



# Métis Nation



April 2019

## Federal Budget 2019 Funds Métis Nation Priorities

— *Recognizes great contributions of Métis veterans and moves Métis Nation ahead in post-secondary education, economic development and Michif language.*



On March 19, 2019, Finance Minister Bill Morneau tabled the 2019 federal budget in Parliament, paving the way for significant federal investments in Métis Nation priority areas. Among the highlights of the documents are:

- “\$30 million to recognize the contribution of Métis veterans to the country’s Second World War efforts and to commemorate the sacrifices and achievements of all Métis veterans”;
- “A Métis Nation-led post-secondary education strategy consisting of financial assistance for Métis Nations students through an investment of \$362.0 million over ten years, and \$40.0 million per year ongoing”;

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- “\$50 million over five years, starting in 2019–20, to enhance the funding of the Métis Capital Corporations to support the start-up and expansion of Métis small and medium-sized enterprises”;

- A new Indigenous Growth Fund of up to \$100 million that will allow all Aboriginal Financial Institutions, including Métis Capital Corporations to support more Indigenous entrepreneurs, and more ambitious projects”; and

- “Support for a distinctions-based approach to Indigenous language revitalization projects with \$333.7 million over five years to preserve, promote and revitalize Indigenous languages, including Michif, the traditional language spoken by the Métis .

MNC President Chartier welcomed the budget as another important step on the road to reconciliation and reducing the socio-economic gap between the Métis and non-Indigenous Canadians.

“The Métis Nation investments contained in this budget are testimony to the success of the Prime Minister’s Permanent Bilateral Mechanism which in relation to our people takes the form of the Canada-Métis Nation Accord,” said President Chartier. “We work hard and collaboratively with the federal government on the priorities under the Accord and Budget 2019 demonstrates how this work is translated into concrete action and real results for our people.”

“Today our Métis Veterans attained a victory in the battle of respect we have fought for over twenty years,” explained MNC Vice-President and Veterans Affairs Minister David Chartrand. “We have advanced the claims of our Métis Veterans.”

The Budget also addressed the progress being made in the move to Métis self-government, stating:

“Together with the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Government of Canada co-developed a joint action plan to advance reconciliation and

improve the social and economic well-being of the Manitoba Métis community, and support the Manitoba Metis Federation’s transition to a self-governing Métis Government. Canada and the Manitoba Metis Federation have committed to work together to reach a self-government agreement that implements the Manitoba Métis community’s vision of self-determination.”







March 2019

## Message from the President

With Budget 2019 coming and going, the Métis Nation rejoices in the fact that finally, after decades of political activism by World War II veterans themselves and by their respective Métis governments, justice has finally been done.

Sitting in the Commons gallery with me was David Chartrand, MNC Vice-President and Minister of Social Development responsible for Métis Nation veterans, who was emotionally overwhelmed by the statement that WWII Métis Nation veterans, after two decades of lobbying by him, are being dealt with and his efforts are finally bearing fruit.

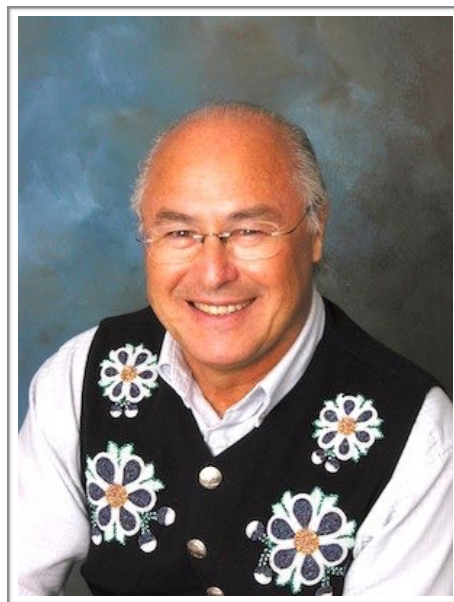
The unfortunate part to this good news is the fact that so much time has slipped by while waiting for this long overdue recognition that the few remaining Métis Nation veterans are now in their mid to late 90s. Over 90% of our Métis Nation heroes will no longer be with us when the much anticipated apology and recognition of service is made. Nevertheless, this federal government must be commended for making the

right decision to deal with this long outstanding matter.

