



# 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT *To The Community*

Celebrating 15 years of serving  
the Alberta Métis Community



**Rupertsland  
Institute**  
*Métis Centre of Excellence*

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**2024-2025 Annual Report**



# Message from the Board Chair



**Lorne Gladu**

Executive Chair, RLI  
Board of Governors

I want to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the members of the RLI Board of Governors for their dedication and steady leadership during a year of change. Their guidance was instrumental as we navigated governance reform, structural realignment, and the many operational adjustments that were required to position RLI within the framework of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

This past year has been one of transformation, collaboration, and forward momentum for Rupertsland Institute (RLI). The work of our Board of Governors, leadership team, and staff has been guided by our shared commitment to advancing education, training, and lifelong learning for Métis Citizens across Alberta.

Over the past year, we have made important strides in strengthening our internal systems, refining our strategic priorities, and ensuring that every program we deliver is aligned with the needs of the community we serve.

This included advancing our work in early learning and childcare; K-12; post-secondary education; and training to employment supports. These efforts continue to be a source of pride for our Board, as they represent tangible progress toward our vision of a self-sufficient Métis Nation enriched by learning, job opportunities, and cultural connection.

I also want to acknowledge the resilience and dedication of our incredible staff. Change - especially at the scale we have experienced - can be challenging; but the professionalism, adaptability, and passion of the RLI team has ensured that Métis Citizens continue to receive the highest quality services. The ability to uphold our standards of excellence while finding new ways of aligning our efforts and new ways of working together is the foundation of our success.

In 2024-25, the Board also focused on strengthening RLI governance through its newly drafted policy manual which provides clear oversight mechanisms and enhanced accountability between the Board and CEO relationship.

Our 2024-25 Business Plan reflects a thoughtful approach to transition—one that balances continuity of services, with the innovation needed to meet future Citizens' demands. These plans will have a lasting impact, ensuring that RLI remains a leader in education and training for years to come.

As we look ahead, I am confident that RLI's legacy of client services, expressed accountability, and community connection will continue to grow under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The work we have undertaken together this year has set a strong foundation for that to happen.

**On behalf of the RLI Board of Governors, I want to thank members of our senior management team, regional team services, and our much-valued partners for their steadfast commitment. It is an honour to serve beside you as we continue to build A Strong Métis Nation Embracing Metis Rights.**



RLI is governed by a public and private sector Board of Governors comprised of representatives from the Métis business community, the University of Alberta, industry, and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. The Board of Governors is accountable to its sole shareholder -- the Métis Nation within Alberta -- as represented by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.



**Andrea Sandmaier**

President, Otipemisiwak  
Métis Government Ex-  
Officio



**James Henry, LLB**

Rupertsland Institute  
Appointment



**Lisa Wolfe**

Otipemisiwak Métis  
Government Ex-Officio



**Dr. Ian Winship**

University of Alberta  
Ex-Officio



**Delores Cox**

Otipemisiwak  
Métis Government  
Appointment



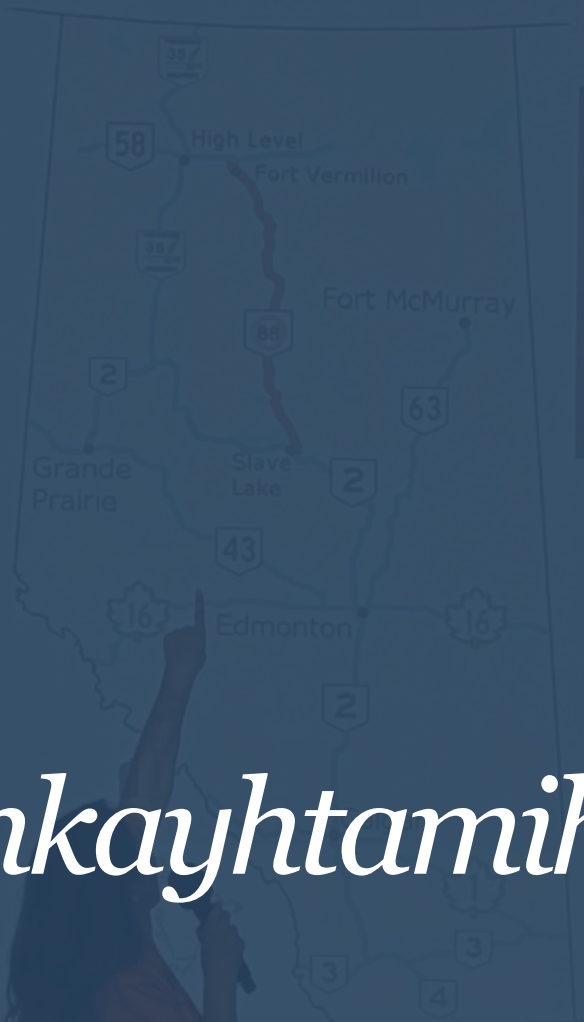
**Dr. Adam Gaudry**

University of Alberta  
Ex-Officio

# Board of Governors

## Who Am I?

- Metis from North Vermilion Settlement on my father's side
- German and mixed European ancestry on my mother's side



*chi kishkayhtamihk*





# EDUCATION





# Teaching and Learning

RLI supports Métis learners across early learning, K-12, and the post-secondary spectrum, including Michif language revitalization. Our Teaching and Learning team leads the development of Métis-specific curriculum resources, professional development for educators, course delivery, and student supports.


## Early Learning Education Childcare Training (ELECT)

This Métis-centric program is designed for early learning educators in key positions to serve Métis early learners. In 2024-2025, the ELECT Program provided:

- **30 early learning educators** with ELECT certificates. With **14 completing over 200 hours** of Métis-specific training in the year-long program and **16 completing 140 hours** in the Summer Intensive option,
- Métis-centric Professional Development to **over 75 early learning educators**,
- **190 Métis children** with apisci nitôtimak/Little Friends Early Learning Funding for preschool and kindergarten fees.

## Michif Language Programs

- Michif in the Classroom: **44 Early Learning and K-12 educators** working with two different knowledge holders to learn Michif and bring it in the classroom
- **151 participants** in the Introduction to Michif course
- Development of a children's book, introductory Michif grammar book, and album - **Coming soon on our website!**

A photograph of three women in a professional setting. A woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue blazer over a floral shirt, is holding a small purple object and looking down at it. To her left, a woman with dark hair is also looking down. To her right, a woman with blonde hair and glasses is looking towards the center. They are standing in front of a light-colored wooden wall with a window.

*"If I had to sum up my ELECT journey in one word, it would be 'unforgettable.' The lessons, relationships, and personal growth I experienced have inspired my teaching practice. This program has left a lasting impact, and I will carry this learning with me as I continue to grow and support the children in my care."*





## K - 12 Education

The RLI Teaching and Learning team's K-12 initiatives include resource creation and distribution; course outline creation; and increasing participation in Métis subjects through offering virtual field trips led by Métis individuals.

In 2024-2025, RLI K-12 initiatives included:

- Launching over **15 new Métis learning resources**, including Métis land-based learning videos,
- Hosting 14 Virtual Field Trips. **Over 17,000 participants including students, teachers, and individuals attended these sessions,**
- Providing tutoring services for Métis students in grades K-12 with a certified Tutoring Provider of their choice. **Over 294 Métis students accessed tutoring services this year,**
- Translating over **62 of RLI's resources into French.** These resources are available on RLI's website to support authentic Métis learning across French-speaking school districts,
- A Métis K-12 Needs Assessment to understand and improve Métis education in Alberta schools. The report is being finalized and will be shared in the near future.



