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AGILITY program and Faculty of Management receive major RBC gift in support of innovation, entrepreneurship

Innovation in family and small business in southern Alberta received a major boost today as RBC pledged \$750,000 to the University of Lethbridge's AGILITY program and the Faculty of Management.

The gift specifically supports programs and initiatives within a new family business and small business stream of AGILITY, a program focused on helping students develop skills in innovation and entrepreneurial thinking.

"We are thrilled that RBC has chosen to support our students by investing in the University of Lethbridge. This donation illustrates that RBC recognizes the importance of these types of businesses to our economy through helping students create the skills necessary to respond to challenges and opportunities, and to help create solutions that will benefit society," says Dr. Lesley Brown, vice-provost and associate vice-president (academic) at the University of Lethbridge.

The RBC gift will be targeted to support and enhance opportunities for students to become involved with family and small business. Students, through the programming and experiential learning opportunities offered by AGILITY and by the Faculty of Management, will specifically benefit with work integrated learning opportunities through co-operative education, gaining valuable skills, confidence and knowledge that will better prepare them to enter the business world.

"Family and small businesses are a strong foundation of the economy of our region," says Dr. Robert Boudreau, dean of the Faculty of Management. "With RBC's generous support, students at the University will gain opportunities to explore and understand the unique and differentiating value of family and small businesses so that they can contribute to this economic pillar of southern Alberta communities."

For RBC, furthering the relationship with AGILITY and the Faculty of Management emboldens students and strengthens the fabric of southern Alberta.

“We are proud to partner with the University of Lethbridge through this gift,” says Mark Brown, regional vice-president, RBC. “For us, this is about more than just a donation – it’s about creating opportunities for young Canadians to learn, grow and thrive. Education is a cornerstone of enabling youth to reach their fullest potential today and, ultimately, creating social and economic prosperity tomorrow.”

The gift will provide support for the following initiatives:

- The establishment of a minor in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise, available to students in all academic programs
- The establishment of the RBC Family and Small Business Internships through the Co-operative Education Program in the Faculty of Management
- The creation of the RBC Family and Small Business Summit that will present a keynote speaker and accompanying seminar series related to family and small business
- The creation of the RBC AGILITY Awards in Family and Small Business to support students with an interest in rural, family and small business who are participating in the AGILITY program

Boudreau, says the co-operative education experience that will be gained by students is invaluable.

“Through RBC’s support, we will be able to give our students the real-world experience they desire and the opportunity to learn from industry professionals,” he says.

“Students get the chance to work on projects relevant in today’s business world, while the businesses they are working with gain a resource they otherwise would not have access to, creating a real win-win scenario. Once these students graduate and look to build their own businesses, they are then that much further along.”

About Agility

AGILITY is a multidisciplinary program open to all students that fosters an environment of creative discovery, nurtures entrepreneurial thinking and provides the supports needed for students to develop and implement innovative solutions that impact and vitalize society.

Numerous supports are offered to U of L students through AGILITY: An academic experience ignites students’ interest in technology, business and social innovation through coursework, workshops and public lectures. Financial support from various sources, such as the contributions of Dr. Cor Van Raay (LLD ’15) and alumnus Bruce McKillop (BASC ’70), provide scholarships to attract and inspire the next generation of

innovators. Tools and infrastructure are being put into place so students will have collaborative, flexible and open spaces to design, create, collaborate and learn.

To view online:

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