

# NEWS RELEASE

## Wilfrid Laurier University



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### **Laurier to award four honorary degrees May 31 and June 1**

A former university president, an insurance company executive, a retired banker with strong ties to the Lutheran Church, and a broadcaster who is also artistic director of a philharmonic choir will be recognized with honorary Doctor of Laws degrees at Wilfrid Laurier University's spring convocation ceremonies on May 31 and June 1.

About 1,360 graduands will receive degrees over the two days. The ceremonies on both days will begin at 1:15 p.m. in the Mutual Arena of the Waterloo Recreation Complex.

Receiving honorary degrees on May 31 will be **Robert Astley**, president and chief executive officer of The Mutual Life Assurance Company of Canada, and **Howard Dyck**, conductor and artistic director of the Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic Choir and long-time CBC radio broadcaster.

Astley, a Winnipeg native, has held numerous positions with Mutual Life, including executive officer (individual insurance services), vice-president (corporate planning and development) and executive vice president. He became president and chief operating officer in 1989 and chief executive officer in 1993. In addition to active participation within industry organizations, Astley is committed to community organizations. He is chair of the Wilfrid Laurier University Foundation, chair of the Dean's Advisory Council of the School of Business and Economics, and former chair of the university's board of governors. He is also on the board of the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

Dyck, also a Manitoba native, has been conductor and artistic director of the Kitchener-Waterloo Philharmonic Choir since 1972, and has been a broadcaster and host of national programs on CBC radio, including Mostly Music, Choral Concert, and Saturday Afternoon at the Opera. He has also been very active in social causes, including a successful 1994 fundraising project with performers from Canada and Europe that benefitted charitable agencies such as the Mennonite Central Committee and Habitat for Humanity (Canadian divisions).

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On June 1, honorary degrees will be awarded to **William Lomax**, retired executive vice-president for human resources with the Bank of Nova Scotia, and **Burton (Burt) Matthews**, president and vice-chancellor of the University of Waterloo from 1970 to 1981, and president and vice-chancellor of the University of Guelph from 1983 to 1988.

Lomax, a native of Kingston, Ont., is well-known for his work in promoting equality in the workplace, and until his retirement last year was the representative of all Canadian banks to the federal government on issues of workplace equity. He is also a founder and board member of the Alliance for a Drug Free Canada and, through his Lutheran congregation in Etobicoke, Ont., he has been a mentor for a series of interns from Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, which is affiliated with Wilfrid Laurier University. He has also served on the Churches Council for Theological Education and was vice-chair of the National Committee for Pensions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. He has also served with the Spencer Hall Foundation, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Bankers' Association.

**Matthews**, who was born in Kerwood, Ont., has been a consistent and important friend of Wilfrid Laurier University for many years. As president of the University of Waterloo in the early 1970s, he supported the notion of changed status and provincialization of what was then Waterloo Lutheran University. From this co-operation came the system of cross-registration of students, common purchasing of certain products, and a mutual appreciation of each other's goals and strengths that continues to this day. In addition to his presidencies at Guelph and Waterloo, Matthews has been chair of the Ontario Council on University Affairs, and is serving or has served on the boards of directors of many corporations, including Mutual Life of Canada, Mutual Trust, and Campbell Soup Company Ltd. A soil chemist by training, Matthews has also been a board member and chair of the International Center for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat.