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Student scholarship drive championed by University of Lethbridge alumni and community leaders

When the University of Lethbridge Board of Governors pledged \$10 million in match funds for the establishment of new endowed student scholarships, it laid the groundwork for the most ambitious student scholarship drive in the 50-plus year history of ULeithbridge.

Now, alumni and community leaders Janice Varzari (BN '90, MEd '02, LLD '21), Terry Whitehead (BA '94), Bernadine Boulet (BEd '88) and Roland Labuhn (BMgt '90) are leading the way through the next phase of the initiative, with ULeithbridge students, current and future generations, destined to benefit.



“We are so excited to have the support of these outstanding alumni and community leaders to help us champion this new initiative and build a plan to move it forward. They are fantastic ambassadors for the University, and we are so grateful for their advocacy and support,” says Kathy Greenwood, ULeithbridge vice-president (external relations). “As graduates, these alumni know the difference a ULeithbridge education can make, and they are committed to ensuring more students have the same opportunities they had. This will significantly increase the sustainability of our current awards program and lay a strong foundation to build upon moving forward.”

At the heart of the drive is the \$10 million in match funds, providing an opportunity to double the impact donations of all sizes make to endowed scholarships — significantly enhancing the endowment base and its sustainability for generations to come.

“What excites me about being a part of this initiative is recognizing that the need for student financial support is greater than ever. It’s so challenging right now for post-secondary students to go to school, and I think students today have a lot more barriers than when I was a student,” says Whitehead. “This is an extraordinary opportunity to have donations matched, and the impact of your gift being doubled will really go a long way. If an alumnus or a member of our community has never donated before, this is a wonderful time to make that first donation as it will be leveraged significantly.”

One of the hallmarks of the scholarship drive is its focus on removing social and financial barriers and creating pathways for Indigenous and racialized communities, people with disabilities and 2SLGBTQ+ students to access post-secondary education.

“I want to see this improve accessibility so that more students can get assistance with their education,” says former chancellor Varzari. “By making a donation, by writing that cheque, you’re going to assist lots of students moving into the future who may not be able to attend university otherwise. People who make a donation, even a small donation, they can see that gift grow and make a difference with the match funds.”

Boulet graduated from the education program in 1988 and is still deeply connected to ULeithbridge, personally and professionally. As an educator, she is quick to mentor student teachers in her classrooms and sees how support from the Lethbridge community creates lasting connections with students.

“I really hope that through this we can build those connections, and that students see we value them,” says Boulet. “You can make a difference in a student’s life by them receiving a scholarship, even if it’s not a big scholarship, and that student will go on to have a positive impact in our community and our province in the future. By giving, you can inspire others to give too.”

Labuhn has long championed the benefits of post-secondary education and how it enhances career outcomes for students, thereby collectively bettering southern Alberta and the communities ULeithbridge graduates call home. He sees donations to establish student scholarships reaping immediate dividends.

“What I really like about this is how the money goes directly to students, and it’s going to be something where you can really see the results,” he says. “A scholarship and an advanced education can have a huge influence in life. These scholarships will help people who may be in a difficult situation get access to post-secondary education, or maybe they will be used to accelerate the path current students are on — it’s all about helping students get to where they want to be.”

To contribute to or create a new student scholarship, contact Director of Development, Erika Scott (BA ’08), erika.scott@uleth.ca or by calling 403-332-4030.

The following video has been created to celebrate this new initiative:

https://youtu.be/gYZDzSG_pn0.

PHOTO: Pictured from left are Janice Varzari, Roland Labuhn, Terry Whitehead and Bernadine Boulet.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/student-scholarship-drive-championed-university-lethbridge-alumni-and-community-leaders#.Y4To5uzMLAM>

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