*RLI received the 2024 Public School Boards' Association of Alberta award for Promoting and Advancing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as it relates to education in Alberta. This award was given in recognition of RLI's commitments to redressing the legacy of residential schools and advancing the process of Canadian reconciliation.*



RLI is recognized as a key education stakeholder and sits on many education action and advisory committees that influence curriculum development. We have also partnered with school divisions to create authentic resources that directly support the Alberta curriculum.

We are supporting school divisions across Alberta to learn from Métis Knowledge Holders. These efforts foster cultural awareness and provide safe spaces to support Métis students' success through in-school programming through the Government of Alberta's Bridging Classrooms grant.

**In 2024-2025, RLI maintained Métis Education Service Agreements (MESAs) with Northland, Clearview, Christ the Redeemer, Pembina Hills, Prairieland and Livingstone Range School Divisions to provide authentic education resources, cultural support, and professional development for educators.**

*"On behalf of McNally Catchment, I want to thank you for leading such an engaging and informative session on Land-Based Learning at our catchment PD. I received so much positive feedback about how thoughtfully you walked staff through the vast amounts of resources that are provided by Rupertsland Institute. We are grateful for your contributions and hope to continue learning from you in the future. Thank you again for your generosity and leadership."*

*- Edmonton Public Schools Principal*

## Professional Development: Courses and Conferences

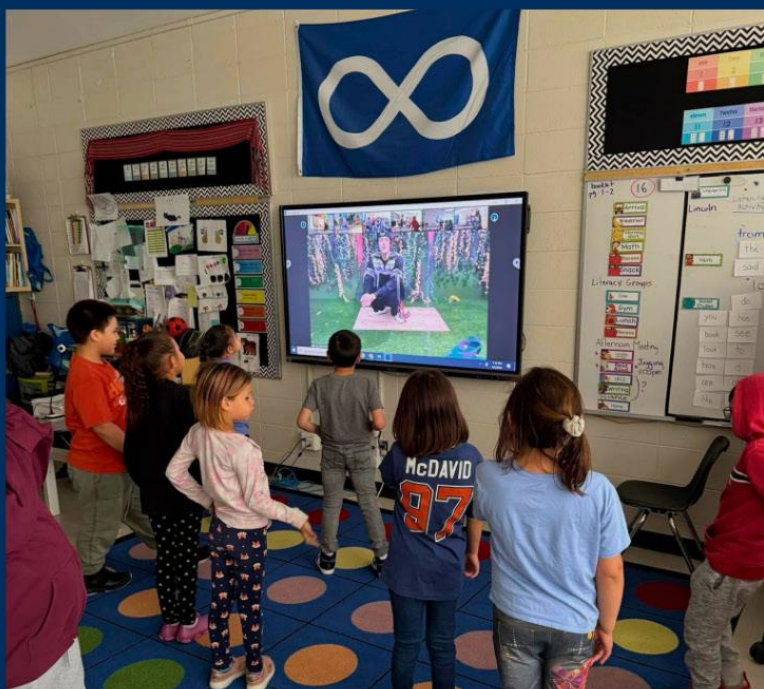
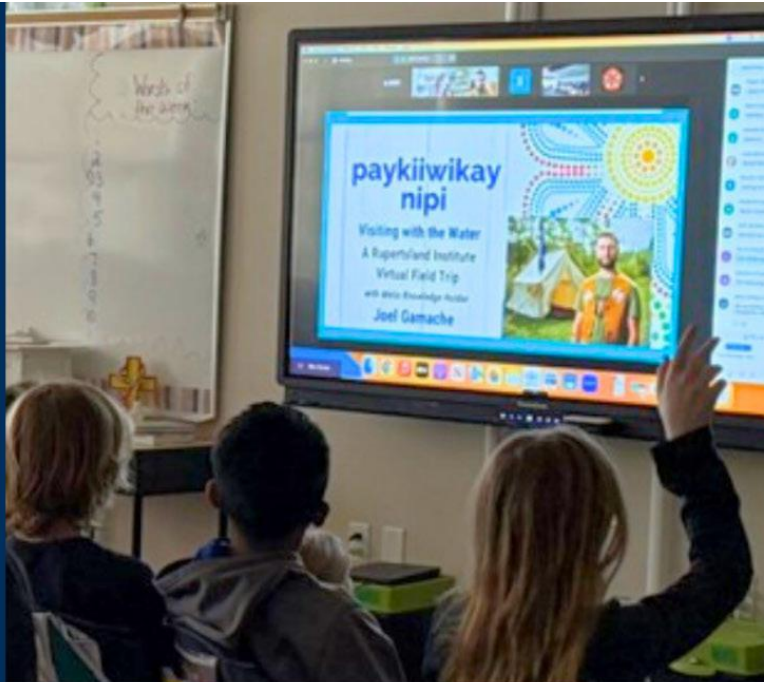
Throughout 2024-2025, our Teaching and Learning team facilitated over **75 professional learning opportunities** for school divisions across the province, **reaching 2500 educators**.

This year **257 Educators** completed the Foundational Knowledge Themes Course

RLI also offers three post-secondary level courses through the University of Alberta. This year we offered:

- Métis Foundational Knowledge for Teachers and Leaders,
- Métis Foundational Knowledge for Pre-Service Teachers,
- okiskinohamakeshiyahk michif pikishkwewin: Pedagogical Approaches for Teaching Michif for Preservice Teachers







# Post-Secondary Education Program



***In the 2024/25 fiscal year RLI funded 782 Métis students from Year One to Post-Graduate / Professional studies.***

RLI's Post-Secondary Education Program provides financial assistance to Métis students enrolled in accredited universities and colleges across Canada.

The program plays a crucial role in ensuring Métis learners can access, participate in, and successfully complete post-secondary education. By investing in Métis students, the Post Secondary Education Program fosters the development of a new generation of skilled professionals who will strengthen the economic growth, social well-being, and cultural vitality of the Métis Nation and Canada as a whole.

In the 2024–2025 academic year, the PSE program successfully supported 782 students across a diverse range of academic disciplines.

The chart below shows how RLI exceeded its projected targets in the 2024-2025 fiscal year with our PSE funding program.

Year of Study	2024-2025 Target	Total Clients in 2024-2025
Year 1	144	150
Year 2	120	171
Year 3	125	220
Year 4 + 5	201	229
Post-Graduate	11	12
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>782</b>





# Community Events

RLI's promotions at Otipemisiwak Métis community events helps us connect with the community in a culturally rich environment centered on strengthening our community ties and influence.



## Audrey Poitras 25th Annual Golf Tournament

On June 14, 2024, RLI proudly participated in the 25th Annual Audrey Poitras Golf Tournament by sponsoring a hole and connecting with many Citizens throughout the day. **RLI also sponsored a team in the tournament, who went on to take first place in the tournament.** We are proud to attend and sponsor teams for this tournament which supports the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Benevolence Fund.

## Métis Fest

On June 22, 2024, RLI attended the 2024 Métis Fest event which is hosted by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Youth Department, helping to promote connection to culture and community. RLI's iconic RV was on-site, alongside a booth where citizens could engage in activities, win prizes, and celebrate with fellow community members. The booth also served as a space to share information about RLI's programs and services, fostering awareness and connection throughout the event.

## Métis Cup Tournament

On August 2nd, 2024, RLI was proud to attend the 2024 Métis Cup to support Métis youth and promote active, healthy lifestyles through sport and community connection. Throughout the tournament weekend, RLI hosted a trade show booth where attendees could learn more about education and Training opportunities and take home a variety of prizes and informational materials.

