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## University of Lethbridge expanding REC Room initiative thanks to Embark Student Foundation Major Grants Program

The University of Lethbridge will receive \$500,000 from the Embark Student Corp., Canada's education savings and planning company, as part of a \$2.7 million grant program aimed at supporting innovative programs, services and initiatives that have a positive impact on student experiences.



ULethbridge's successful REC (Refresh, Energize, Connect) Room program launch in 2022 is the impetus behind the grant award. Its introduction of indoor recreational spaces that support connection, play and physical activity has been enthusiastically embraced by students and earned recognition from Embark as one of seven projects across the country receiving support.

"The Embark Student Foundation Major Grant Program marks our commitment to making the path to and through post-secondary school easier for all Canadians," says Andrew Lo, President and CEO, Embark. "By supporting these innovative programs, we hope to enrich the lives of students and give them the skills they need to thrive both today and in the future."

This year, seven recipients were selected as part of the Embark Student Foundation Major Grants Program, with \$2.7 million being disbursed to qualifying post-secondary institutions across Canada. Each post-secondary institution selected will receive between \$250,000 and \$500,000 over five years to build their programs and realize their goals.

"It's very encouraging to receive this support from Embark and we're appreciative they recognize how important it is to provide an environment that encourages student flourishing," says Kathleen Massey, ULethbridge's vice-provost (students). "This funding creates the opportunity for us to enhance and expand this program through the addition of more indoor REC Room spaces, the construction of new outdoor spaces and the development of related programming."

REC Rooms are equipped with a variety of activities, including quiet pursuits like puzzles, a giant chess board, virtual reality games, digital games and art hives/murals, Indigenous games, as well as some active games such as ping pong and giant Jenga. For those who feel like just relaxing, there are bean bag chairs for reading, chatting or just zoning out.

“We currently have three indoor locations across campus, and they are full of activity pretty much any time of day,” Mark Slomp, executive director, Student Services. “Research has shown us that when students have connections with one another and engage in exercise and activities and have outlets to laugh and play, it sets them up for success in all the other areas of their academic experience. We’re excited to build on the REC Room concept and further support student flourishing.”

Other post-secondary schools receiving funding from Embark include Concordia University, Niagara College, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Toronto Metropolitan University, University of Toronto and Vancouver Island University. For a further look at their projects, check out this [news release](#) from Embark.

**About [Embark Student Corp.](#)**

Embark Student Corp. is Canada’s education savings and planning company. With over \$6 billion in assets under management, the company is committed to empowering families along their post-secondary journeys by giving them the resources and tools they need to better plan and save for all that comes with an education. As a wholly owned subsidiary of Embark Student Foundation, a not-for-profit Canadian corporation, the company, registered as a Scholarship Plan Dealer across Canada, manages almost 600,000 RESPs for Canadians nationwide and helped approximately 53,600 students through post-secondary studies last year.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/university-lethbridge-expanding-rec-room-initiative-thanks-embark-student-foundation-major>

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.