

# NEWS RELEASE

## Wilfrid Laurier University



### **New mapping technique charts a course in the fight against cancer**

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**WATERLOO**, Ontario - At first glance, medicine and geography may seem worlds apart, but in the fight against cancer, geography is helping medical science chart a course towards a better understanding of the disease.

The latest research by **Ph.D candidate Michael Tiefelsdorf at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario**, makes use of the latest advances in computer technology, statistical techniques and geographic information systems, to develop a methodology that relates occurrences of cancer to migration flow. Tiefelsdorf will present his findings at the latest conference of the Association of American Geographers, in **Fort Worth, Texas, April 1-5, 1997**.

By examining the spatial distribution of male bladder cancer victims in the 219 counties of the former German Democratic Republic, Tiefelsdorf found a solution to one of the challenges in the fight against cancer. Since cancer is a disease that can have a long dormancy period, there is no clear relationship between the place of residence where the disease takes hold and the place of prior exposure to risk. Tiefelsdorf's research on migration patterns addresses this problem and illustrates the influence of the dominant migration pathways. His research also indicates that cancer incidence rates tend to cluster spatially, with high rates in urban centres. The research sheds light on some of the causes of cancer and will assist in developing strategies for its prevention.

Considered one of Canada's leading universities, Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, offers a full range of undergraduate and graduate programs to 7,700 full and part-time students.