



# Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

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



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's been some time since we followed the mandate given to us by our Citizens to leave the Métis National Council (MNC) at our AGA in 2019, and we stand in defense of our identity as the Red River Métis, the inheritors of Louis Riel's legacy. I know that, like me, you feel a deep sense of responsibility to our Ancestors, to honour their legacy of fighting for our existence.

Citizens will recall that, at the time of the MMF's departure, those who remained with the MNC immediately launched a court case against us, falsely claiming that the MMF had left it in poor condition, citing a "scorched earth" policy that was almost impossible to believe. I know for a fact that when the Red River Métis Government left, MNC was in a strong financial position, with long-term funding commitments from the federal government.

MNC's court case against the MMF has continued, despite the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan departing from the MNC in 2024 for similar reasons to ours, in defense of our identity. This was quickly followed by Métis Nation British Columbia also leaving the MNC.

The only remaining member bodies attached to MNC now are the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), and the Métis Nation of Ontario, the primary source of the false claims to our identity. Even MNA itself has been proven not to represent the Alberta Settlements, and several former Locals have also departed, choosing to represent themselves on the national and international stage.

Though I, and your Cabinet, remain deeply concerned about who is making decisions at MNC, and what funds they are using to support this court case - which is little more than political theatre - we are continuing to use our own funds from our own revenues to defend ourselves.

I can report to our Citizens that as this case evolves, the evidence is showing, clear to all, that we have faithfully operated in the best interests of our Nation, and that we have done our best to protect our national identity, the culture, and the community that are part of the great legacy gifted to us by our Ancestors.

All my Citizens who know me understand that I am a protector by nature. I have no tolerance for those who seek to harm our people, either as a collective or as individuals, and I will never hesitate to stand

against any foe or adversary who seeks to do us harm. When I take the stand in this court case, it will be to protect our Citizens, our identity, and our culture.

As your President, I have given 28 years in helping the MNC grow into a reputable National Government. Myself, then MNC President Clement Chartier and the team of expert consultants who supported our work, along with Wenda Watteyne as Executive Director, were able to negotiate the biggest financial transaction to the benefit of our Métis Nation - over 3 billion dollars - which each provincial body has been the beneficiary of, and are now enjoying the resources they did not have before.

I have great confidence in the legal team we have assembled to protect our Nation, and put forth the evidence necessary to show that MNC was a National Government, not a corporation, as Alberta and Ontario are trying to claim.

Citizens know that I fought for decades to have Canada recognize and honour our World War II Veterans, who went across the ocean to fight for people they did not know, and defended democracy with valour in every instance. Securing an apology from Canada for the way they were treated when they returned from these battles was one of the high points in my career, and ensuring recognition payments were delivered to Veterans has remained of utmost importance to me.

Let me be clear - every dollar and cent of the fund provided by Canada for this work has been used for the program, which also includes ongoing work to educate all about the deeds and bravery of our heroes. To see anyone question that, or threaten

the integrity of the fund so that it is no longer able to work as a whole to the benefit of our Veterans and their memory, breaks my heart. Still, I have always believed in the justice system of Canada, and remain steadfast in my faith that the essence of this fund will continue to be available to those wishing to honour our Veterans now and into the future.

This court case that they initiated against us is not about missing money or misappropriation of funding. It's about corporate rules that were developed back in the 90s, which were never intended to hold back our ability to find our own pathway to self-government, using our laws, customs, and ways. The court case is about a political vendetta against the MMF, and that will show as the case evolves.

As always, I will continue to share my thoughts and activities with you, the Citizens who guide my actions and have given me the honour of being your leader. I will continue to update you as these court proceedings move forward, confident that when they draw to a close, the truth will be evident to all.

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). D.M. ∞*



# RED RIVER MÉTIS CITIZEN CHELSEA GABEL WILL LEAD A NEW ERA OF INDIGENOUS HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESEARCH

DR. CHELSEA GABEL IS LEADING THE CHARGE ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESEARCH.



*Chelsea Gabel was appointed as scientific director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Institute of Indigenous Peoples' Health in Fall 2024 and plans to support Indigenous-led research and community collaboration in her new role.*

Dr. Chelsea Gabel is leading the charge on Indigenous health and wellness research. She's an associate professor in the department of health, aging and society and the Indigenous studies department at McMaster University. She recently took on the title of scientific director of the Institute of Indigenous Peoples' Health at the CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research). This Red River Métis Citizen sees a bright future for Indigenous health initiatives.

Gabel recognized from an early age she wanted a career that gave back to Indigenous communities. "Being Red River Métis, I always knew that I wanted to do something that would advance Indigenous health and well-being research. I never imagined that I would become a professor. That was never something, as a little girl in Manitoba, that was on my list of careers," she said. "But I knew that doing something Indigenous and Métis-specific was really important to me."

The scientific director spoke to us about her priority of funding Métis-focused health research, as there

is a serious gap in research funding.

"Métis health research is severely underfunded at CIHR. There was a big analysis done that's not out on CIHR yet. They looked at Indigenous health research investments over the last six years and Métis health research is disproportionately under-invested," she said. "There is a clear need for increased investment in Métis health research, and that is my number one priority."

