



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

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Student Talayna Ekelund to be honoured with University of Lethbridge Volunteer Award

It takes a special kind of person to balance coursework, studying, a part-time job and a healthy social life. It takes an exceptional person to recognize they have more to give and are willing to share their time raising the world around them and bettering their community. Talayna Ekelund is that kind of person, and at Spring 2024 Convocation, Ekelund will be honoured with the 2024 University of Lethbridge Volunteer Award.



The anthropology and pre-education student grew up learning the benefits of helping others and she has embraced that spirit, actively seeking ways in which she could benefit her community. In one year alone, she logged over 600 volunteer hours, lending her time to multiple organizations throughout Lethbridge and southern Alberta. Her experiences were broad and impactful, and her contributions, both big and small, were readily appreciated by all the groups she assisted.

Described as a keener since she first enlisted with Volunteer Lethbridge, Ekelund has worked at casinos, bingos, galas, supers, bottle drives and food banks amongst many other events. She has tutored and mentored children and youth and when called upon, always has found a way to fit a request into her busy schedule.

Invested in her community, Ekelund sees volunteering as a way of connecting with people and learning about the services and organizations that support community growth and well-being. She fits easily into any team setting, goes above and beyond to seek out tasks, and by asking questions and being engaged in her experience, ensures her work is of an exceptional standard.

The groups she has worked with include Interfaith Food Bank, Lethbridge Family Services, Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization, Inclusion Lethbridge, Stitch It Forward Society, Lethbridge Therapeutic Riding Association, United Way, Lethbridge Dragon Boat Festival, Southern Alberta Art Gallery, the YMCA and YWCA, Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society, Youth One, Womanspace, Hungarian Society and many more.

For her substantial work, Ekelund has already been recognized with a Leaders of Tomorrow Award by Volunteer Lethbridge.

And while the hours Ekelund spends volunteering are substantial and the diversity of her experiences vast, it's her continued commitment to being a volunteer that demonstrates the humanity and integrity with which she shares her time. Her ability to connect with people from all walks of life set her apart as a leader amongst her peers and an ambassador for all the positives ULethbridge students bring to the community.

Ekelund will receive the University of Lethbridge Volunteer Award at Spring 2024 Convocation Ceremony 2, Thursday, May 30, 2024, at 2:30 p.m. in the 1st Choice Savings Centre gymnasium. For more information on Spring 2024 Convocation, visit ulethbridge.ca/convocation.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/student-talayna-ekelund-be-honoured-university-lethbridge-volunteer-award>

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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.