## Citizens' Gathering

On August 16–17, 2024, RLI attended the 2024 Citizens' Gathering in collaboration with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. During the event, RLI's Teaching and Learning Team hosted an information booth to share details about its programs and services, including ELECT and the five themes on Métis Foundational Knowledge. Attendees were invited to learn more through pamphlets, stickers, and information sheets distributed throughout the Gathering.

## Michif Women's Gathering

From March 7 - 9, 2025 RLI co-hosted the second annual Michif Women's Gathering with the theme of ***Honouring our Aunties: Strength, Wisdom, and Workforce Leadership***. This event honoured the legacy of women in the workforce— as entrepreneurs, educators, caregivers, and leaders in their field. The legacy of work at RLI strives to continue through the vision of "A skilled, knowledgeable, and self-reliant Métis Nation."



# *A Right to Joy: RLI's Métis 2SLGBTQIA+ Gathering*

**April 11 & 12, 2024**

On April 11th & 12th, 2024 the Rupertsland Métis Student and Alumni Association (now the Otipemisiwak Métis Students and Alumni Association) collaborated with the Edmonton 2 Spirit Society and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Youth department to create the first Métis 2SLGBTQIA+ Gathering in Edmonton, Alberta.

The gathering is an integral step towards building an inclusive, welcoming, and diverse space for Métis learners and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. This two-day event centered on sharing experience, knowledge, ideas, and building a more connected, involved, and inclusive community bringing together Métis and other Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ community members.

The gathering featured a dynamic panel of speakers, panelists, and presenters sharing a common goal: to facilitate learning, inclusivity, and inspiration for all in attendance. Through an atmosphere of open dialogue, education, and community building, this gathering aimed to create a welcoming and supportive environment for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

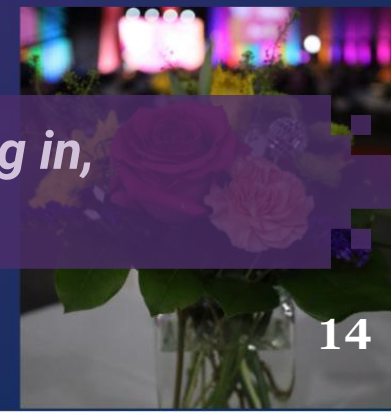
Our agenda for the gathering included:

- An opening keynote speech by Member of Parliament Blake Desjarlais
- 8 unique workshops designed to explore Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA+ identities and values
- A 2SLGBTQIA+ in the Arts panel with Cree Nomad, Ella Thomson from May Beads, and singer/songwriter Shawnee Kish
- A 2SLGBTQIA+ in STEM panel with KD King, Jackie Harrison, and Andrew Volk
- And a closing keynote speech from VENUS, winner of Canada's Drag Race Season 4.

In total, we hosted **371 attendees**, and gathered **\$2,033** in pre-event donations collected through the pay-what-you-may Charity Drag Show on April 12th.

*"I am so thankful to have been in a space that was unapologetically Indigenous and unapologetically Two-Spirit..."*











# *Student and Alumni Events*

RLI's Student and Alumni events work to engage the Otipemisiwak Métis community by creating environments of connection weaved with influence from the community and Métis identity. These events are held in collaboration with the Otipemisiwak Métis Students' and Alumni Association to ensure our reach envelopes past and present individuals funded through RLI and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

## **Buffy the Métis Scholar's Birthday**

On July 26th, 2024, RLI celebrated a significant milestone with Buffy's Birthday Bash. Attendees enjoyed a lively and festive atmosphere, marking the day RLI was incorporated as a Section 9 company under the Alberta Companies Act in 2010, becoming an official affiliate of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

The event was a perfect blend of culture, community, and fun in the sun. Participants engaged in exciting outdoor activities and games, including cornhole and four-in-a-row.

## **Shaakipakowa (*they are budding*)**

On October 3rd, 2024, RLI staff, students, and alumni gathered for a special evening of celebration at the Carriage House Inn in Calgary.

Shaakipakowa (they are budding) symbolized a night of new beginnings and community connection as a means of growth.

President Andrea Sandmaier of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government shared inspiring insights on the **transition of the Rupertsland Métis Student and Alumni Association (RMSA) to the Otipemisiwak Métis Student and Alumni Association (OMSA)**. This transition signifies a point of growth for the student and alumni association to act as a point of connection for students and alumni across Alberta.

**Through music, networking, and community building activities, Shaakipakowa embodied the essence of Métis heritage while celebrating and reflecting on the deep roots and ongoing growth within the community.**





# Métis Education Foundation Endowments 2024-25

Name	Date Established	Total Number of Awards	Total Funds Dispersed
MacEwan University	2008	24	\$95,000.00
University of Alberta	2008	39	\$267,500.00
NorQuest College	2008	5	\$22,500.00
NAIT	2009	24	\$102,500.00
Portage College	2009	10	\$30,000.00
Northwestern Polytechnic	2011	4	\$8,000.00
University of Calgary	2012	18	\$115,000.00
Mount Royal University	2012	8	\$25,600.00
University of Lethbridge	2012	8	\$57,000.00
Lethbridge College	2013	6	\$21,000.00
Athabasca University	2014	1	\$2,500.00
Northern Lakes College	2015	6	\$9,000.00
Lakeland College	2015	7	\$21,000.00
Bow Valley College	2015	5	\$20,000.00
MEF Endowment Trust Fund	2015	11	\$110,000.00
Medicine Hat College	2018	4	\$8,500.00
SAIT	2018	1	\$3,000.00
Concordia University	2018	2	\$5,000.00
ELCC Endowment Trust Fund	2020	5	\$25,000.00
Keyano College	2021	2	\$11,000.00
Red Deer University	2021	0	-
Olds College	2021	-	-
<b>Total Contributions</b>		<b>190</b>	<b>\$959,100.00</b>



# Métis Education Foundation

The Métis Education Foundation (MEF) 2025–2029 Strategic Plan presents a bold vision of "Empowered Métis Scholars through legacy, growth and community."

Established in 1991 by the Métis Nation of Alberta, the MEF has played a key role in advancing education access and success for Métis learners. With the recent Community Legacy Initiatives (CLI) Funding Protocol Transfer Agreement between the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and MEF, the Foundation entered a transformative era—enhancing governance, strengthening community accountability, and expanding operational capacity as a stand-alone affiliate.

MEF's impact is deeply rooted in enduring partnerships, particularly between RLI and post-secondary institutions. **Since 2006, these collaborations have supported the creation of perpetual post-secondary endowments at 21 post-secondary institutions, ensuring sustainable financial support for Métis students.** As MEF renews its commitment to education equity, community impact, and long-term sustainability, it builds on a strong foundation to support current and future generations of Métis learners.



**Andrea Sandmaier**

President,  
Otipemisiwak Métis  
Government  
*October 2023 - Present*



**Shannon Dunfield**

Secretary of Records,  
Otipemisiwak Métis  
Government  
*October 2023 - June 2025*



**Sarah Wolfe**

Secretary of Records,  
Otipemisiwak Métis  
Government  
*June 2025 - Present*



**Jason Ekeberg**

Secretary of the Treasury,  
Otipemisiwak Métis  
Government  
*October 2023 - Present*

## Governance

The MEF is governed by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, reflecting our deep-rooted commitment to the Métis Nation within Alberta. The Board of Directors meets quarterly, or as needed, to review and approve changes to endowment agreements, receive reports from post-secondary institutions, and discuss strategic adjustments to enhance education initiatives.

