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University of Lethbridge students to go homeless in support of Wood’s Homes Emergency Youth Shelter

Annual 5 Days for the Homeless national event to run Mar. 8-13

The issue of youth homelessness will be in the spotlight as University of Lethbridge students brave the elements in support of Wood’s Homes Emergency Youth Shelter by participating in the annual 5 Days for the Homeless event, Mar. 8-13.

Beginning the evening of Sunday, Mar. 8, the students will sacrifice the comforts of their regular lives, foregoing access to technology, routine meals, a roof, a warm bed and even personal hygiene as they gain an appreciation for what it is like to live on the streets.

Armed with only cardboard and tape, the students are responsible to build their own shelter in the bus loop area near the Students’ Union Building – their ‘home’ for the week. Throughout the week they are only permitted to eat food that is donated to them and are responsible for attending all classes.

“We can talk about homelessness and we can study it in class to try and figure out ways to better support those who find themselves on the streets, but we can never fully realize the difficulties someone on the street faces,” says Tyrel Gagne, a student coordinator for the 5 Days for the Homeless event. “This will give us a taste of those struggles, the difference being we at least know that it will end on Friday.”

Wood’s Homes is a local organization that supports youth at risk in the community. Students will elicit donations on campus for the duration of the 5 Days event, with a goal of raising \$10,000. To date, the campaign has raised more than \$60,000 in the seven years that U of L students have participated.

Donations to the group can be made either in person (at tables set up on campus and to the student volunteers) or online at: 5days.ca/Lethbridge.

“We want to thank our generous sponsors for their support this year,” says Faculty of

Management student Michael Ostrom, director of the group. "Without the help of Save on Foods West, Candie Co Clothing, Rona, Hudsons Canadian Tap House, the University of Lethbridge Bookstore and the University of Lethbridge Students' Union, we wouldn't be able to take part in this national program and raise much needed funds for Wood's Homes."

Members of the student group are available for media interviews on Wednesday, Mar. 11 between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. They also welcome any media members interested in joining them for a night in their cardboard hotel.

For more information, please visit: 5days.ca/Lethbridge or the national webpage: 5days.ca.

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