Another positive and ongoing aspect of Budget 2019 is the continued recognition of the Métis Nation and the provision of fiscal resources which will enable our Governing Member governments to provide more and better services to their citizens. These last two years in this respect have been unprecedented in the history of the Métis Nation.

While we did not get everything we put forward in terms of budget asks, we will hopefully have future budgets to rely on if this federal government that is committed to a true and lasting reconciliation finds success in the forthcoming federal election. Without a doubt, the Métis Nation has never made the kind of breakthrough we have experienced under the Trudeau government. The relationship was a refreshing one which the Métis Nation embraced fully and continues to do so.

I can never overstate that the underlying basis for our success is the fact that we have never



given up on our nationhood and rights, including speaking out against the wrongs perpetrated against us and stubbornly defending our existence as a distinct Indigenous people, with a traditional homeland in Western Canada.

Much rides on the outcome of the upcoming federal election and the current drama being played out by the former Attorney General of Canada. Hopefully these antics will merely go down in a historical footnote as a massive headache, and not the cause of derailing a true and lasting reconciliation between Canada and Indigenous peoples and nations, and in particular the Métis Nation.





April 2019

## The Government of Canada and the Métis Nation sign historic Early Learning and Child Care Accord



*l-r: President Glen McCallum(MN-S), President Audrey Poitras(MNA), President Margaret Froh(MNO), President Clara Morin Dal Col(MNBC), MP Chandra Arya (Ottawa Nepean), President David Chartrand(MMF)*

On March 6, 2019, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, and leaders of the Métis Nation signed the Métis Nation Early Learning and Child Care Accord in Ottawa. The Accord provides the Métis Nation with the

authority and funding to create culturally relevant and supportive early learning and child care for Métis Nation children and their families.

“We are a proud, hardworking people, but many of our families struggle as the working poor,”

stated David Chartrand, Vice-President and Minister of Social Development of the Métis National Council (MNC), and President of the Manitoba Metis Federation. “For over twenty-years the Metis have been left out of federally-funded Indigenous Early Learning

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Programs. During this time, the lack of federal commitment to reconciliation with the Metis Nation has hurt our children and our families. Today I stand here rejoicing with our hardworking mothers and fathers that have prayed for this day when our children would have their own Metis Head Start and early learning supports.”

For Minister Duclos, “this Accord solidified our ongoing joint commitment to supporting the Métis Nation vision for early learning and child care where Métis children and families throughout the Homeland are provided with culturally relevant, self-empowering early learning and child care programming and services.”

The Government of Canada has committed up to \$450.7 million to strengthen early learning and child care (ELCC) programs and services for Métis children and families in the Métis Homeland. This will be achieved through a flexible model that allows Métis Nation Governing Members to identify ELCC priorities such as to improve access to programs, integrate Métis culture, languages and values into ELCC

services, and promote employment of Métis individuals as early childhood providers.

“The Canada-Métis Nation Early Learning and Child Care Accord marks another milestone on our path to reconciliation and filling the gaps in the availability of essential services to citizens of the Métis Nation,” said MNC President Clément Chartier. “I wish to thank Prime Minister Trudeau for his stewardship of Canada’s nation-to-nation relationship with the Métis Nation and Minister Duclos for delivering on his commitment to ensure an autonomous Métis Nation designed and administered early learning and child care program for our children.”

Vice-President Chartrand added: “We should state that in Manitoba, languages will be respectful; we have many French-speaking Métis communities which connect our families to the Québécois.”

