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**Compassion takes centre stage with first graduates of Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing**

Edmonton – MacEwan University is proud to celebrate the first graduating class of the Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing (BPN) program during this year’s Convocation ceremonies. The psychiatric nursing profession is attracting more students as the government and Alberta Health Services give more attention to mental health issues.

“The idea of advocating for the health of the most vulnerable people among our communities pulled me to psychiatric nursing,” says Dana Blackwell, who will become the first graduate of the BPN program. “We are making progress, but there is still a significant stigma surrounding mental illness, addictions, trauma and treatment,” added Blackwell.

Assistant Professor Brian Parker, interim chair of the BPN program says the same things that drew him into this area are attracting students. “The draw for me was being able to work with people and the human mind, which is the most complex, intricate, fascinating piece of machinery one can imagine,” said Parker.

The program admissions team seeks well-qualified candidates with a passion for psychiatric/mental health nursing. MacEwan University aims to prepare Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs) who demonstrate leadership, promote excellence in professional nursing practice and contribute to optimal wellness of individuals, families, groups and communities.

To be eligible for the program individuals must be registered and practicing. There are approximately 1,500 RPNs in Alberta.

*Founded in 1971, MacEwan University inspires its students with a powerful combination of academic excellence and personal learning experiences. Offering more than 65 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training, the university provides a transformative education in a creative, collaborative and supportive learning environment where creativity and innovation thrive. Located in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, MacEwan University offers a unique student experience that opens up diverse pathways for achievement and growth.*

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