



Le Métis

EST. 1871



March 8, 2023, marked the 10-year anniversary of our historic Supreme Court of Canada victory, *MMF (Manitoba Métis Federation) v Canada*. As some of our Citizens and former leaders will remember, the MMF land claim case began in 1981, with the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench. What followed was a 32-year journey toward victory, which we finally achieved on March 8 of 2013.

The decision recognized "the unfinished business of reconciliation of the Métis people with Canadian sovereignty is a matter of national and constitutional import." It further recognized that the mistreatment of the Métis and the theft of 1.4 million acres promised to the Nation's children engaged the honour of the Crown.

As many of you know, settling our land claim was a priority for me from the time I first took office as President in 1997. At the time, the case was completely inactive. It took tremendous commitment by many people to revive it. In fact, there was a group of patriots who were dedicated to making it happen, regardless of the effort and personal sacrifice needed. In particular, I would like to pay tribute to my late brother, Elbert Chartrand, who was the finance minister for the MMF at the time we launched the land claim case. He was a tireless fighter for our Nation, whose bold actions, wise counsel, and determination were an inspiration to many people, including me.

Our land claim was a landmark case in the history of our Nation. It forever changed the face of our relationship with Canada and proved that our long journey toward justice was worth every sacrifice and effort. The words I spoke that day came from my heart: *"We've been vindicated. Our history has been vindicated. Riel has been vindicated. This country's history has been put on trial, and justice has prevailed. It is a victory. It is our time!"*

President's Message

There's no doubt that many of our recent advancements could not have happened without the land claim victory and the support of Citizens to get us there. Together, we are finally realizing the hopes and aspirations of our Citizens and forever changing the history of our people.

In our land claim victory, as in all matters, the National Government of the Red River Métis is the servant of the Citizens. It is your guidance and your will that has led us to every success we've had today. You have always told us that settling our land claim is critical to righting the wrongs done to our people when Manitoba joined Canada's confederation. You also told us that any settlement we achieved must be put back into programs and services, creating a long-term legacy, as was intended by our Ancestors. We expect that negotiations for the land claim settlement will be completed during this term, as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau first committed to in 2015.

I am proud of the work we have done together, advancing our Nation and securing the future, and I'm proud to be the leader you chose to see this through on behalf of our Nation. It took 25 years of my life to get here, but I know every effort made by all leaders was worth it.

Of course, we still have more work to do to finally secure our place in Canada's confederation. However, I know that with each victory, we've gained confidence in our next step, always working together, united in our shared purpose and our sense of kinship.

To our grassroots leaders – our Local executives – you may not always realize how important your work is. You may not see how much of a difference you have made in your Métis Government's strength and ability to tackle large issues like our land claim and our modern-day treaty. You may not realize it, but your President does. Your Cabinet does. Your determination, your presence as a focus point for community to gather around and your persistence in keeping our Citizens engaged – this has made all the difference. You have kept the flame of our nationhood alive, which has guided your Cabinet to follow your will on matters of national import. I hope you can see as clearly as I do that our success is a direct result of your time, your energy, and your confidence in your Red River Métis Government.

Again, to our Local leaders, I say thank you from your President and Cabinet. There is also no doubt that our Cabinet today stands on the shoulders of all the leaders who came before us, just as we will be the shoulders for our Youth – our future leaders – to stand on.

To our Youth, know that your Cabinet is always working toward the future. You are the inheritors

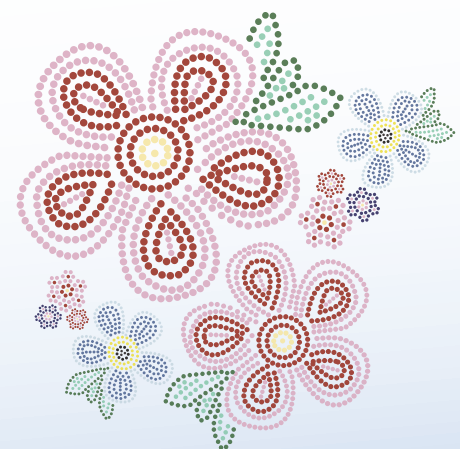
of the legacy we are building. The prosperity our Nation pursued for our children through the land negotiated by our Ancestors into the *Manitoba Act* will be your inheritance, along with so many other achievements. I know you're as invested as your parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents in protecting our rights, our culture, and our Red River Métis identity for the generations behind you.

What was robbed from our Nation at the formation of Manitoba will come back to you and your children, and all those in our Nation who are still struggling to recover from the intergenerational legacy of harm and poverty that was left to us.

Many of your Cabinet representatives, including me, are not building this future for us. We know that our time to fight and advocate for our Nation will one day come to rest. I hope you are ready to take up the responsibility and understand that we are all here to support you and provide you with everything we can.

As part of this legacy we are building for the next generations of Red River Métis, I will be continuing to meet with Citizens from across the Homeland as we engage in the important consultations about our historic modern-day treaty. We cannot lose sight of the fact that this is another massive milestone on our path to finding our rightful place in Canada's confederation. I am always happy to have an opportunity to be with you all at regional meetings. There is nothing like being with the community, talking about matters of importance to all of us, and listening to your will and guidance. It is what fuels my heart, as well as what fuels our direction as your government.

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



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

Red River Métis teacher takes home Indigenous educator award



Red River Métis educator Marika Schalla won the Indspire 2022 Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Award for Innovative Practice.

Red River Métis Citizen Marika Schalla is leaving her mark on the country's education system.

The 27-year-old serves as an educator, curriculum developer, and education consultant. She recently received an award for her passion, creativity, and forward thinking in the classroom.

Schalla gave birth to her son a month before starting Grade 12 and is thankful she crossed paths with a teacher who helped her navigate the new challenges.

"Going into high school with a newborn baby in my last year was difficult. I had a lot of stigma and judgment from being a young Indigenous mother, and I went through a hard time in my Grade 12 year," said Schalla. "I had a teacher who believed in me. She saw the abilities, skills, and knowledge I held as a young woman and helped me flourish."

After her high school guidance counsellor recommended that she become a teacher, Schalla enrolled in university for a dual Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Education.

"I did a lot of (studying on) animals and the land. When I started finishing my degree, I wanted to translate the work I've been doing on the land into my career as a teacher, and my minor was Indigenous studies, so I thought this is what I really want to do."

The Red River Métis educator, who now teaches Grades 1 and 2 at Niji Mahkwa School, recently helped co-author a textbook and video series called *Fireside Chats*, which highlights the career journeys of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leaders.



Schalla partnered with charitable organization TakingItGlobal to develop part of the Canadian curriculum for Your Voice Is Power, an educational program and remix competition.

"I did lesson plans on people who do computer science, health, culture, and politics (as a career). I did lessons on lawyers and senators so we can have representation for our Indigenous Youth, that you can be anything you want to be," she said.

Schalla hopes to continue with the *Fireside Chat* series and release another volume of videos.

After that project, Schalla partnered with charitable organization TakingItGlobal to develop part of the Canadian curriculum for Your Voice Is Power, an educational program and remix competition. TakingItGlobal, the Georgia Institute of Technology, and musician Pharrell Williams' education equity non-profit YELLOW collaborated with Amazon Future Engineer Canada, a computer science and STEM education program, to offer Your Voice is Power in Canada.

"They asked me to be on the curriculum development team and consult, and I helped create different modules in the program about Indigenous dance, songs, and music," she said. "From there, we created this amazing program used in schools across Canada."

Last year, Schalla won the Indspire Guiding the Journey: Indigenous Educator Award for Innovative Practice. Awards are given to educators who contribute to community-based education and honour the principles of Indigenous knowledge.

She couldn't believe a young Red River Métis girl from Winnipeg's North End like herself could have this much provincial and national impact.

"Going from there to where I am now is a dream come true. It is like really doing the 'heart work,'" she said. "I say 'heart work' instead of hard work because it is hard, but it's all coming from the heart."

Schalla was honoured that many of her coworkers, family members, and students tuned in to watch her win the award. She said she does it all for the students.

"It's so they can grow up and know they can do so much with their lives and have so much potential. I only had that one teacher (who believed in me) when I was in Grade 12, but now my students are getting it lifelong. It was just amazing."

The Red River Métis educator is also working on getting her first children's book published soon.

Schalla's family is deeply entrenched in their Red River Métis culture. Her grandparents are fluent in Michif, while some of her other family members learned to speak Michif French in St. Laurent, where they live. The educator has always been proud of her heritage, and makes sure to pass it along to her two sons.

"I want to do what's best for our people, and I've always been trying to celebrate the culture, especially in my home," she said. "My sons know who they are. My oldest is learning to play the fiddle, and my youngest is learning to jig, and they're really proud to be who they are."

Schalla is also proud of the Manitoba Métis Federation's commitment to helping Citizens.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without the MMF. They helped me with my schooling, they helped me get a house, and they've helped my family," she said. "My son gets the My Little Métis Box every season, and that's a big, fun day in our house. We get the box, and my kids get to explore the toys, the books, the resources, and the learning in there."



Red River Métis karate star nabs bronze medal at 2023 Canada Winter Games



Red River Métis athlete Dylan Weiss captured bronze in Karate Kata at the 2023 Canada Winter Games.