The Accord recognizes that the Métis National Council and Governing Members are best placed to design, deliver and integrate Métis culture,

languages and values into programs for Métis Nation children and families. It builds on the considerable collaborative work that was undertaken on a distinct Métis Nation Framework within the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework which was released by the Métis National Council, Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Government of Canada in September 2018. It also marks another concrete step in the implementation of the Canada-Métis Nation Accord which identified early learning and child care as a priority.

Vice-President Chartrand concluded: “Thanks to Prime Minister Trudeau’s and Minister Duclos’ vision, a vision based on reconciliation with our People, we will now have affordable, Metis-specific, child-focused programs with support for recreation, education, and early learning development. Today we have made history and ensured a legacy for our children and families. This is reconciliation in action.”

Quotes from other Governing Member Presidents:

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President Glen McCallum,  
Métis Nation – Saskatchewan:

“This Accord demonstrates the power of working together with respect and recognition. With the inclusion of Métis voices at the negotiating table, we were able to emphasize the importance of education for our children and to achieve an agreement that acknowledges the needs of all of parties. We view this as a step forward – for our children, for our Nation and for our relationship with the Government of Canada.”

President Audrey Poitras, Métis  
Nation of Alberta

“The Métis Nation of Alberta believes every parent deserves access to quality, affordable child care and Métis families across the province will benefit from our partnership with the federal government. While our objective is to provide a wider range of holistic services, this funding will serve as the backbone of our investments in the spectrum of lifelong learning. It will empower Métis institutions to make teaching and learning more inclusive and accessible to Métis families in the area of early childhood education.”

President Clara Morin Dal Col,  
Métis Nation British Columbia:

“This is wonderful news for Métis children and families in British Columbia. The Accord is an important step forward for Métis children and families in British Columbia needing access to early learning and child development programming and services. We have never been able to provide such programming and services to Métis families before but now with this Accord and the funding commitment already made to us, we can develop and deliver services and programming from childcare assistance to early learning for our Métis children and families here in British Columbia. This would not have happened without the full support of the Prime Minister and his government and this is an excellent example of what can happen when everyone is working together for our Métis children and families.”

President Margaret Froh, Métis  
Nation of Ontario:

“Today is a great day for our Métis families and children, who have been vocal about needing more support and greater services. This Accord is

another positive step forward and will provide us with the opportunity to address the needs of our Métis families and communities throughout Ontario. By working on a government to government with our Metis governments, Canada is recognizing that the MNO is best positioned to design, develop and deliver programs for our citizens, and we acknowledge this investment that will better the lives of Métis people in Ontario.”

President Melanie Omeniho,  
Les Femmes Michif  
Otipemisiwak [LFMO]:

“Today LFMO is very pleased to see that Metis children and families have hope to work on achieving success through the new Early Learning and Child Care initiative that has been committed to by the Federal Government. More than seventy percent of Metis families are lone parent families who will benefit from the ability to ensure that Metis children can achieve success in the formidable years of education. Our families deserve to see bright futures where education and learning are the tools that they will utilize moving forward.”







April 2019

## President Chartier attends MMF Cabinet Meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>

In response to a letter from President Chartier to Governing Members offering his availability to attend their Cabinet or Council meetings to provide an update on preparations for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Métis Nation in 1870 through the Manitoba Act, he was invited to the March 9-10<sup>th</sup> MMF Cabinet meeting.

President Chartier provided an overview of where organizing efforts were at with potential partners such as Library and Archives Canada and the Canadian Museum of History, as well as the lobbying efforts to secure fiscal resources from the federal government.

President Chartier explained that while the majority of events would take place in Manitoba, there were also planned events in the rest of the homeland which entered confederation at the same time as the Northwest Territories under the 1870 Rupert's Land Order. With the original four



provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick forming Canada in 1867, Manitoba was the 5<sup>th</sup> province to join confederation.

This is the significant milestone/event which will be the focus of celebrations in 2020. The current government of Manitoba will also be undertaking celebratory events having established a provincial committee, allocating a budget for community events, but doing so without engaging the Métis government in Manitoba.

