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1911-2011 | Wilfrid Laurier University

For Immediate Release
October 12, 2011 | 147-11

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Laurier features “Dr. Jill” sharing how she rebuilt her brain – from the inside out

WATERLOO – Laurier welcomes Jill Bolte Taylor (“Dr. Jill”), an author, neuroanatomist, and one of *Time Magazine’s* 100 most influential people, to deliver her talk “How to Get Your Brain to do What you Want it to do” at a centennial event October 18.

Bolte Taylor, who chronicled her recovery from an arterio-venous malformation (AVM) – a rare form of stroke – in her *New York Times* bestselling memoir, *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist’s Personal Journey*, will describe how she “rebuilt her brain” from the inside out.

A Harvard-trained neuroanatomist, Bolte Taylor specialized in postmortem investigation of the brain to study schizophrenia and severe mental illness. She is known as the “Singing Scientist” for her travels with her guitar in hand as the national spokesperson for the mentally ill for the Harvard Brain Tissue Resource Center at McLean Hospital. She is also the president of the Greater Bloomington Affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Bloomington, Indiana.

Following her AVM in 1996, Bolte Taylor underwent major brain surgery to remove a blood clot placing pressure on the language centres in the left hemisphere of her brain. Through her speaking engagements, she describes the eight years it took for her to “rebuild” her brain, the insights she gained into how her brain operates, and how the functions of her right hemisphere blossomed following the trauma inflicted on her dominant left hemisphere.

Bolte Taylor has appeared on the *Oprah Winfrey Show* and travels to raise awareness about the shortage of brain tissue donated for postmortem research by those diagnosed with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Bolte Taylor’s appearance is part of Laurier’s centennial celebrations, and was organized by Wilfrid Laurier University’s Faculties of Science and Social Work and the Manfred and Penny Conrad Institute for Music Therapy Research.

The lecture and book signing event takes place Tuesday, Oct. 18, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. at The Tannery Event Centre, 151 Charles St. West, Kitchener. Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors. To purchase tickets, visit www.laurieralumni.ca/alumni/events or call 519-884-0710 ext. 5265.