that process, and at least be responsible for my own success or failure," he added.

Starting HUB Technology Solutions – which offers professional IT services that align with its clients' business goals – was also a way for McLennan to follow his passion: helping people solve problems with technology. Celebrating 30 years of business this year, HUB Technology Solutions has evolved through the years, starting from a team of two that has now grown to 13.

"Back when we first started, our primary focus was larger companies that were headquartered out of Winnipeg," said McLennan. "And then we saw that business drying up and more requests coming for IT support from small, medium-sized businesses, so we started making the transition over to supporting small, medium-sized businesses."

McLennan would like to see the company grow even more over the next decade.

"We sit down as a business, and we write up a 10-year growth plan," he said. "Every year, we try to look at it and make adjustments.

"I want HUB to keep growing over the next 10 years using technology that wasn't readily available five or 10 years ago. Leveraging that in our business to help expand our client base throughout Manitoba. Some of the technology that is available with remote support and those types of tools will allow us to expand our market into geographical regions that we didn't have the opportunity to leverage before."

McLennan aims to continuously challenge himself to maintain that constant level of growth, spending

evenings and weekends focusing on strategic tasks that will help grow the business in the future.

"If you're feeling too comfortable at what you're doing, then you're probably not growing," he said. "Take those opportunities when you're challenging yourself. You're going to fail, so just embrace that fact you're going to fail, but fail forward. Always be looking for the positive and lessons learned from those failures, and just keep moving forward. Failure's just part of the process."



Troy McLennan, owner and founder of HUB Technology Solutions

He added, "You have to listen to your heart, and if you think you can do something, try it. If you fail, at least you can say to yourself, 'hey, you know what, I'm proud of the fact I tried it, and even if I failed, at least I tried.'"

McLennan has strengthened his business by forging long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships – with clients and other business owners.

"A strong peer network is important. I've got a group of business owners that I try to meet with regularly. We have these sessions, sometimes it'll be for breakfast or lunch, sort of like entrepreneur therapy," he said, "meeting and talking about topics and issues we're all having. It doesn't matter what kind of business you run; you all encounter the same sort of problems, and you can talk about it and work through them with a group of people that really understand."

Additional partnerships began in 2018 when McLennan bought out his business partner and became the sole shareholder and owner. As a Métis entrepreneur, he turned to the Manitoba Metis Federation's (MMF) affiliates, the Metis Economic Development Fund (MEDF) and the Louis Riel Capital Corporation (LRCC), for an equity investment and business loan, respectively.

"Both those kind of arm's-length organizations underneath MMF were instrumental in me purchasing the other 50 per cent of shares of HUB and becoming a sole owner," said McLennan.

"I've got a strong relationship with John Coutris, (CEO of MEDF). He sits on my Board of Directors; we speak regularly about the business topics that have to do with HUB. I value his input a lot. I see him as a resource that I go to bounce ideas off, to talk about challenges I've got, talk about successes. You know, all of that, so I really see John as bringing a lot of value to HUB in that way," said McLennan.

"And then on the LRCC side, they've been nothing but supportive of my business since becoming the majority owner in 2018," he said, speaking of LRCC CEO Paul Paradis and his team.

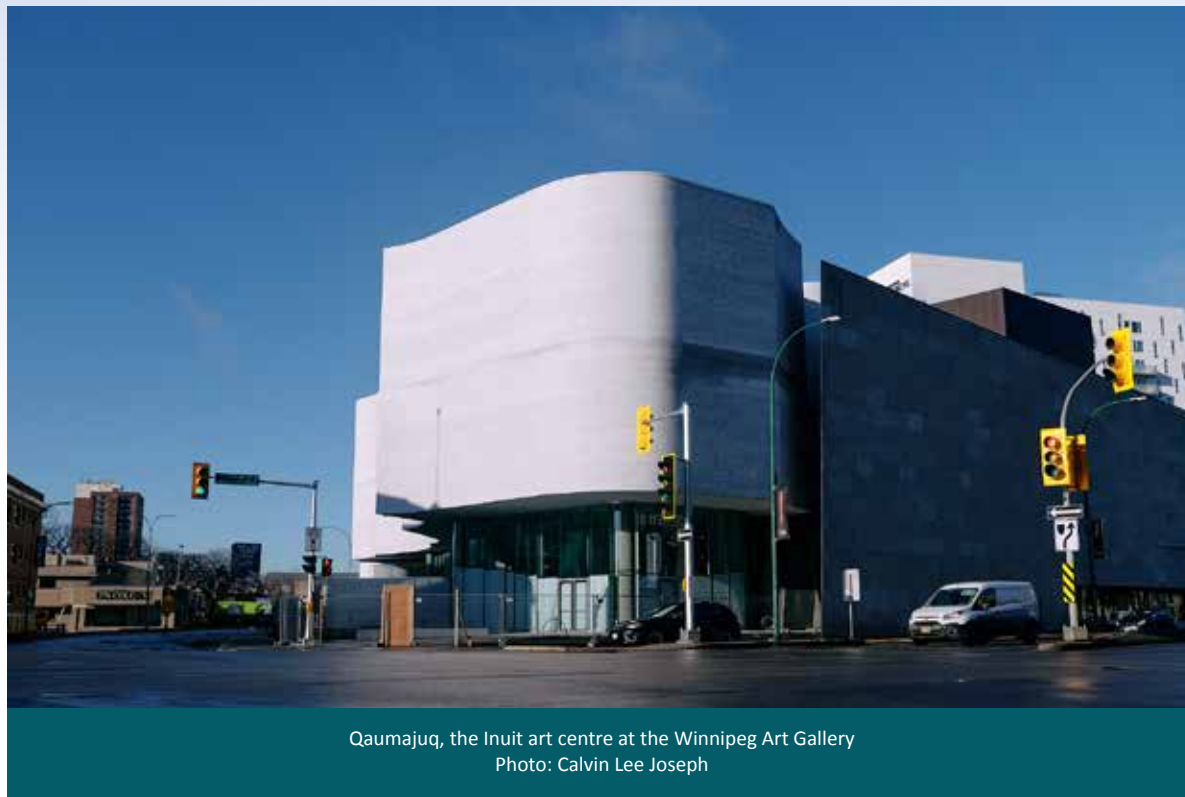
"They make a point of saying that they support Métis business, and they do follow through on those words. LRCC has been using HUB as their managed IT services provider," said McLennan. "It's really a true, two-way partnership."

