

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



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PROWIS'96 draws 40 female high school students to Laurier

Opening the eyes of teenage women to a future in science and mathematics is the goal of PROWIS'96, a three-day conference at Wilfrid Laurier University May 7-9.

While women now comprise the majority of undergraduate students in Canada, they are still very much the minority in sciences and mathematics.

"Part of the problem is perception," says Mary Ann Fieldes, a biology professor and Assistant Dean (Science) at Laurier. "Because there are relatively few women in science, women don't enter the field. And because women don't enter the field, there are relatively few women. It's a cycle that has to be broken."

That's the purpose of the annual PROWLS program - Promoting Women in Science.

More than 200 Grade 10 students from 67 high schools within 100 kilometres of Kitchener-Waterloo applied for one of the 40 spots available this year. The conference is sponsored by Bell Canada.

The PROWIS'96 participants have each chosen four workshops to attend from a list of 19 offerings. The workshops include:

- Smile, You're on Candid Camera (the investigation and taping of microscopic fresh water organisms)
- Tofu for You (how to extract and use plant proteins)
- Eureka! The Joy of Mathematical Discovery (using examples to illustrate ways of solving interesting and challenging mathematical problems)

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