The Red River Métis Citizen plans to include training for the next generation of Red River Métis health and well-being researchers.

"For me, really ensuring that we are investing in our younger generation (is important). If it were not for the Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research, where I received funding, I don't know that I would be in this position," said Gabel.

Gabel also hopes to empower Indigenous communities in their own initiatives.

**“ I REALLY WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WE'RE TRAINING, SUPPORTING, AND ENSURING COMMUNITIES (AND GOVERNMENTS), FOR EXAMPLE, LIKE THE MMF, ARE SUPPORTED AND CAN APPLY FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE CIHR. IT'S ABOUT SELF-DETERMINING YOUR OWN RESEARCH AND YOUR OWN HEALTH PRIORITIES – CHELSEA GABEL ”**



*The Red River Métis Citizen advises Red River Métis Youth to tap into their historical resilience to take initiative on issues impacting the Red River Métis community.*

"I really want to make sure that we're training, supporting, and ensuring communities, for example, like the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), are supported and can apply for funding through the CIHR. It's about self-determining your own research and your own health priorities.

Ensuring that, for example, Red River Métis researchers and organizations can apply for funding in the same way that researchers can apply for funding and have the capacity and support to be able to do that," she said. "I hope in my role I can be that person and be that advocate and be that support."

The Red River Métis Citizen urges for non-Indigenous researchers to take on a supportive role and allow Indigenous and Red River Métis Citizens to take the lead.

"I want to say to non-Indigenous researchers to take a step (back) and support Indigenous and Métis-led researchers to pursue big grants that (are) their own. If you're really interested in Indigenous and Red River Métis specific research, then you know you can support behind the scenes. You can provide guidance, you can provide advice, but don't lead," said the director.

Gabel is the first Red River Métis woman to hold the position of scientific director of the Institute of Indigenous Peoples' Health for the CIHR.

The former scientific director, Carrie Bourassa, was removed from the role for claiming false Indigenous ancestry. Gabel, having had a personal relationship with Bourassa, acknowledged feelings of betrayal and hurt, while also emphasizing the importance

of having a legitimate Métis person in the role to advocate for Red River Métis Citizens.

Gabel takes pride in her heritage and Citizenship, which she can hold while taking on this role in Ontario thanks to the Manitoba Métis Federation's Beyond Borders program.

"I'm Red River Métis. I'm originally from Rivers, Manitoba; Desjarlais is my family name. (In) my childhood and youth I lived primarily in Winnipeg. Staying connected to my Métis heritage is a hugely important part of my life," she said. "I was very grateful for the Beyond Borders program. Now, I have Citizenship, and my daughter has Citizenship, and that is an enormous source of pride for me."

Gabel was previously featured in McMaster University's newspaper, Brighter World, where Health and Wellness Minister, Frances Chartrand, was quoted in support of Gabel's new position.

"It made my heart happy and full just to have the MMF be part of this announcement with me. Having Minister Chartrand's quote and support and having the MMF back me, it means a lot and sets an important message and tone," she said.

For Red River Métis Youth aspiring to follow in Gabel's footsteps, she says not to doubt yourself.

"I think as Red River Métis Citizens we have a rich legacy of resilience and adaptability and courage. Keep all of those things in mind," she said. "I have two wonderful (Red River Métis) students who have moved to Ontario to work with me and they're going to do wonderful things. We need more Red River Métis Youth and scholars doing this important work"

## THIS IS SNOW LAUGHING MATTER: SEASONAL JOB OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH



We are looking for Red River Métis Youth interested in making some extra cash this winter by shovelling snow for our senior and Elder Citizens!

Red River Métis Youth living in the Winnipeg Region can sign up to assist Red River Métis seniors and Elders by shovelling their snow each winter. Participating Youth are paid by the Winnipeg Region and the seniors and Elders receive the service for free. To be eligible for the program, Youth must have valid MMF Citizenship card and be 29 years or younger. Seniors and Elders must also have a valid MMF Citizenship card.

## HONOURING LOUIS RIEL: CELEBRATE, LEARN, AND CONNECT THIS FEBRUARY!



The MMF would like to thank you for honouring and celebrating Louis Riel Day this February!

We encourage everyone to learn about Manitoba's first Premier and the history of the Red River Métis in light of Louis Riel Day. We have many events taking place across the province this month for Citizens to enjoy and participate in. Scan the QR code to our website to find one near you!



# SAVE ENERGY & MONEY WITH MÉTIS ENERGY EFFICIENCY OFFERS

Efficiency Manitoba and the Manitoba Métis Federation are working together to help make energy efficiency upgrades easier for Red River Métis Citizens.

Qualified households can receive free energy-saving upgrades such as:

- ✓ Insulation upgrades
- ✓ New high-efficiency natural gas furnace
- ✓ Energy efficient light bulbs, showerheads and aerators, air sealing products and more

**Find out if you qualify**

Visit [efficiencyMB.ca/MEEO](http://efficiencyMB.ca/MEEO)  
1-844-944-8181