Even throughout the pandemic, new clients have been seeking HUB's sense of partnership.

"Most of them are coming to us saying, 'We've been with another IT service provider, and we really don't feel like we've got a partnership with that existing provider, and that existing provider doesn't really have our best interests or our success in mind.' So we're getting new clients who are looking for more of that partnership now."

For more information on HUB Technology Solutions, visit hub.ca.

Métis Nation contributes to Qaumajuq, Winnipeg Art Gallery's Inuit art centre



Qaumajuq, the Inuit art centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery
Photo: Calvin Lee Joseph



Julia Lafreniere, WAG Head of Indigenous Initiatives

The Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG) is preparing to open Qaumajuq, formerly known as the Inuit art centre, early this year. Featuring a world-renowned collection of Inuit art, Qaumajuq, which means “it is bright, it is lit” in Inuktitut, will connect Canada’s North and South through art and storytelling.

“This first-of-its-kind cultural landmark is connected to the Winnipeg Art Gallery on all levels, creating a cultural campus in downtown Winnipeg. Qaumajuq is the temporary home to 14,000 Inuit artworks, many of which are on display in the Visible Vault, the

heart of the building,” said Julia Lafreniere, Head of Indigenous Initiatives at the WAG.

The 40,000-square-foot centre is “a place where art and technology offer direct connections to the land, people, and cultures of Inuit Nunangat, the homeland of Inuit in Canada,” said Lafreniere. “Qaumajuq has taken shape with the guidance of the WAG Indigenous Advisory Circle, Elders, and knowledge keepers from across Turtle Island.”

Comprised of representatives from the Métis Nation and other Indigenous communities, the WAG’s Indigenous Advisory Circle includes Sharon Parenteau, Executive Director of the Louis Riel Institute, a Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) affiliate, as well as Métis artists, professors, and curators.

Lafreniere, a member of the Indigenous Advisory Circle, said, “The WAG’s Indigenous Advisory Circle is at the heart of all of our work and there are members from the Métis community that have provided guidance and their voices are essential to the WAG. The Circle provides leadership and counsel in the development and planning of related WAG exhibitions, education, community outreach, partnerships, and programming.”

Michif language keepers and Métis members of the WAG’s Indigenous Advisory Circle contributed to the process of giving spaces throughout the Qaumajuq building Indigenous names. The language circle included Métis Elder Verna DeMontigny.

“The bridges connecting the two buildings on each level were named Nakishkamohk, Michif for ‘connection.’ I am very proud that the WAG has permanent space for the Michif language, and this is just the beginning of incorporating Métis knowledge into the fabric of the WAG,” said Lafreniere.

“The Métis Nation has been essential to Qaumajuq planning, from the project’s inception to the upcoming opening celebrations. We acknowledge that without the input from the Métis Nation, the dream of Qaumajuq would not be a reality.

“Working with Métis artists, Elders, and knowledge keepers at the Winnipeg Art Gallery has been the highlight of my career,” said Lafreniere, a Métis Citizen. “I am very grateful that I get to do work that is so close to my heart and community. Uplifting Métis voices is work that I will never stop doing, and I’m very thankful that the MMF has been such a strong advocate for Métis people. I look forward to doing as much as I can to bring Métis voices, knowledge, and people into the WAG.”

MMF President David Chartrand also recorded video messages for Qaumajuq’s virtual opening. The Métis Nation plans to showcase its own heritage at the future Métis Nation Heritage Centre, located at the former BMO building at Portage and Main.

“The opening of Qaumajuq is special to not only the Inuit peoples, Manitobans, or Canadians, but to the entire world. The Métis people of Manitoba applaud this distinctions-based project that will showcase the vibrant history and contributions of the Inuit people of Canada,” said President Chartrand.

“As the Métis Nation also builds our own Heritage Centre in Winnipeg, we understand the significance of this worldly project. The Métis – like the Inuit – have always spoken through the arts.”

He added, “On behalf of the Métis people of Manitoba and the MMF Cabinet, I congratulate all who contributed to this groundbreaking project.”

Beginning with the early 2021 opening, admission to the WAG-Qaumajuq is free for all Indigenous Peoples. For more information on Qaumajuq, please visit wag.ca/qaumajuq/.