## Strategic Priorities:

**Growth** - Expanding funding, institutional capacity and program impact

**Connection** - Deepening relationships with students, alumni, and institutional/community partners

**Legacy** - Building sustainability, identity, and renewed community engagement.

# MEF Community Legacy Initiatives (MEF CLI)

## Métis Endowment Program (MEP):

The Métis Education Foundation (MEF) is dedicated to empowering Métis students by reducing financial barriers to post-secondary education and supporting their academic and career goals. Through endowment-funded awards and partnerships with 21 post-secondary institutions across Alberta, MEF ensures long-term, sustainable support for Métis learners. These awards not only make education more accessible, but also foster academic excellence, community leadership, and cultural pride. By helping students connect with their Métis heritage and the broader community, MEF reinforces the values of self-determination, resilience, and nation building—investing in a stronger future for both Métis students and the Métis Nation as a whole.

## Otipemisiwak Community-Based Awards:

Distributed to recognize and reward academic success and community involvement, these awards are open to Métis students pursuing academic excellence and providing both financial assistance and a platform to honor their accomplishments. Recipients are awarded a monetary prize and are celebrated during the annual November Métis Week celebration, highlighting their academic success and contributions to the community.

Current Community-Based Awards include:

- Art L'Hirondelle (\$1,000)
- Bruce Gladue (\$2,500)
- Cecil Bellrose (\$2,500)
- Delia Gray (\$1,000)
- Pearl Calahasen (\$1,000)
- Gary Pruden (\$500)
- Ernest Poitras (\$1,000)
- Marlene Lanz (\$2,500)
- Tom Ghostkeeper (\$1,000)



## MEF Legacy and Fund Development Program:

The MEF Legacy and Fund Development Program ensures the long-term sustainability of the Métis Education Foundation by fostering a culture of giving and community support. Through lasting relationships with individual donors, families, corporate partners, and industry stakeholders, the program secures vital resources that empower Métis students and alumni. With innovative fundraising initiatives, strategic endowment growth, and meaningful community engagement, it strengthens MEF's capacity to provide ongoing financial support.



## Otipemisiwak Métis Student and Alumni Association (OMSA):

The Otipemisiwak Métis Students and Alumni Association (OMSA) is a framework created to enhance the lives of Métis Citizens through cultural and community-based initiatives. OMSA supports Métis students and alumni by offering programs fostering connection, identity, and growth.

These include:

- **En Roo:** A digital platform to connect Métis students and alumni, facilitating communication and resource sharing. Designed with a user-friendly interface to assist students and alumni with opportunities such as scholarships and networking events.
- **Ambassador Program:** Métis student and alumni volunteers representing OMSA, and guiding past, present, and future members of the community. Ambassadors engage in outreach, provide peer support, and promote cultural awareness within educational institutions.
- **Mentorship Program:** A digital platform connecting Métis students with mentors, alumni, Elders, and leaders to support academic, professional, and personal growth while strengthening cultural identity and community ties.
- **Shakamohta Podcast:** A student-led podcast connecting the community through storytelling and discussions on Métis culture. Episodes feature conversations with community leaders, artists, and students, aiming to promote cultural pride and awareness.
- **Internship Program:** Offering Métis students meaningful work experiences, connecting them to Métis culture and community. This program is designed to cultivate professional skills while also enhancing a deeper understanding of Métis history and traditions.



*To date, the Otipemisiwak Métis Student and Alumni Association (OMSA) has:*  
**9,314 enrolled Students and Alumni**

A group of people are gathered in a large, open hall with a high ceiling and exposed wooden beams. They are looking at a large, white, rectangular object that is partially covered by a white sheet. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from the windows on the right. The overall tone is warm and yellowish-orange.

*kishinahamaakew*





# TRAINING





# ***Métis Training to Employment (MTE)***

The Métis Training and Employment (MTE) program, delivered by RLI and funded through the Indigenous Skills, Employment and Training Program (ISET) of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), is dedicated to helping Métis citizens across Alberta achieve meaningful employment through training and education.

Similar Post-Secondary Education (PSE) program, which supports university studies through the Métis Education Post-Secondary Strategy, MTE focuses on job training and employment services tailored to the needs of Métis Citizens.

The MTE Program focuses on short-term training and college programs such as certificates, diplomas, and employment supports for job-ready clients.

## **What We Offer:**

RLI provides a wide range of services under MTE, including:

- Funding for certificate, diploma, and trades programs
- Customized training initiatives
- Employer programs to support the hiring of Métis citizens
- Short-term training (e.g., safety tickets, PPE acquisition)
- Employment readiness services (e.g., resume writing, mock interviews, and job search)
- Career and job fairs
- Partnership development to create more job opportunities

These services are available both online and in person through nine regional offices and three mobile service units. Our services cover the following districts under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government:

- The Northeast region which includes the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Lower Athabasca River Territory and the eastern half of the North Saskatchewan River Territory (Districts 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20).
- The Northwest region which includes the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Lesser Slave Lake and Peace River territories (Districts 13, 14, 15, 21, 22)
- The Central region which includes the western half of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government North Saskatchewan River Territory (Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
- The South Region which includes the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Battle River Territory (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).



# Listening to Our Community

This year, RLI conducted both staff and community engagement sessions to hear directly from those we serve. These conversations help us understand what’s working and where we can improve. We are currently exploring new service delivery models, especially those that leverage technology, to make accessing our programs easier and more efficient.

## National Engagement: Shaping the Future

RLI continues to play a key role in the national mid-term evaluation of the ISETP. This evaluation uses a co-development approach to ensure Indigenous perception is central to the process. The draft report highlights:

- Lessons learned from previous agreements like ASETS
- Gaps and challenges in the current ISET Program
- Successes and innovations that have emerged under ISET agreements

RLI’s involvement ensures that Métis perspectives are included in shaping future Indigenous employment programs.

## Conclusion

The 2024–2025 year has been one of growth, innovation, and impact. With nearly 930 citizens funded and over 700 achieving employment or self-employment, the MTE program continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Métis Albertans. Through regional offices, mobile services, and national advocacy, RLI remains committed to empowering Métis citizens and building stronger communities.

Region	Funded	Job Search Outcomes (Non Funded)	Employed/ Self-Employed	Return to School
Northeast	125	16	78	15
Northwest	186	16	100	31
Central	362	24	186	59
South	254	24	147	29
Carryover Clients from 2023-2024	-		218	25
TOTAL:	927	80	729	159

# Northeast Region

In the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the Northeast Region team remained committed to supporting Métis citizens through a wide range of employment and training services. **These services included job search assistance, career exploration, employment maintenance, and financial support for safety certifications, personal protective equipment (PPE), apprenticeships, and post-secondary programs for Otipemisiwak citizens.**

Over the year, the regional team supported **217 clients** pursuing training in trades, certificate and diploma programs, as well as employment supports such as job search assistance, résumé development, employment partnership placements, and summer student opportunities. **As a result of these efforts, 100 clients successfully gained employment or became self-employed, while 21 clients returned to school to further their education.**

## Employment Partnerships

### *Métis Employment Placement Program*

- Esquao - Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women.

