



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release — Thursday, June 9, 2022

Top high school graduates earn Chinook Scholarships from University of Lethbridge

Six of the province's top high school graduates have been awarded \$5,000 Chinook Scholarships from the University of Lethbridge as they begin their academic journeys this fall.

Students from Lethbridge, Coaldale, Magrath, and Okotoks were successful in earning the major awards, ahead of a strong field of applicants. All ULethbridge-bound high school students are eligible to apply for the Chinook Scholarship, which recognizes those who have demonstrated superior academic achievement (minimum 85 per cent admission average) and leadership qualities.

The winners are: Andreas Gateman (Holy Trinity Academy, Okotoks), Bhawana Pradhan (Winston Churchill high School, Lethbridge), Kealani Wickend (Kate Andrews High School, Coaldale), Alejandro Figueroa (Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, Lethbridge), Makena Wood (Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, Lethbridge), and Karl Boehme (Magrath High School, Magrath).

"These students have shown throughout their high school careers to be leaders in their schools and in their communities," says Dr. Mike Mahon, ULethbridge president and vice-chancellor. "Their applications highlight a well-rounded group of engaging young people who take initiative, are empathetic and utilize the critical thinking skills that will greatly add to our campus community. We're excited to welcome them to ULethbridge to begin their post-secondary journeys."

The award recipients were selected by a committee based on a submitted student essay, references, academic excellence, and leadership experience.

Following is a brief synopsis of the winners.

Andreas Gateman, Holy Trinity High School, Okotoks
Intended area of study: Sociology and Education

- Co-president of the “Me to We” volunteer program, where he led students to organize fundraisers, demonstrations and events, successfully raising \$10,000 for clean water in developing nations
- Skip/team captain of the Okotoks Curling Club, including helping coach younger players

QUOTE — “This takes on a lot of the burden of paying tuition costs and has made me feel much more comfortable going into my first year. I’m honoured to have been chosen and look forward to starting my studies at ULethbridge in the fall. I am excited to focus my education on something I am truly passionate about and interested in discovering.”

Bhawana Pradham, Winston Churchill High School, Lethbridge

Intended area of study: Health Sciences and Management

- Student leader in school leadership club, where she organized a clothing and necessities drive that impacted over 200 students and resulted in a large donation to the Streets Alive Mission
- Participated in her school’s English Language Learning program, supporting programming and companionship
- Volunteer service representative and sorter at Interfaith Food Bank

QUOTE — “This award is very significant to me because it gets me closer to being able to take more classes without financial worries. It also means a lot to me because it rewards my academic achievements and lessons learned throughout life. I am excited to attend ULethbridge because I will be able to study the field of my interest, join new clubs and meet new people.”

Kealani Wickend, Kate Andrews High School, Coaldale

Intended area of study: Kinesiology and Education

- President of her high school council, a role that required hours of community service, event planning and public speaking
- Team captain and participant in multiple high school athletics
- Community volunteer for local library summer reading program, as well as other community events

QUOTE — “This award means the world to me. I have always believed in the importance of leadership within schools and communities. I thoroughly enjoyed taking on roles of encouragement to develop a positive and inclusive environment. I am very excited about all the new experiences I hope to have at the University of Lethbridge! I can't wait to meet new people and expand my learning in a new environment where I can work on personal goals and further my growth.”

Alejandro Figueroa, Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, Lethbridge

Intended area of study: Kinesiology

- President of his school's branch of the National Honor Society, where he served as the group's official representative to other organizations, led meetings and public presentations, and organized content, community speakers and logistics of the club.
- Initiated introduction of mathematics peer tutoring hours and created a STEM club
- Demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities in church and sports activities

QUOTE — "I am truly grateful and elated to have been chosen as a recipient of the award, as it helps reassure me that I am on the right trajectory and have the capabilities to navigate this new stage of my life. I am excited about being able to start a new academic journey that entails diversifying my current lifestyle and surrounding myself with more like-minded people."

Makena Wood, Lethbridge Collegiate Institute

Intended area of study: Neuroscience

- Member of her school's branch of the National Honor Society, requiring significant volunteer and community service responsibilities
- Lethbridge Amateur Swim Club athlete who also served as a coach and role model for seven to 10-year-old students

QUOTE — "This award has been amazing to receive as an acknowledgement of my hard work and achievements in high school. I recognize that most everyone spends a lot of time and effort through their teen years as they prepare for the post-secondary path they will take and it is truly special to me to feel recognized for the journey I have been on. This award is definitely a confidence boost heading into my university career and its value will no doubt help kickstart my success. I am excited to experience and participate first hand in the amazing neuroscience program, to get to know some of the talented researchers and professors who make the program what it is, and to explore the amazing technology we have access to. I am also very excited to continue my competitive swimming career in a program I have grown up around for the last decade."

Karl Boehme, Magrath High School, Magrath

Intended area of study: Neuroscience

- Chairman of the Magrath Hope Squad, which raises awareness for issues related to suicide and mental health, where he directed meetings, planned fundraising opportunities and events and acted as a resource and friend to students who were struggling
- Class Valedictorian
- Soccer coach for the Magrath Soccer Association, ensuring all children progressed in soccer skills and team building

QUOTE — “This award increases my confidence in my leadership skills and is a very welcome support to help me focus on my education. I love to learn! I can't wait to go deeper into topics that interest me and have a greater understanding of and appreciation for the world around me.”

** Awards will be presented personally to the six students over the next few weeks. Lethbridge Collegiate Institute students Makena Wood and Alejandro Figueroa will receive their awards Friday, June 10, 9-11 a.m., at the LCI Green & Gold Awards ceremony in the LCI gymnasium.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/top-high-school-graduates-earn-chinook-scholarships-university-lethbridge>

-- 30 --

Contact:

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