

Wilfrid Laurier University



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Tiger Brand's Joan Fisk named Outstanding Business Leader for 1996

Joan Fisk, president of Tiger Brand Knitting Company Limited of Cambridge, has been awarded the 1996 Laurier Outstanding Business Leader Award.

The award, first presented in 1987, honors the accomplishments of members of the strong business community in the Wilfrid Laurier University area. Fisk will receive the award today and be the honored speaker at an awards reception at 4 p.m. in the Aird Centre at Laurier. The reception, for about 150 people, will include graduate and undergraduate students (some of whom will also receive awards), faculty and staff members, and corporate and individual donors.

Fisk was born in Cambridge and is a graduate of Galt Collegiate and the University of Guelph. She joined the family-owned business (begun by the Warnock family in 1881 as Galt Knitting) in her childhood, helping out where needed and working after school. As head designer from 1977 to 1989, Fisk created a private line of children's, men's and women's leisurewear called Non-Fiction, which became an immediate success. Tiger Brand also manufactures private label garments which are marketed through Cotton Ginny, The Gap, and other large national retail outlets.

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Tiger Brand's sales have increased by 60 per cent over the past few years, and employment in its plants (there are five in Cambridge and one in Pincher Creek, Alberta) has increased by more than 30 per cent.

"Joan has successfully guided the direction of Canada's largest vertical textile manufacturer to expanded markets in Europe, Asia and the Orient," said Dr. Alex Murray, dean of Laurier's School of Business and Economics. "It is a tremendous challenge to be globally competitive in the textile industry, and Tiger Brand's system of just-in-time delivery assists in this regard."

Tiger Brand's technological leadership was recognized in 1993 by *Apparel Industry* magazine's All Star Award. It was the first Canadian company to receive the award.

Fisk is a very active member of her community, both inside and outside the industry. She serves on the Apparel and Footwear Sectorial Advisory Group, which plays a key role in the implementation of the Canadian government's international trade policy, and is a member of the Apparel Manufacturers Marketing Association of Ontario.

In addition, Fisk is chair of the Cambridge Corporate Committee of the Investing in Skills and Tomorrow fundraising campaign for Conestoga College; is a member of the Jobs for Cambridge committee; the Task Force on Local Training; and the School of Business and Economics Dean's Advisory Council at Laurier.

In 1994, Fisk was awarded a Commemorative Medal for the 125th anniversary of Confederation in recognition of her contributions to the local and national communities.

She is married and is the mother of two teenaged children.