### *Summer Student Placement*

#### **21 summer students across 6 employers.**

- RLI METI-Service Centres in Bonnyville and Lac La Biche
- Otipemisiwak Métis Government District 12
- Métis Local 1935
- Métis Crossing
- Lakeland Credit Union
- Aspen View School



*My advisor, Barbara was exceptionally helpful throughout the process as well and answered any questions/concerns I had throughout the school year and was so very kind to me, and it was a great pleasure working with her. She did a wonderful job of making me feel supported and showed her genuine care towards helping me, and I appreciate it greatly as she also helped me feel empowered to do well in my program, and I was hired at two different places within two months after graduating. I am very thankful to Rupertsland Institute and my advisor, Barbara, it was truly an excellent experience.*

*- Rachel Ferguson, Practical Nurse Diploma  
NorQuest College*



*Barbara, and RLI relieved so much stress during my year of school, I don't think I would have been able to achieve the grade average I did had RLI not relieved financial stress that I would have faced otherwise. Going to school is a lot of pressure and having to worry about how you're going to cover rent, or food, let alone school supplies, takes away from why we're really there. With the help of RLI I was able to achieve a dream I've had since I was very little. And, I would like to say I have successfully found work in my field of study with many opportunities to follow. I really cannot thank RLI enough for all that they do and continue to do. It adds pride to my Métis culture, that we lift each other up and truly care for each other. When one of us succeeds, we all succeed. Maarsi Rupertsland.*

**- Tralynn Ganter**  
**Indigenous Artisan Entrepreneurship Program**



**NE**

## Events attended by NE Region Staff

- Grand Opening of CanSafe in Lloydminster
- Forward Summit in Calgary
- Lac La Biche School Job Fair and school presentations
- Métis Scholarship Awards at Portage College
- Meetings in Fort McMurray in October supporting community initiatives
- Collaborated with Careers and MNA on a school registry drive
- Lakeland "Try a Trade" Expo in May
- Participant in Bonnyville Job Finders group and employer network meetings
- Conklin Trade Fair
- ATC Career Fair
- Portage College Career Fair

As part of our efforts to bring Rupertsland services to more communities across Alberta, the NE team travelled with our Mobile Units on their trips to Athabasca, Conklin, Boyle, Fort McMurray, Cold Lake, Métis Crossing, Lloydminster, and St. Paul.



# Northwest Region

In 2024-2025, the Northwest Region staff worked diligently to provide services to our Métis citizens. **We provided job search, apprenticeship, METI-Services, as well as certificate, and diploma students.**

The Northwest regional team assisted **151 clients** seeking training for Trades (Yr 1-4), Certificate & Diploma Programs, Employment supports (Job search & resume supports), Employment Partnership Placements, and Summer Student Placements. **Of the clients we assisted, 76 secured employment or are self-employed, and 25 have returned to school.**

## Employment Partnerships

### *Métis Employment Placement Program*

- Ignite Marketing and Production Inc.

### *Summer Student Placement*

- Grande Prairie MNA Local 1990
- Northwest Development Society - Peace River
- Region 5 (District 21) MNA office, Slave Lake
- RLI office in Peace River and Grande Prairie



*"I am very thankful to have gotten an Administrative Assistant Summer Student position at Rupertsland Institute! I have gained valuable work experience with providing general administrative support, assisting with office procedures and providing assistance to clients. I was able to built strong relationships with people within my community. Rupertsland Institute gave me a culturally rich working environment and I got to learn so much about my Métis culture! Learning more about the Métis culture has opened my eyes to how strong and beautiful the Métis people are!"*

*"I will forever be proud to say 'I am Métis.' My summer with Rupertsland Institute will always hold a special place in my heart because I have learnt things that have helped me find my true identity and sense of belonging. I would also like to say a special thank you to all of the beautiful souls I got to work with."*

*- Dominique Fjeld, Administrative Assistant Summer Student  
Rupertsland Institute*

# NW



*"I wanted to pursue post-secondary education and decided on a one-year certificate program for Water and Wastewater Technician at NAIT. I looked toward the MNA for assistance with my educational goals. I found Rupertsland.org and the generous possibility of financial assistance. I was accepted into my program and subsequently applied through Rupertsland for financial aid. I was matched with a student advisor who guided me through the process and explained the requirements for possible aid. I was a successful applicant receiving aid which helped cover my tuition and portion of books and supplies.*



*I will be forever grateful for Rupertsland and the Métis Nation of Alberta for making my education dreams come true."*

*- Ben Caetano, Waste Water Technician Certificate  
NAIT*

## Events attended by NW Region Staff

- **April 24, 2024** – Student Career Fairs at St. John Paul II and St. Joes High School, Grande Prairie
- **July 24th, 2024** – Northwestern Polytechnic Career Fair, Grande Prairie
- **July 30, 2024** – High Prairie Rodeo Parade, High Prairie
- **October 29, 2024** – Career Fair at the Tara Center, Grande Prairie
- **November 15, 2024** – Métis Week Rupertsland NW open house, Grande Prairie
- **November 28, 2024** – "Lunch and Learn" with Halliburton at the Grande Prairie RLI office
- **March 26, 2025** – Student Career Fairs at St. John Paul II and St. Joes High School, Grande Prairie
- **March 29th, 2025** – Spirit Seekers Indigenous Youth Conference, Grande Prairie



*"Rupertsland Institute gave me the opportunity to experience going through school with no worries. They were understanding, respectful, knowledgeable and very helpful in making sure I achieve my goal! For the entire year I had one person who regularly checked in on my studies and asked how it was going. I appreciated the communication she had given me the whole way through. I am currently a MOA at a clinic and enjoy every minute of it!*

*Thank you Rupertsland and Tara Lynch for all they did to help me achieve my dream!"*

*- Tyra Sawers, Medical Office Administration / Health Unit Coordinator  
Diploma  
Sundance College*

# Central Region

The Central Region has one office in Edmonton and serves the greater Edmonton area and west to Jasper through our RV mobile services.

The staff in the Central Region continued to provide services to those seeking training for years one to four of a trade, certificate or diploma program, employment supports, employment partnerships. As well as, all years of a degree program, and the last two semesters of a Masters program.

Our Central Region **assisted 769 individuals** with education, training and employment needs. **Of the completed journeys, 186 individuals are currently employed or self employed and 59 have returned to school.**

## Employment Partnerships

### *Summer Student Placement*

In the summer of 2024, **the Central Region supported 10 companies and 33 students finding rewarding positions where they can apply their education to employment.**

The Edmonton staff is called upon throughout the year to attend many functions, and we are glad to engage with the community to meet Métis citizens and promote our programs and services.

**In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the Central staff attended over 20 events.**

On November 15th, 2024, the Central office celebrated Métis Week by hosting an open house with refreshments, games, and door prizes. Attendees included citizens, members from the Board of Directors, and members from the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.





# South Region

Over the past year, staff from the South region have had the privilege of participating in several meaningful events focused on Indigenous education, employment, and community connection. These experiences have not only strengthened our relationships with Indigenous communities across Alberta but also deepened our understanding of the opportunities and challenges they face. **Each event was a chance to listen, learn, and share – and we're proud to reflect on the moments that made a difference.**

## Event Highlights

- **Indigenous Post-Secondary Fair: Henry Wisewood High School** - This fair was a vibrant gathering of students, educators, and community members. Our team was honored to promote RLI programs and speak directly with Indigenous youth about their dreams and goals. The conversations were inspiring – filled with curiosity, ambition, and hope for the future.
- **Aboriginal Futures Indigenous Job Fair and Central Alberta Fall Job Fair**  
At these events, our staff connected with job seekers and community partners in a space that encouraged open dialogue and mutual support. We shared information about RLI services and explored how we can continue to support Indigenous career pathways. The energy was collaborative and forward-looking.
- **Electricity Transformation Canada Conference** - Attending this national conference was a learning journey for our staff. We gained insights into the renewable energy sector, especially the innovative projects being led by Indigenous communities. It was inspiring to see how technology and tradition are coming together to shape a sustainable future.
- **Indigenous Flag Raising & Opening Ceremony: Truth & Reconciliation** - This ceremony at Red Deer Polytechnic was a deeply moving experience. It marked a collective commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, and our staff was grateful to be part of it. The event fostered reflection, learning, and a renewed sense of solidarity with Indigenous communities.



