



University of
Lethbridge

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release — Thursday, July 11, 2024

Shad ULethbridge inspires high schoolers in STEAM and entrepreneurship

Media are invited to meet with SHAD students on Friday, July 12 at 10 a.m. at the Simulation Health Centre located in Markin Hall M2018 and M2020

At the beginning of July, the University of Lethbridge welcomed high school students from across Canada for the first time through Shad Canada, a program designated for students in Grades 10 and 11.

Designed to enrich their skills in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) disciplines and entrepreneurship, Shad ULethbridge is a month-long initiative that allows students to reside on campus and collaborate closely with professors and mentors from the Lethbridge Community.

“We are hoping this experience for the students might open their eyes to the research, learning and opportunities that are available to them at the University of Lethbridge,” says Dr. Trushar Patel, Shad ULethbridge program co-director.

Upon their arrival, students were introduced to a real-world design challenge, which was shared across all Shad campuses in 2024. This year’s challenge poses the question: “How might we help people in Canada integrate affordable and reliable green energy sources into their everyday lives to create more sustainable communities?”

To tackle this challenge, which cultivates skills in solving urgent social and economic issues, students were organized into groups and expected to present a solution at the end of their stay. Activities and lectures were chosen to complement the comprehensive design challenge and appeal to students whose sights are set on STEAM and entrepreneurial futures. Key moments from the first week at Shad Lethbridge included a visit to Dr. Claudia Gonzalez's (MSc '00, PhD '04) brain lab in the kinesiology and physical education department, where she discussed cognitive processes like language, executive function, and spatial abilities. Additionally, Dr. Danny Le Roy, an economics professor, gave a lecture on the economy and renewable energy resources.

“The economic presentation was really interesting,” said Hamza Obeidi, a student from Kitchener, Ontario, who dreams of going into biomedical engineering. “I thought economy was just money and business, but our instructor showed us how economy ties into everything.”

Students also participated in an Indigenous Learning Day filled with activities such as double ball and immersive Blackfoot cultural experiences. Dr. Leroy Little Bear (BASc (BA) '72, DASc '04), vice-provost of Iniskim Indigenous Relations, along with Shane Gordon McDougall, a third-year Indigenous Studies student and Student Council Indigenous representative, and Caroline Russell (BA/BEd '04), an instructor in the Department of Indigenous Studies, organized the activities.

“I particularly enjoyed throwing the arrow into the hoop. Even though I didn’t make it in, it was still enjoyable to learn,” said Raina Garland, a Métis student who was a two-time silver medalist at the 2023 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG). “Participating in these Indigenous games further connects me to my heritage.”

In addition to on-campus learning, the program also includes organized excursions across southern Alberta, allowing participants to explore the region's landscapes and cultural heritage, including a two-night camping trip to Sylvan Lake and a visit to Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump.

Jayden Li, a student from Mississauga, Ontario, applied to Shad ULethbridge for the entrepreneurial aspects of the program’s offerings. He has since discovered that the connections he’s made and excursions contribute significantly to his overall experience.

“I think the best time I’ve had so far was the camping trip. We sang campfire songs, went rock climbing and canoeing,” says Li. “I actually flipped my canoe, which was fun.”

Learn more about [Shad Canada](#).

This news release can be found online at [Shad ULethbridge](#).

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Our university's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our university community.