Persistence pays off

Edmonton – On November 20, Delores Gladue will be one of several hundred graduates who will walk across the Winspear Centre stage during MacEwan University’s fall convocation ceremony. But unlike most students who earn their degree in four years, Gladue has been working on earning her parchment—on and off—for 15 years. “I started off part time, just taking one course per semester,” says Gladue. “Then after I took a break to raise my son, I went back to complete my degree.”

“When I wrote my last paper, I thought of my dad and how proud he would have been,” says Gladue, who will receive her Bachelor of Arts, with a major in Sociology. “Both my parents were Residential School survivors and my dad really wanted me to complete my education. It was very important to him. Both my parents have passed away, so for me it will be special moment when I cross the stage to receive my degree because I will be thinking of them.”

Gladue currently holds down two jobs, both of which involve working with offenders. “I work with the Elizabeth Fry Society and I’m also a writer for the Gladue Report. “I interview Indigenous offenders who have been charged with a crime and write reports that judges use to recognize the cultural factors and adversity that many Indigenous people face,” she says. “I ask offenders about their lives to answer the question: How did you get here?”

“I’d love to be able to answer the question of how to reduce recidivism. How to help people avoid going from one institution to another?”

“One of the questions I ask—and one that most people don’t know how to answer—is what they like best about themselves. I get to help people see the moments in their lives when things changed. And when you hit something, it’s like planting some kind of seed in the person’s mind.”

“When I was eight or nine years old I found a book that said something like ‘Intro to Sociology’ on the cover. It just stuck in my mind. Now I know there was a reason I opened it.”

Gladue receive her degree on November 20 at the Winspear Centre during the 9:30 a.m. convocation ceremony.

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 65 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.

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