# Provincial Projects

A large part of our training mandate at RLI is to develop training projects across the province to address demand in the labour market. Although RLI fell short of its intentions with provincial projects, we continued to showcase RLI's commitment to the legacy of supportive community partnerships. Empowering our citizens to be those who own themselves, we designed projects to support budding entrepreneurs at each level of their journey.

## Métis Entrepreneurial Workshop (MEW)

MEW has been a successful part of our provincial projects since 2019-2020. A need had been identified by the community for a project or program that could help bridge the gap between an idea for a business and executing that idea.

Over the years we have worked to refine the curriculum and update it as circumstances in the wider world evolve. **Over the 2024-2025 fiscal year, our workshops consisted of 16 hours of virtual workshops, as well as opportunities for post-workshop supports with “one-on-one” sessions with our workshop facilitators.** While it is not a requirement for participants to have an existing business or a business idea, greater success and engagement is developed if there is a business concept in which to relate the curriculum.

**In 2024-2025 we conducted 4 workshops, 2 virtual and 2 in-person in Edmonton and Calgary.**

Our virtual workshops are designed to allow entrepreneurs who have not made the leap from their regular employment to self-employment, fit the project around their schedules. It also allows us to offer the program across the province, so that all Otipemisiwak Métis Government citizens have access to them.

In total, we were able to assist **49 participants** in acquiring the knowledge and coaching necessary to move forward with their goals. Of these participants, **16 were able to immediately move forward in starting their own businesses.** The remaining **33 participants** are continuing to refine their business ideas as they work towards self-employment.







*"I really enjoyed my time at the Painted Warriors camp. I met new friends and was more actively involved in recreation activities. I received my first aid certificate, bear awareness and field leader in hiking certification. More importantly, I learned a lot about my Metis culture and traditional medicines. Thank you, Rupertsland Institute, for giving me the opportunity to attend this camp."*

**-Brandt Nabess**

## Métis Youth Tour Guide Summer Camp - Painted Warriors Ranch

This camp included hands-on activities including culinary skills, archery, traditional medicines, crafting, beading, bushcraft, and more. Participants had comprehensive training experience, earning national certifications in horseback riding (levels 1 & 2), remote first aid, hiking field leadership, and Métis cultural interpretation. Our sessions were led by seasoned guides, experts and Métis Elders.

Our 2024 Youth Tour Guide Summer Camp had **10 students successfully earn their certification.**

## Jelly Academy Digital Marketing Bootcamp

This course took students through 11 weeks of online part-time Digital Marketing training including Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and tracking online analytics through Google and Meta.

This project ended with **31 participants finishing and graduating from the course.**

## Women in Micro-Business (WIMB) Seminars

WIMB Seminars focus on key areas important to growing a micro-business, such as e-commerce, digital marketing, content marketing, and the fundamentals of business administration. Unlike our Métis Entrepreneurship Workshops, participants in the WIMB are free to pick and choose which seminars are most relevant to their needs.

The content of the seminars is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the rapidly changing digital environment. This is achieved by integrating current industry trends and participant feedback to adjust and update content throughout the year to ensure participants are benefitting as much as possible from their attendance. **In 2024-2025, we conducted 4 seminar series, each with 7 seminars, plus an optional 8th seminar focusing on strategies to boost attendees' brands.**

Over the past year, **we had 59 participants participate in the seminars.** Of those participants, many went back to their full-time careers while increasing their revenue in their micro-businesses. However, some participants found even greater success after attending the seminars. **Of the 59 participants, 13 were able to grow their side hustle into full-time self-employment.**

# Rupertsland Emergency & Industry Skills Drone (REISD) Training Project

Wildfires and extreme weather have been increasing in quantity and intensity for a decade, with the summer of 2023 being an exceptionally bad year for wildfires across the province. These incidents have disproportionately impacted our citizens in the northern communities. Part of RLI's commitment to providing emergency management supports to the community is helping to build capacity in our citizens to assist with the emergency management response.

One of the largest disrupters in the emergency response field has been the increasing dependency on Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (drones) in the direct response to wildfires and other emergency incidents. Drone operations are becoming the most cost-efficient way for incident response teams to monitor situations, looking for flare ups, and provide oversight of fire crews working in the middle of the fire. Responsibilities that used to require fixed wing and rotary aircraft.

Rupertsland identified the need for these skills in emergency management, as well as the growing opportunities in almost every industry, as an opportunity to put the Métis people in the forefront of a growing field. In 2024-2025 we officially launched our first iteration of the Rupertsland Emergency & Industry Skills Drone Training Project (REISD). This first of its kind training opportunity provided participants with the opportunity to obtain their advance drone pilot certification, along with additional certifications and safety tickets that would assist with employment or self-employment once they completed the program.

## Outcome:

There was a strong demand from applicants expressing interest in participating in the program. Of these, **15 were approved to attend the project, with 13 completing the necessary pre-requisites to take their advance certification testing.** The program ended with **11 successful, newly certified, advanced drone operators, with the remaining 2 planning their retakes in the weeks following.**



*"It was challenging, fun and an experience of a lifetime.*

*We were the first ones to participate in such a program that included so much more than drone training but not like any other drone course out there being offered. To be able to come together at such a place as the Métis Crossing made it that much more unforgettable and unique. I have great plans for my training and am extremely happy to have been chosen for the opportunity."*

**- Morgan Calliou**





*The image below  
was captured by  
one of our drone  
participants.*





# Mobile Services

RLI's mobile units are more than just service providers—they're ambassadors for RLI and the Métis Nation. These units travel across Alberta, attending events, parades, and trade shows, while also delivering employment services to remote and rural communities.

The RLI Mobile Offices continue to be a familiar sight in all areas of the province.

The three Mobile Units along with the Advisors and Drivers continue to create awareness and provide RLI services to Clients in all areas of Alberta.

Our mobile service team also attended numerous special events such as Métis cultural events, trade shows, school events, job fairs, recruiting fairs, a golf tournament, parades, as well as the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Citizens' Gathering. **The three RVs had 2121 visitors and logged 63,000 kms in the last year.**

## *Mobile Virtual Services*

There are occasions when Client Advisors are unable to travel on the RV. In order to ensure an uninterrupted service to our Clients a new Virtual Mobile Service was introduced this year.

