November 28, 2017

Nursing students partner with St. Albert Food Bank

Edmonton – “Don’t forget the lentils,” says Suzan Krecsy, executive director of the St. Albert Food Bank and Community Village. Krecsy is talking to a group of four MacEwan University Bachelor of Nursing Students as they stack healthy food choices on a table surrounded by walk-in freezers and tall shelves of non-perishable food products.

The four students—Elizabeth Wiley, Bailey Rozak, Samantha Barker and Gillian Richards—are taking third-year community nursing courses that have an ongoing health promotion and education project with the food bank.

Lentils along with other lean proteins, fresh fruit and vegetables are the building blocks of a diabetic-friendly hamper. “While the food bank does its best to provide healthy options for clients, handing over a hamper filled with processed food to a family struggling with diabetes is tough,” adds Krecsy.

Richards and her team compiled a list of diabetic-friendly food donations and used social media, including Facebook to get their message out to those making donations or thinking about making donations to the food bank. They include:

- Beans and lentils
- Soups (low salt/cholesterol)
- Granola and healthy breakfast bars
- Oatmeal
- Rice
- Dried Fruit and nuts
- Cans of tuna
- Canned tomatoes and other canned vegetables

“Grocery store gift cards and cash donations also help,” said Rozak. “They allow food banks to provide fresh and frozen staples like eggs, milk, cheese, fresh produce, meat and grainy breads.”

Krecsy says it’s valuable work that simply wouldn’t be possible without the students’ help.

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For more information, please contact:
David Beharry, Media Relations Advisor
780-497-5586    Cell: 780- 231-5954    Email: beharryd@macewan.ca

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