The General Assembly in 2017 passed a resolution which mandated the national government to proceed with the celebration and also committed itself to working to have our national government return to its birthplace at the Red River, which is an objective still underway.

The MMF Cabinet expressed their appreciation for the work to date by President Chartier and committed their full support in making Métis Nation 150 a success.





April 2019

## President Chartier attends MNGA in Richmond, BC



On March 22, 2019 President Chartier along with President Chartrand of the Manitoba Metis Federation and President Glen McCallum of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan attended the Métis Nation Governing Assembly (MNGA) of the Métis Nation British Columbia.

All three of the leaders were provided an opportunity prior to the official commencement of the session to provide remarks. President Chartier spoke about the tremendous progress experienced by the Métis Nation over the past 4

years under the reconciliation agenda of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, including the fact that for the first time in the history of the Métis Nation specific fiscal allocations of well over 2 billion dollars has been provided for a number of services which our governments will be providing to their respective citizens.

President Chartier also spoke about the future of the Métis Nation, making the point that we are one people, one nation, and that we will be celebrating next year (2020) our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of joining Canada.

Because of the positive developments under the current federal government, the Métis Nation can rightfully say that we are going to celebrate, not just mark this significant milestone.

Both President Chartier and Vice-President Chartrand thanked President Clara Morin Dal Col for the important role she played as national Minister of Culture, Heritage and Families, as well as Minister of Health in enabling the Métis Nation to achieve the success that we currently enjoy.







April 2019

## Representatives of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops visit the Métis Nation



On March 28<sup>th</sup> three representatives of the CCCB met with President Chartier at the National Office. Attending the meeting were: Bishop Lionel Gendron, President; Archbishop Richard Gagnon, Vice-President and Monseigneur Frank Leo, General Secretary. Archbishop Gagnon is the incoming President of the CCCB.

This was the third meeting with Msgr Leo, the second with Bishop Gendron and the first with Archbishop Gagnon of Winnipeg. The general discussion at the meetings has been the relationship between Métis Nation citizens and the Catholic church as well as the effects of residential schools.

One of the major points of

discussion is the potential for a visit to the Holy See in Rome by the leaders of the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis Nation, along with residential school survivors. While nothing has been finalized, there is a good possibility that this could happen. Discussions will continue.





April 2019

## President Chartier appears before the Senate Committee studying the Indigenous Languages Bill



On March 19<sup>th</sup>, President Chartier appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples which is studying Bill C-91, the Indigenous Languages Bill. Initially when accepting the invitation to appear it was jointly with National Chief Perry Bellegarde but this changed the day before to a staff member from the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC). Nevertheless, President Chartier decided to attend.

President Chartier made it clear that the Métis Nation was fully

supportive of the passing of the Bill in this sitting of Parliament, as we, along with the Assembly of First Nations and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami co-developed the draft along with the Minister of Heritage Canada. President Chartier acknowledged that the draft was not perfect and would support positive amendments but cautioned against making broad substantive changes which may lead to the bill being sidelined and lost to us at this time.

President Chartier re-emphasized the need for Canada and all provincial

governments to respect our s.35 inherent right of self-government, and must deal with us as equals and on a distinctions-based approach. Once the legislation is passed, President Chartier in terms of the Métis Nation and its governments sees the fiscal resources transferred to our governments which will then ensure that our institutions and communities have access to the programs and initiatives which will be established.







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## Ottawa Senators engage in reconciliation exercise



On March 28<sup>th</sup> the Ottawa Senators hosted President Clément Chartier, President Natan Obed and National Chief Perry Bellegarde at their game against the Florida Panthers. This was billed as an act of truth and reconciliation centered on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people, and those Indigenous peoples from across Canada who now make Ottawa their home.

