



For immediate release — Wednesday, March 25, 2020

Campus Care Parcel program, part of Nourish, goes ahead thanks to innovative distribution solution

Food security issues do not subside during national emergencies, rather they are often enhanced. As society has been forced to function in entirely different ways throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of Lethbridge and its partners devised a plan to keep one of their most important initiatives alive – the Spring Campus Care Parcel giveaway.

Now in its 17th year, Campus Care Parcels are an essential service for students at one of the most critical times in the academic calendar. A pandemic situation has only highlighted the need to make sure food security issues are met and students are supported as they wrap up their academic calendar and prepare for final exams.

"We know how critical this support is at the best of times and under these circumstances it is even more important," says Campus Chaplain Erin Phillips. "We are grateful to our churches for continuing their support for this crucial program and cannot say enough how much we've appreciated the way the University has helped us work out unique logistics."

This year's program, with support of the Campus Chaplaincy, local churches, Save-on-Foods and the University community, was devised to ensure students could still get access to food in a manner that kept them and volunteers safe, and abided by physical distancing guidelines.

U of L facilities staff picked up the majority of the food from local churches and brought it to campus where volunteers, practicing physical distancing and taking all safety and health precautions, sorted the food into parcels.

"Unfortunately, given the constraints we're working under this spring, we understand we can't reach every student in need," says Mark Slomp, director of Student Services. "We identified particular groups and individuals who are more likely to be experiencing a food shortage during this time and reached out to them directly through email and communicated the details of how they could access the parcels. We urge all other

students who may be struggling to please access the food banks available throughout the city.”

Students were able to access the Campus Care Parcels on Wednesday afternoon by calling volunteer distributors and meeting them at the University’s Anderson Hall between 1 and 4 p.m. Parcels were brought curbside and picked up to avoid any social gathering.

“We know that 50 per cent of our students work while they study and that many have been facing layoff or reduced hours in these extraordinary circumstances,” adds Slomp. “We wanted to do what we could to ensure that students have what they need — and that especially includes nourishment — as they work to complete their semesters.”

The Campus Care Parcel program is one of a group of food-related programs that make up the University’s Nourish initiative. Nourish is designed to raise awareness about food scarcity on campus with a goal of increasing access to healthy food for students.

-- 30 --

Contact:

Trevor Kenney, News & Information Manager
403-329-2710
403-360-7639 (cell)
trevor.kenney@uleth.ca
@ULethbridgeNews

Mark Slomp, Executive Director, Student Services
403-394-3960
mark.slomp@uleth.ca