A Red River Métis athlete made history last month after placing third in a sport debuting at the 2023 Canada Winter Games.

Seventeen-year-old Red River Métis Citizen Dylan Weiss competed for Team Alberta in Karate Kata Male and won bronze.

Weiss has been competing in karate for seven years at the provincial level and one year at the national level. The athlete developed a taste for the sport by watching television as a kid and loved it after trying it out.

"I had seen a few (TV) shows, and I saw karate was in them, and I'd watched *The Karate Kid* lots. I thought it was cool and wanted to try it," he said.

"Kata" in Japanese translates into "form." Karate kata emphasizes the correct forms and postures, which is an integral part of martial arts training.

"It's more of a stylistic presentation," said Weiss.

The Red River Métis athlete trains multiple times per week and takes classes at the Desa School of Karate near Edmonton. Weiss has already racked up several accolades within the sport.

"I competed at nationals last year. I didn't get last, at least. It was not the best performance I've done – I can admit that – but it was a good experience. Last year, in December, I went to Venice (Italy) for the 2022 Karate 1 Youth League tournament, and I got 81st for Junior Male Kata, and I got somewhere in the 80s for my sparring," he said. "Honestly, it's been a fantastic experience I've gotten (during) the last year as I've never really had the opportunity to try because I didn't think I was good enough."

The bronze medallist received the rank of Shodan (Uechi Ryu) in 2022 and is a repetitive honour roll member (2020-2022).

A Citizen Beyond Borders, Weiss' Red River Métis roots come from his mother's side. He's still learning what it means to be Red River Métis.

"I've been watching what my mom and aunt do with their beading," he said. "Honestly, it's just been a new experience because I haven't been able to tap into it because of not really knowing about it for so long."

The athlete also competed in the Canada Winter Games' Kumite -68 kg Male category and said it was a great experience to compete on Prince Edward Island.

"The campus we stayed on was phenomenal. The food was always (fresh)," he said. "I stayed in a room with about 13 other guys. It was a little tight at first because we weren't really close to each other, but the second we started talking more, it was a fantastic experience with the other athletes. The energy at the campus was just unreal, and I'm grateful for the experience."

Although he placed third, Weiss said the experience was a bit stressful and overwhelming to start the games.

"After talking with my kata coach, who I am very grateful for, I was able to calm myself down and start moving into my techniques and being able to do what I do best."

The 2023 Canada Winter Games featured 3,600 participants, 20 sports, 26 disciplines, and 174 events. Karate was one of the new events for the games, as well as mixed doubles curling. Weiss is honoured to be an inaugural medallist from the games.

"I was representing more than myself for once, and I was able to push everything out on the tatami and know I was one of the first male competitors to perform on that mat, the first (Red River) Métis athlete to perform on that mat, and the first male Alberta athlete to medal for Kata."

Now that Weiss has a taste for the podium, he's hoping to continue raising the bar in 2023.

"I'd like to go to a lot more international tournaments. I think the experience alone is phenomenal," he said. "I'd like to medal at nationals again, I think that'd be a lovely goal, and I'd like to keep representing my style on the WKF (World Karate Federation) stage."

Community Photo

Le Metis' Community Photo section invites Métis Citizens to send in photos to be featured in our newsletter. If you have a photo that celebrates the Red River Métis Nation, send it to communications@mmf.mb.ca and you may see it in print!



Get involved in our historic consultations to learn more about our next steps drafting our Red River Self-Government Treaty with Canada. At the consultation meetings, we'll summarize the Treaty, and describe what it does, what it is, and what it isn't; its purpose; its chapters; and which self-government areas are covered by the Treaty.

Visit mmf.mb.ca for more information and to view a full list of all the currently announced consultation events. Please note, all participants are required to submit their Citizenship number to attend a consultation meeting.





Your **Red River Métis Government** is
hosting a series of **historic consultations:**

**WINNIPEG
REGION**
MARCH 18, 2023

**THOMPSON
REGION**
MARCH 25, 2023

**INFINITY WOMEN
SECRETARIAT**
APRIL 2, 2023

**THE PAS
REGION**
APRIL 15, 2023

YOUTH
APRIL 22, 2023

**INTERLAKE
(SELKIRK) REGION**
MAY 13, 2023

**VIRTUAL
MEETING**
MAY 24, 2023

**SOUTHWEST
(BRANDON) REGION**
MAY 27, 2023

**ELDERS & VETERANS
(BRANDON)**
MAY 28, 2023

We're meeting with Citizens about the exciting
changes **coming soon** to **Red River Métis
Citizens and Government.**

**For more information and to
register, visit mmf.mb.ca!**

