March 6, 2012

Going ‘homeless’ to help the homeless

Edmonton—Four MacEwan University students from the School of Business will go homeless for five days with a goal to raise $10,000 for the Youth Emergency Shelter, and to increase awareness of the issue of homelessness.

The four business students; Brett Farquharson, Ellisha Sharma, Sarah Hoekstra and Pierce Brindza will remain on campus and spend their nights sleeping outside for five days starting at 5 p.m., on Sunday, March 11 until Friday March 16 at 5:00 p.m. The four students will have a pillow, sleeping bag and the clothes on their backs. They will have no access to showers or facilities to which their student status would usually grant them. While participating they must attend all classes and complete their academic responsibilities.

“If our campaign can help change one person’s perspective of homelessness it makes it all worthwhile,” said MacEwan University student organizer and participant Brett Farquharson. “If it helps one person get off the street, we’ve given someone a chance,” added Farquharson.

The students will be expected not to use cell phones or social networking sites during the Five Days campaign except for the purposes of promoting the campaign. They will have a cell phone for emergency purposes. Also, participants are only aloud food received through direct donations.

The MacEwan University student participants hope to raise $10,000 for the Youth Emergency Shelter and have already secured a $5,000 matching donation from Trailblazer RV. The students will be relying on food donations to support them through their five days. All perishable food items are gladly received to support the students, and all non-perishable food items donated will be taken to the Edmonton Food Bank. Donations will be accepted at the cafeteria of MacEwan University City Centre Campus building 6 throughout the campaign. Cash donations may also be sent at www.5days.ca - select ‘regional site’ – Edmonton (MacEwan University).

The students will also write about their experiences, which can also be viewed at the Five Days site.

Founded in 1971, MacEwan University is proudly celebrating its 40th anniversary. As a comprehensive university, the institution offers more than 65 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training. Its philosophy of inspiring minds, providing career opportunities and opening the doors to academic excellence, continues to be its guide as it serves the educational needs of students across Alberta, Canada and the world.

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