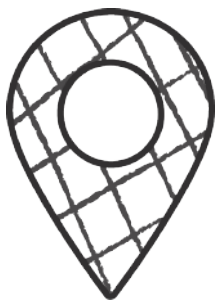
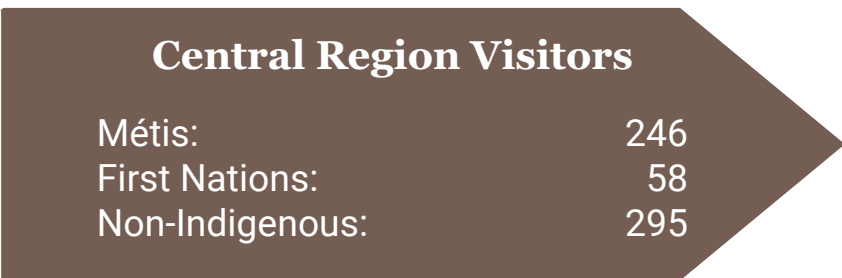
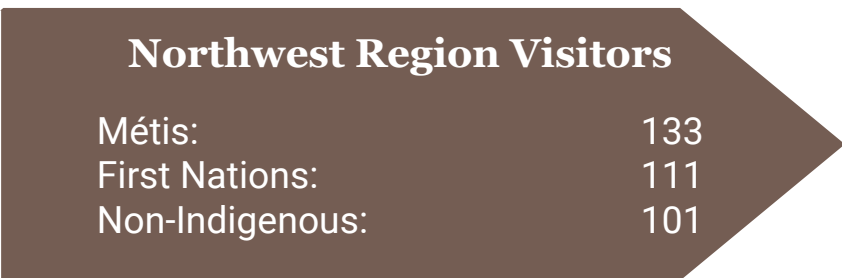
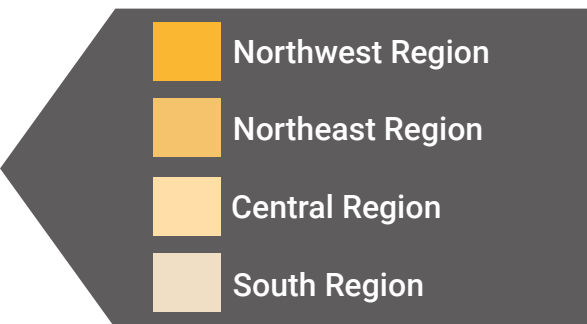
This service provides Clients with the ability to connect virtually with Advisors from any of the RLI offices when an Advisor is unable to travel with the Mobile Offices.

## *Emergency Services*

The Mobile Services has been included in the RLI Emergency Services Team as a support with vehicles and supplies in the event of emergency situations.

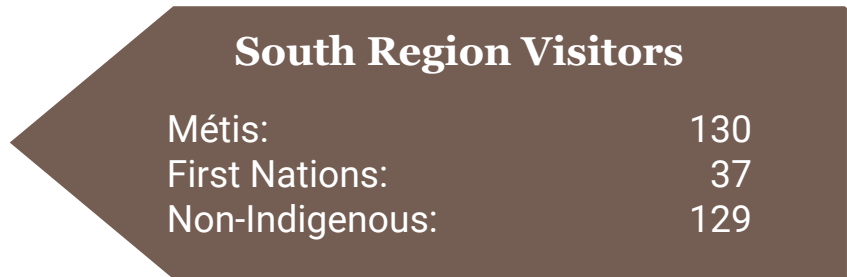
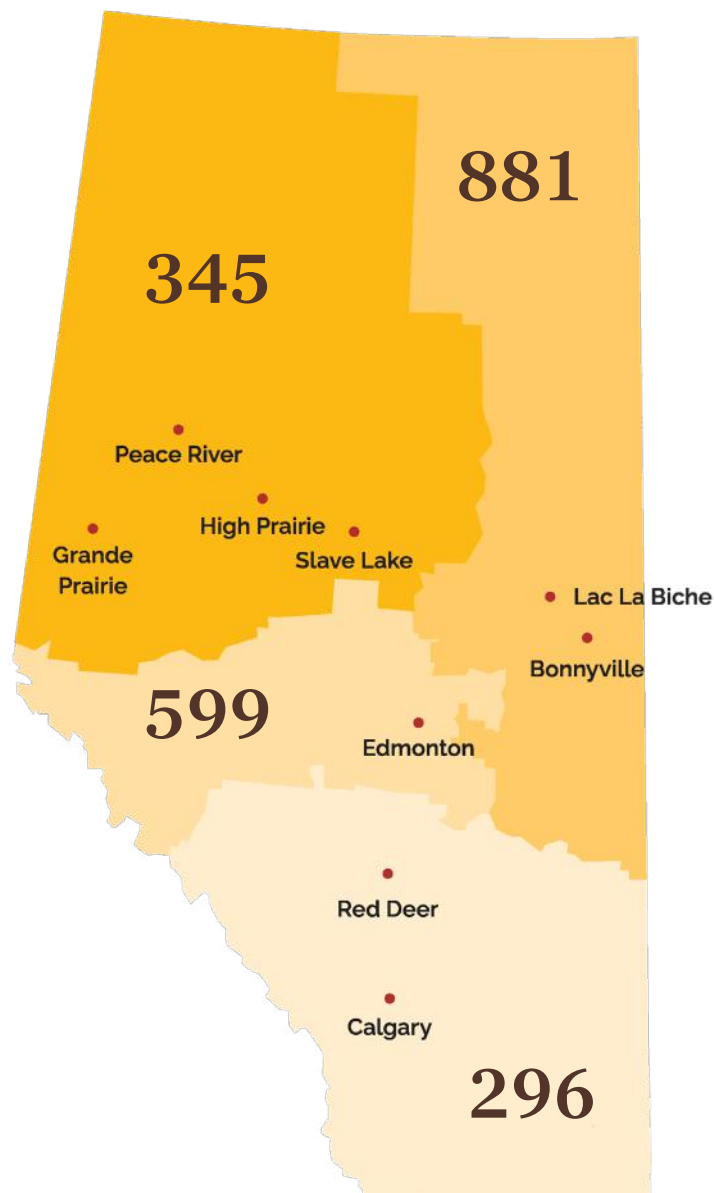
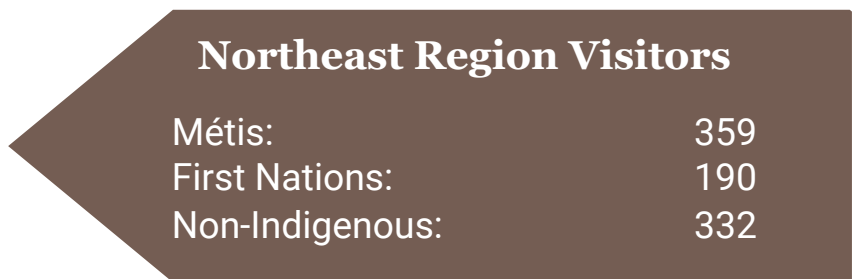






**Total Visitors:**  
**2121**

***63,000 kms travelled***





**Kîwîchitanow  
Emergency  
Management  
Services**

# *Kîwîchitanow* *(to help many)*

## **Kîwîchitanow Emergency Management Services**

During the 2011 Slave Lake Wildfire, RLI was called upon by the then Métis Nation of Alberta to provide supports to evacuated citizens. Utilizing our existing Mobile Services units, we were able to provide much needed food and supplies to displaced Métis people during an incredibly stressful and uncertain time in their lives.

In 2016, we were called upon again to provide the same supports and services during the Fort McMurray wildfire. Not only were we able to provide supports and supplies to our displaced community, but we also worked with Employment and Social Development Canada to use the communication capabilities of our Mobile Services units to provide access to the Employment Insurance applications.

During the 2023 wildfire season, we once more utilized our Mobile Services units along with a 5-ton truck we were able to source at short notice to provide supplies and supports across much of the northern region of the province. It was after this summer that the decision was made to explore the possibility of formalizing these supports into an official RLI program.

Ahead of the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the Rupertsland Emergency Management Committee was formed, and parameters were established to develop the Rupertsland Emergency Supports Program. The scope of the program is to work with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and respond quickly in emergency situations impacting our communities. **RLI was able to secure a 5-ton truck and 3-ton truck, as well as a warehouse space, to ensure we are prepared to respond immediately when called upon by the community and Citizen's Council.**





*In July 2024, the Rupertsland Emergency Support Program received a call to provide supplies and supports to displaced communities in Fort Vermillion.*

*We were able to arrive on scene the following morning with **4 pallets of supplies**, enough for the **52 families** who had been evacuated.*



*aen natoonikayhk*

RUPERTSLAND CENTRE



FOR MÉTIS RESEARCH





# RESEARCH



# Research at RLI

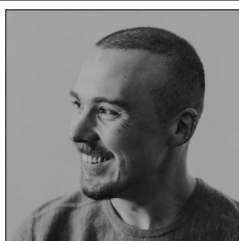
RLI's research function continues to play a vital role in informing decision-making, guiding program development, and supporting the advancement of Métis education, training, and employment priorities. In 2024/25, our research activities were grounded in strong partnerships, strategic data collection, and community engagement to ensure that services are responsive, evidence-based, and aligned with the vision of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government (OMG).

