

Students' Association of Mount Royal University provides student 'care cupboards' to help alleviate food insecurity on campus

Calgary, AB September 12, 2022 — The Students' Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU) has launched a program to provide free food & hygiene products across the Mount Royal University campus to help alleviate food insecurity issues for students.

Students' Association Manager of Support Services, Lisa Antichow said the 'SAMRU Care Cupboards' program was inspired by student feedback calling to expand the reach of food security programs on campus: "We have provided food and financial services to students for a very long time, but the SAMRU Care Cupboards does this in a new way by extending anonymous, convenient access to food and personal hygiene supplies all across campus."

There are five SAMRU Care Cupboards locations on campus. Re-stocked twice a week, the pantries feature both refrigerated and non-perishable food storage, microwaves, and essential hygiene products. Students accessing the care cupboards are encouraged to take what is necessary, but to visit SAMRU's Peer Support Centre for their broader support needs.

A recent article on food security on campus revealed that 9.5% of all Mount Royal University students suffer from food insecurity with 75% of those who are food insecure responding that they are severely food insecure (skipping meals, unable to purchase food, sleeping to avoid eating, etc.).

Antichow noted that SAMRU has been addressing food insecurity on campus since 1995 and in addition to the Care Cupboards program, the organization also operates a daily Free Breakfast program for students as well as a wide variety of food and financial services through the SAMRU Peer Support Centre.

SAMRU's Representation Executive Council President, Joseph Nguyen acknowledged that "this student-inspired program to increase food security and access for all students required a collective effort and was made possible by the support of Mount Royal University who provided space for the cupboards. The campus community has openly welcomed this initiative and we are grateful for their support."

Nguyen also noted that the program was not funded by student fees: "the SAMRU Care Cupboards are currently 100% funded by organizational fundraising efforts and our aim is to continue this funding model into the future."

The Students' Association of Mount Royal is a registered charitable organization. Donations to this and other student-focused programs can be made online at samru.ca/donate.