



MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA

Monthly E-News – May 2020 Update

**From the Office of
President Clara Morin Dal Col**

May 2020 Update - Spring is in full display all over British Columbia and that in itself is cause for celebration, but the coronavirus is still with us, although according to our provincial health officials the curve is flattening which is great news for all of us. Slowly some of the very tight restrictions on outside of the home activities are being relaxed by health officials such as provincial parks being opened for day use so that we can once again begin to enjoy the outdoors. There is no doubt that these last few months have been challenging for everyone, but we are getting through it and that's what matters the most.

Helping our Métis communities help our Métis People

At MNBC, we have been especially concerned with the most vulnerable of our Métis people – the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions, and others in our Métis communities who may need a helping hand during this challenging time. To assist our Métis Chartered communities we have provided \$656,000 since March, with each community receiving \$17,000 over the three months. Because we believe our Community Presidents and their Boards know best what the needs of their communities are, we have left the decisions on the use of those dollars in their hands. We know that many communities have purchased gift cards that can be used by our seniors and others to help pay for their prescriptions, essential food items, and critical cleaning products. We are looking forward to hearing how each community has used the dollars when they provide reports in September.

500 Applications for each of two important support Initiatives

In April we announced a rent subsidy for Métis renters in the amount of \$250 per month, and a one-time payment of \$500 for Métis families with school-age children to help access online education. I am pleased to report that we have received about 500 applications for each of the initiatives and MNBC staff are processing the applications as quickly as possible. Many people have been hurt financially during this coronavirus and here are two more ways that we are helping our Métis families to cope.

\$350,000 for Métis Children and Family Agencies

In early April we also provided \$350,000 in emergency funding to the five Métis Child and Family service providers in British Columbia plus the Métis Commission for Children and Families. All of these agencies provide very necessary services and programs for children and families, and the MNBC Board and I felt that it was important to help them meet the needs of their client families.

Métis Financial Corporation helps Métis Businesses

This month, our Métis Financial Corporation of BC is putting in place a loan program for qualifying Métis businesses who have suffered business losses because of COVID-19. The maximum amount that qualifying Métis businesses can receive is \$40,000. More information can be obtained at <https://www.mfcbc.ca>. Last month our Financial Corporation provided financial support to a Métis company in Prince George to enable them to double production of items used by front-line workers in the fight against COVID-19.

A Big Thank-You

I send a big thank-you to everyone who is working so hard to assist our Métis people during this pandemic. From our Community leaders and their Boards to MNBC staff who are tracking down and distributing health products, and taking calls from our Citizens who need information and assistance, or who are processing applications – a big thank you for all that you are doing. Please check our special COVID-19 portal on the MNBC website <https://www.mnbc.ca> for all updates and information about the coronavirus.

New CEO Hired

I am pleased to announce that MNBC has hired a new Chief Executive Officer. Daniel Fontaine will be starting with us on May 25th. Daniel is Métis and has more than 15 years of senior management experience in public relations and governmental affairs. He is leaving his position as CEO of the BC Care Providers Association to join MNBC. Daniel is the right choice for MNBC and his extensive experience in governmental affairs will strengthen relations between MNBC and all levels of government. His leadership experience will advance the vision and mission of MNBC. We would like to thank Chris Gall for serving as Executive Director for the past year.

As always, if you have any questions or require information about any subject, please don't hesitate to contact me at cmorin-dalcol@mnbc.ca

We hope you and your loved ones stay healthy and safe. We are getting through the pandemic together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel Fontaine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President, MNBC