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Bust-a-Backpack campaign outdoes expectations

The teachers of tomorrow are helping today's students with their annual Bust-a-Backpack campaign, an initiative of the Education Undergraduate Society (EUS) at the University of Lethbridge.

In the annual campaign, now in its ninth year, Faculty of Education students fundraise to fill backpacks full of school supplies, which they then donate to local schools.

"We really think it's important to engage our community and our schools and help students that we may one day be teaching to gather school supplies they maybe couldn't afford," says Kailey Doucette, EUS social activities director. "They need those supplies to feel like they are on equal footing with their classmates and to help them in their general learning."

The executive of the EUS spurred the six sections of professional semester one (PS1) students and faculty members on a friendly competition to see who could fill the most backpacks. They set a goal of 40. In addition to school supplies like notebooks, binders, scissors, glue, calculators, crayons and pencils, the students reached out to their friends, family and employers for donations. When the totals were calculated, they had 48 filled backpacks, four boxes of supplies and \$504 in cash, which they used to buy children's books.

"Our members definitely reached out into the community, much more so than I was expecting but it's awesome they did," says Doucette. "We are very proud of our members. They went above and beyond anything we could have expected and their contributions will truly make a difference in the Lethbridge community."

This year, the society decided to adopt Westminster Elementary School and Wilson Middle School.

"We really want to see where the backpacks are going and see the impact that we're making," says Doucette.

Media are invited to attend the delivery of backpacks and supplies to the Wilson Middle School office at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 8. The school is located at 2003 9 Ave. N.

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