Elder Claudette Commanda, along with Chief Kirby

Whiteduck and her grandson, Kaleb Buckshot-Cote, represented the Algonquin people, with Caleb dropping the ceremonial puck to start the game. For the Florida Panthers, rookie Brady Keeper from the Pimicikamak Cree Nation took the ceremonial faceoff which he won and then presented the puck to Caleb.

A major highlight of the night was the singing of the American and Canadian anthems by Mary Nahwagabow, with the Canadian national anthem,

O'Canada, sung in English, French and Anishinaabemowin to conclude the song which brought a rousing applause from the crowd.

While the Senators did not win the game, they certainly won the hearts of thousands of Indigenous peoples across Canada!!







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## Community Visits

On March 11<sup>th</sup> President Chartier was invited to join a number of Elders to help kick off culture week at the Twin Lakes School in Buffalo Narrows, a Métis village.

President Chartier spoke in general terms of accomplishments of the Métis Nation, its culture, language and traditional lifestyle which their parents and grandparents lived and which they continue to have a chance to participate in.

He also spoke briefly of this experience growing up in the village and the cultural richness which the Métis in northwest Saskatchewan possess. He also



modelled several beaded vests, mitts and mukluks and a moosehide coat which were made by local Métis women. He also modeled a newly gifted vest from his niece Minnie who is part of the school staff.

This was the opening of a weeklong event of different cultural activities, both inside and outside. In fact one class who he dropped in to say a quick hello were not able to attend the opening as they were going to the lake to do some fishing.



On March 13<sup>th</sup>, President Chartier paid a visit to Métis community leaders in Fort McKay, Alberta while he was there to meet with Dwayne "Trudeau" Roth who is preparing a defence in a Métis rights fishing test case which President Chartier will assist him in.







April 2019

# Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak – Women of the Métis Nation receive funding for Métis Women to participate in Community Development



*l-r: Minister Carolyn Bennett and President Melanie Omeriho*

On March 22, 2019, the Government of Canada announced capacity funds to Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak – Women of the Métis Nation. The funding from The Department for Women and

Gender Equality is for \$250,000 over 3 years for a total of \$750,000. It will assist Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak to develop human resource capacity to support initiatives of importance identified by Métis

women specifically in the areas of governance and community participation.

This funding will provide much needed capacity to support the organization's mandate which is

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to ensure that Métis women from across the Métis homeland are safe, connected, and empowered. It will also go towards engagement to link Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak with other Métis and Canadian organizations. The goal is to help create the conditions for strong Métis female participation throughout the Métis Nation to help build healthy, vibrant and productive communities.

Funding will go towards advancing Métis women into leadership roles in their communities, as well in positions of governance. An aim of the project is to raise the profile and voice of Métis women in areas where they can effect change like School Boards, Municipal Governance, and committees in Métis and mainstream governments.

“This funding is much needed for Métis women across the Métis Nation. It is part of a \$100 million commitment to women’s issues across Canada. We are pleased to be recognized as a leader in our community”, says Melanie Omehiho, President of Les Femmes Michif

Otipemisiwak – Women of the Métis Nation. “This funding will assist our goal which is to help Métis women overcome barriers that many do not realize exist. Giving Métis women the skills and confidence to join the public conservation and participate thoroughly, through a strong female Métis lens and proper skills training, is our number one priority. I would like to thank Minister Monsef for her commitment to this work.’

“Our government is committed to investing in women’s organizations, and Indigenous organizations serving women, because we know it is the most effective way to advance gender equality”, says Hon. Maryam Monsef, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Minister of International Development. “We are happy to announce stable and flexible funding to help the Women of the Métis Nation build capacity so they can grow and continue being a strong voice for Métis women across the country.”

“Congratulations to the women of the Métis Nation for their on-going advocacy” adds Hon.

Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Crown – Indigenous Relations. “The Government of Canada is proud to work with you to advance the needs of Métis women from coast to coast to coast. We know that when women are seen and heard, they use their voices to the benefit of their families and entire communities.”



