



University of  
Lethbridge

**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Burton family, Pincher Creek clinic establish awards supporting future students, rural health care**

A prominent Pincher Creek, Alberta family, along with physicians from a local clinic, have established a pair of University of Lethbridge awards that invest in the next generation of students and the health and well-being of their community.

Drs. Beverly (BSc '03) and Tracy Burton (BSc '03), both physicians practising in Pincher Creek, together with their mother Christine (BEd '74, Diploma in Education '78), a retired science teacher, have created the Burton Family Bursary for Women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) to encourage young women to explore STEM fields, particularly students who intend to pursue a career in health or medicine.



“It’s important we give women the opportunity,” says Christine. “Not everybody has the funding, and we don’t want that to be the barrier for someone to be able to go into the sciences, to find their passion and make a difference in the world and themselves.”

In addition, Tracy and Beverly, along with their fellow physicians at the Associate Clinic, have established the Pincher Creek and Piikani Health and Medical Scholarship for a continuing ULethbridge undergraduate student from Pincher Creek or the Piikani Nation in any degree program who is intending to pursue a career in a health or medical field.

From the Associate Clinic’s perspective, establishing the scholarship inspires and supports the next generation in the medical field, and seeks to put more health-care professionals in rural settings.

“We hope that people from this area will decide to go into a medical field, whether that’s as a physician, a nurse or an allied health professional, and then say they want to come back to the community that supported them,” says Tracy.

Both awards have been matched by the ULethbridge Board of Governors, doubling the impact of their investments.

Giving back to community is a value the Burton family holds close to their hearts.

“It’s always been important for Bev, Tracy and I to give back,” says Christine. “Establishing the scholarships is a way of giving back to our community for enhancing our lives and making a difference to each of us.”

The daughters were inspired by their mother growing up and naturally gravitated to studying the sciences at the post-secondary level. Their time at ULethbridge and the doors their academic experiences opened for them left a lasting impression and inspired them to support future generations of students, and specifically young women.

“My mom, sister and I all have our degrees in science,” says Tracy. “We very much encourage science, and women are very much under-represented in science. Often, women don’t think they can do it and this scholarship can help them achieve their goals.”

Beverly and Tracy are involved in Girl Guides, as was Christine before them, and they organize STEM nights two or three times a year for Sparks, a group of five- to eight-year-olds.

“I think it’s important for girls to see what women can do,” says Beverly, who’s also a member of the ULethbridge Board of Governors. “Then they can say, ‘OK, if they can do it, I can do it.’ We’ve been practising for more than 15 years, so some of the ones we’ve seen since they were little are now going to university. They say, ‘I want to be a nurse, or a doctor and you helped put me in that direction.’”

## **PHOTOS**

Burtons: (L to R) Drs. Beverly and Tracy Burton, Christine Burton

Clinic: (L to R) Dr. Kunmi Akarakiri, Dr. Tracy Burton, Dr. Beverly Burton, Dr. Ashley Rommens, Dr. Jared Van Bussel

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/burton-family-pincher-creek-clinic-establish-awards-supporting-future-students-rural-health>

Contact:

Trevor Kenney, Manager of Public Affairs

403-329-2710

403-360-7639 (cell)

[trevor.kenney@uleth.ca](mailto:trevor.kenney@uleth.ca)

@ULethbridge

*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.*