

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



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Jan Varner
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Jan Varner appointed new director of Laurier Institute

Jan Varner, a staunch proponent of the benefits of training and education, has been appointed director of The Laurier Institute, the management development unit of the School of Business and Economics at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Varner, 37, replaces Rosemary Pell, who has returned to teaching at Laurier after a very successful two-year term as director of the institute.

A graduate of Laurier's Business Administration and MBA programs, Varner brings a wealth of relevant experience to her new position. She has worked in banking, in marketing, as an employment counsellor, and, since 1987, has been the co-operative education placement resource advisor with the Waterloo Region Catholic School Board. She has also delivered many workshops and has been a guest lecturer on co-operative education at the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario.

Varner was also president of K-W Business Women in Networking in 1993, and is the treasurer and executive board member of the Ontario Co-operative Education Association.

Being appointed director of the Laurier Institute is "so exciting for me because it ties education and business, two areas I believe in," said Varner, who will also be teaching human resources management and organizational behavior at Laurier.

Canada has traditionally lagged behind its international competitors in terms of money spent on manufacturing training, "but that is starting to change due to demographics" and changes in the workplace. Companies are realizing that they "need to train their employees to obtain higher production levels in a shorter time period," she said.

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The Laurier Institute, founded in 1984, provides management development activities in the community. Through its customized courses, it has helped train thousands of individuals, from executives, managers and supervisors to unemployed people who wish to become entrepreneurs. Its clients have included Dare Foods, Ontario Hydro, AT&T, Thomas J. Lipton, Abitibi-Price and NCR.

One of the institute's banner programs is the Manufacturing Supervisor Program, which runs for 16 evenings and concludes with a one-day Saturday session. Other popular programs include the Master Manager and Master Communicator programs, which draw on the expertise of faculty members in Laurier's School of Business and Economics.