*Minister Maryam Monsef*







April 2019

# Métis Nation grieves the death of Micah John Messent, a rising young Métis leader with a passion for the environment who perished in flight on route to Nairobi

On behalf of the Métis Nation, Clément Chartier, President of the Métis National Council, wishes to extend condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Micah John Messent, who was aboard Ethiopian Airlines flight ET 30 that crashed on route to Nairobi, Kenya on Sunday. Micah was invited to attend the fourth United Nations Assembly of the Environment in the Kenyan capital.

“This is a tragic loss to Mr. Messent’s family, friends and those who worked with Micah. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who knew and loved him. The Métis Nation stands together in honour of this young Métis man who was living a life committed to doing good in his community and for the environment,” states Clément Chartier, President of the Métis National Council.

Micah Messent was the youngest of five siblings and was a member



of the Red River Métis Nation in Manitoba. When Micah was young, his family moved to the Comox Valley, the traditional

territory of the K’omoks peoples. A recent resident of Courtenay, British Columbia, Micah had a passion for B.C. parks and the

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ocean. After graduating in 2017 with a bachelor's degree from Vancouver Island University's Indigenous Studies program, Micah participated in the Indigenous Youth Intern Program with B.C. Parks. After his internship, Micah then worked for the Government of British Columbia as an Indigenous Relations Analyst and Training Specialist for B.C. Parks.

At B.C. Parks, Micah was involved in developing a student ranger program and was chosen last year to participate in the inaugural Ocean Bridge program, launched by the Vancouver Aquarium and the Ocean Wise Conservation Association. Micah was one of at least two Ocean Bridge members who died in the crash. Also on the plane was Toronto resident Danielle Moore who had also been selected as a delegate to the environmental assembly.

Micah is being remembered by friends as a leader, an activist, and all-around incredible human being. Laurie Meijer Drees, chair of the Indigenous Studies Department at Vancouver Island University, where Messent

earned his B.A., called his death "devastating."

"Micah was very inclusive. With the students who were in our classes he always showed leadership around getting people together, making sure everyone felt happy in the room. His enthusiasm and his creativity and his positive energy were really a hallmark of who he was."

Drees said one of her most prominent memories about Messent was his approach to Indigenous issues. "One of the things he brought is a creative attitude towards this business of reconciliation. As a proud Métis person he didn't want to focus on racism and negativity and critique that is often part of those conversations. He wanted to demonstrate goodwill and happy cross-cultural interaction."

Micah and his family were known to be very engaged in their local Métis community. "When we lose a young member of our community, the whole Métis Nation mourns. The life Micah lived was one of great service to his ancestors and to his natural environment. He will be missed not only for who he was

but for what he may have accomplished,' says Clara Morin Dal Col, President of the Métis Nation British Columbia.

The Métis Nation sends condolences to all families who lost a loved one on Ethiopian Airlines flight ET 30.







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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Métis Nation Rights Symposium April 2-3 Vancouver, BC
- MN-S Legislative Assembly (MNLA) April 12-14 Regina SK
- United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues April 22-May 3 NYC
- Nature Champions Summit April 24-25 Montreal, QC
- Centre for the North (CFN) meeting May 1-2 Prince Rupert, BC
- Canada Youth Summit May 2-3 Ottawa, ON
- MMF Fundraiser event May 12 Winnipeg, MB
- Open Government Partnership (OGP) Global Summit May 29-31 Ottawa, ON

### **Remaining Engagement Sessions for Métis Sixties Scoop Survivors**

Métis Nation – Saskatchewan  
April 5-7, 2019 – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Métis Nation of Ontario  
April 12-14, 2019 – Toronto, Ontario

Métis Nation British Columbia  
April 26-28, 2019 – Richmond, British Columbia





Office of the President  
Métis National Council  
#4 - 340 MacLaren Street  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0M6

(800) 928-6330

[www.metisnation.ca](http://www.metisnation.ca)

[info@metisnation.ca](mailto:info@metisnation.ca)



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TWITTER

