



MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL
RALLIEMENT NATIONAL DES MÉTIS

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New project launched seeking improved employment opportunities for Métis Nation citizens with disabilities

Saskatoon, SK - Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier today announced a new project aimed at finding ways of improving employment opportunities for Métis persons with disabilities.

“Improving skills development and employment opportunities for Métis Nation citizens with disabilities is a top priority,” said President Chartier during the launch of the project today in Saskatoon, SK. “This project will help identify the best tools and services available to Métis Nation citizens with disabilities seeking skills development, and find innovative ways of improving their employment opportunities.”

As part of this project, the MNC will be partnering with the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), the leading cross-disability organization promoting the equitable, meaningful and sustainable employment of persons with disabilities in Canada.

To launch the project, President Chartier, David Chartrand, MNC Vice-president and Minister responsible for Social Development, Bruce Smith, CCRW 1st Vice-Chair, and Carole Barron, CCRW President and CEO signed a Memorandum of Understanding formalizing the new partnership.

“The CCRW recognizes a shared interest with the Métis Nation in ensuring public and private sectors have an understanding of, and support for, the economic and social benefits of improving employment opportunities for Métis persons with disabilities,” said Bruce Smith, CCRW 1st Vice-chair. “We look forward to forging a productive partnership with Métis governments.”

The MNC and CCRW will cooperate in establishing a national advisory group, which will explore innovative and effective tools and services aimed at meeting the employment needs of Métis persons with disabilities. Gary Tinker, a leading advocate for persons with disabilities, will be one of the MNC representatives on the national advisory board.

“The expertise of Mr. Tinker and the other advisory board members will be vital to the success to this project,” said Carole Barron, CCRW President and CEO. “The insight of the national advisory board will be invaluable.”

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The MNC and CCRW will also be holding a National Training Forum for Métis Nation employment counselors, giving them the tools to better serve Métis Nation citizens with disabilities entering or reentering the workforce.

The Improving Employability Outcomes for Métis Persons with Disabilities project is being supported by the Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund, part of the federal government's economic stimulus initiatives.

"Métis Nation citizens are valuable contributors to the Canadian economy, but there is still much work to do in ensuring all our people have an opportunity to engage in the workforce," said David Chartrand, MNC Vice-president and Minister responsible for Social Development. "With the right opportunities, Métis Nation citizens with disabilities can play an important role in Canada's economic recovery."

For more information contact Greg Taylor, MNC Communications, at (613) 296-9263 or gregt@metisnation.ca.

The MNC represents the Métis Nation in Canada at the national and international level. The Métis Nation's homeland includes the 3 Prairie Provinces and extends into Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and the northern United States. There are approximately 350,000 – 400,000 Métis Nation citizens in Canada, roughly a quarter of all Aboriginal peoples in the country.