## Partnership with the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research (RCMR)

Our longstanding relationship with the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research at the University of Alberta remains central to our research capacity. Together, we continue to generate knowledge that advances understanding of Métis experiences and priorities. This year, one highlight was Métis Talks, featuring OMG Justice Department representative Sharon Bourque, who shared valuable insights on justice and self-government with students, academics, and community members.

*The Métis Justice  
Métis Talks was  
held on December 5,  
2024 with 60 people  
attending online.*

## MÉTIS Talks



**Dr. Justin Tetrault &  
Dr. Sandra Bucerius**

*Métis and Indigenous Experiences with Re-entry  
from Prison: How the Canadian Justice System  
Creates Impossible Conditions*



**Sharon Bourque**

*"Finding Justice: Métis families'  
experiences with the criminal justice  
system" Documentary (2023, 52-minutes).*

**Thursday December 5, 2024**

**1:00 PM – 3:00PM (Mountain Time)**

**ONLINE**



UNIVERSITY  
OF ALBERTA



Otipemisiwak  
Métis Government



Rupertsland  
Institute  
Métis Centre of Excellence



NATIVE STUDIES

FOR MÉTIS RESEARCH



## **Labour Market Information**

Through our ongoing partnership with Big River Analytics, RLI continues to produce Labour Market Quarterly Reports that analyze economic trends, workforce needs, and employment opportunities across Alberta. These reports are presented to staff and the RLI Board of Governors each quarter and directly inform the strategic direction of our education and training services. This evidence-based approach ensures that our programs remain aligned with the realities of the labour market and the evolving needs of Métis Citizens.

## **Midterm Evaluation of ISETP**

RLI participated in the Midterm Evaluation of the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISETP), led by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) in partnership with the Métis National Council. The findings from this evaluation will directly inform future negotiations for a renewed skills and training agreement with ESDC, ensuring that Métis-specific priorities are at the forefront of federal program design. The mid-term evaluation will be available on the RLI website in the weeks ahead.

## **K-12 Community Report**

In collaboration with the Métis National Council, RLI contributed to the development of a K-12 Community Report to support the federal government's consideration of dedicated funding for Métis K-12 education. This report reflects community perspectives, identifies gaps in the current system, and highlights opportunities for culturally grounded, locally driven education initiatives.

## **Community Engagement for Client Service Transformation**

This year, RLI engaged Métis Citizens across Alberta to gather feedback on how our services can evolve to complement the new OMG governance structure. These conversations are shaping our Service Transformation Strategy, ensuring that our delivery model is designed to meet the needs of Citizens in ways that are both effective and culturally relevant.

Through these initiatives, RLI continues to strengthen its reputation as a leader in research-driven program design, using data, partnerships, and community voices to inform our work and guide our path forward under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

# STAY CONNECTED

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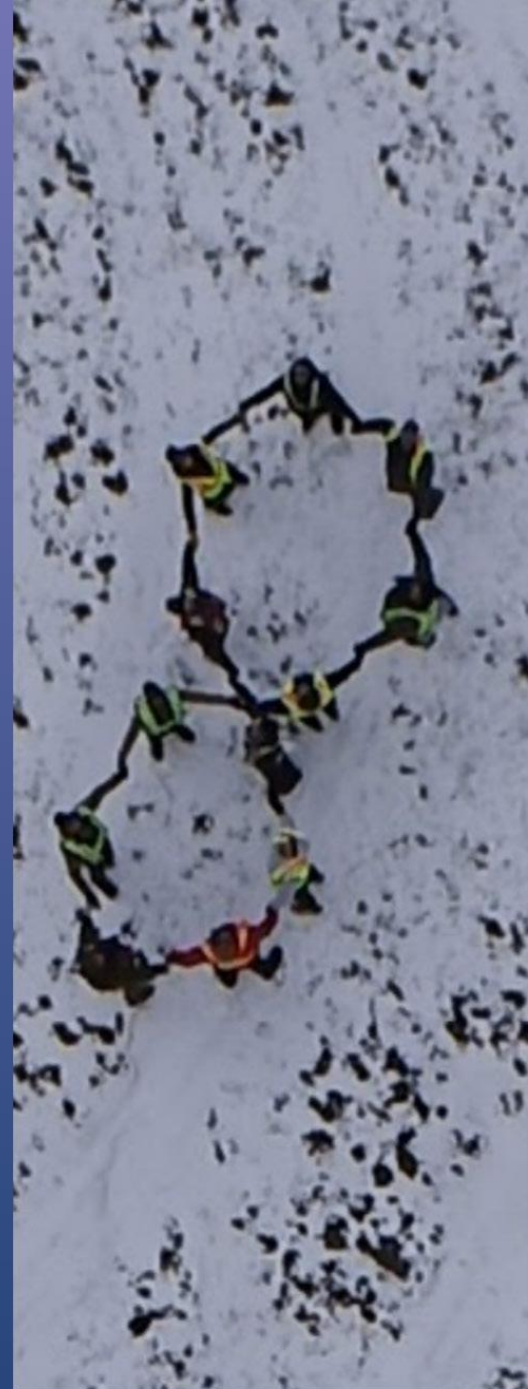
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***[www.rupertsland.org](http://www.rupertsland.org)***











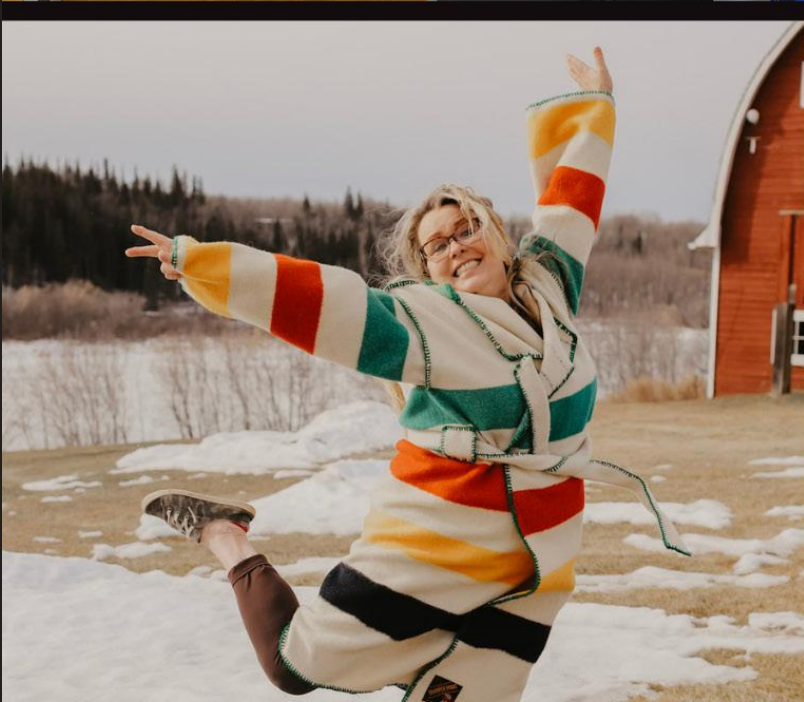
















**Rupertsland  
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**Canada** 

