

Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy  
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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**LU 'Grocery Bus Service' Phase 2 Beginning**

Thunder Bay, ON, 7 February 2019 – Phase two of Lakehead University Bus Service is full steam ahead! A collaborative project between the Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (TBAFS) and Meal Exchange's Students Feeding Change Project will run over the course of 8 weeks on a series of Fridays and Saturdays for all Lakehead University Students. The project will begin this Saturday February 9<sup>th</sup> until March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

"We were very pleased with how phase one of the pilot went and are focusing on community partnerships for phase two," says Victoria Pullia, Intern at the Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy. "We are excited to announce the Westfort BIA as the first community partner of the pilot with many businesses offering discounts ranging from 10-15% for students," added Pullia.

"We in The Westfort Village are very pleased to welcome LU students to our area on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February" says Jack Moro, Owner of J.B. Evans Fashions & Footwear, "this first official visit we hope will be the start of many more visits and a great collaboration for the students and Westfort." To read a full list of participating Westfort area stores follow [tbfoodstrategy.com](http://tbfoodstrategy.com).

TBAFS and the Students Feeding Change Project has continued its partnership with Lakehead University Student Union (LUSU) and welcomes Lakehead University's International Student Services Centre as a second partner on the Lakehead University campus. "Our two new partners, Lakehead University International Student Services and the Westfort Business Area, shows interest in the project's potential and both campus and community groups want to support students' access to sufficient nutritious food," says Shawna Holmes, Campus Innovation Lead at Meal Exchange. The goal of phase two is to determine if this initiative is beneficial for both students and the community and if necessary, determine permanent longevity of the project to increase student food security. "The Students Feeding Change project has been fortunate to have the continued support of the Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and are excited to continue partnering with LUSU, the Thunder Bay Country Market, and the TBAFS" added Holmes.

The Coordinating Committee has focused on building partnerships with other grocery stores and organizations in the community to create sustainability for the project and are open to new organizations reaching out to partner on similar initiatives.

All route dates except February 9<sup>th</sup> will shop at three local grocery stores including Superstore, Walmart, and the Thunder Bay Country Market. "We are very pleased to continue our support of this project as it welcomes new students and potential life-long customers to enjoy all the local goodies our market has to offer, students are able to purchase locally grown foods and build relationships with farmers and food producers which are important for our community to grow and beneficial for the market," says Annet Maurer, Manager at the Thunder Bay Country Market. The market is a great site location because of the community atmosphere and its huge draw to visitors and new residents of Thunder Bay, providing students the opportunity to engage in the community through food. Students will be provided with a list of products and prices available at the Market when they RSVP for the bus as well as \$2 off coupons provided by the Market.

Feedback from students was important in planning for the second phase of the project. "We extended route times from two to three hours to ensure students have the option to shop at more than one location and spaced out dates since many students purchased groceries for one to two weeks," adds Pullia.

Phase two of the Grocery Bus Service will run on the following dates:

Saturday February 9<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Friday February 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Saturday March 9<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Friday March 9<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

*With support from the Maple Leaf Centre for Action on Food Security, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Meal Exchange launched the Students Feeding Change (SFC) project and has been working to facilitate programs in Thunder Bay with the goal of supporting food security, access to education, and well-being among all students.*

*The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy works with over 40 partners across the region to build a more sustainable, healthy, and equitable food system. Visit [tbfoodstrategy.ca](http://tbfoodstrategy.ca) to find out more.*

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For more information about this project please contact:

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