

Wilfrid Laurier University



Laurier, Brantford and Grand Valley Education Society commit to opening a university campus in Brant by fall of 1999

For Immediate Release

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BRANTFORD – The Grand Valley Education Society (GVES), the City of Brantford and Wilfrid Laurier University today announced their intention to open a Laurier University campus – tentatively called the Brant Campus – in the Fall of 1999.

GVES chair Colleen Miller, Brantford mayor Chris Friel, and Laurier president and vice-chancellor Robert G. Rosehart ended months of anticipation by announcing that their three organizations are now committed to this new partnership in community education. Formal agreements will be finalized in September, 1998, with the inaugural classes scheduled to begin one year later.

"Today, we are formally stating our commitment to opening the Brant Campus by September, 1999," explained Rosehart. "From that point on, the people of Brantford and the surrounding area will be able to earn a Bachelor degree on a full-time basis without having to leave home."

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Laurier envisions a unique curriculum leading to a three-year degree. The goal will be to prepare students to meet contemporary job challenges by combining studies in administration, communication, information technology and the liberal arts. The program will draw on Laurier's existing strengths in each of these four areas.

The formal agreement that the three parties finalize will put Laurier in charge of providing the academic and support programs required to complete the degree. As a community-owned charitable organization created to support postsecondary education in Brant, the GVES will assist with fundraising and local initiatives to promote the new campus. The City of Brantford will lease physical facilities to the University for a nominal rent and provide the money required for the capital cost of leasehold improvements.

The 16,000-square-foot Carnegie Building, located at 73 George Street, will be renovated to include classrooms to accommodate 200 to 300 students and offices for staff and faculty. The City plans to provide Laurier with an interest-free loan for the renovations and reduce the loan to zero over the length of the agreement, so long as the University offers a degree-granting program.

The agreement signed in the fall will initially be in effect for five years. During that time, the parties will assess the possibility of establishing a more permanent facility and plan for its development. The City of Brantford has indicated that it would be willing to provide as much as \$2-million from the sale of the ICOMM building to a permanent campus.