

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Students pledge \$1.5-million to renovate dining and health facilities

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WATERLOO – Students at Wilfrid Laurier University are contributing \$1.5-million to a multi-million dollar renovation project. Laurier, the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union (WLUSU) and the Wilfrid Laurier University Graduate Students' Association (WLUGSA) today signed an agreement in which students are significant partners in plans to renovate Laurier's dining hall and kitchen, student-services building and Paul Martin Centre.

The renovation project, currently estimated to cost \$3.8-million, centres around a significant expansion of the existing dining and food-services facilities. The expanded dining hall will accommodate more students and will resemble a marché-style retail market. A series of self-sufficient stations, divided by menu groups, will offer a range of meals.

The renovation also involves expanding the student-service building – a project to which students had earlier pledged an additional \$250,000 – extending its second floor until it joins the exterior of what is currently the Paul Martin Centre (PMC) and connecting it to the PMC's foyer. The PMC will become a general-purpose meeting room. A new legislative-assembly room will serve as meeting room for Senate, Board of Governors and other campus users.

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“The focus of this project revolves around improving our health, counselling and food services,” explains Laurier president Bob Rosehart. “Our awareness of the importance of these areas, along with the awareness of students, has changed drastically since the existing facilities were built some 50 years ago. The renovations will allow us to better meet contemporary needs and expectations.”

The agreement also gives students a significant voice in how the renovation project proceeds. The presidents of the two student groups will be two of seven members on a joint consultation and management committee formed to develop and execute an inclusive and extensive consultation process.

“The students have long recognized that health, counselling and food services are three areas important to all our well being,” explained WLUSU president Jeffrey Kroeker. “So the union and the GSA decided we wanted to play a significant role in ensuring that needs in those areas are fully met. The best way to do that was come to the table as full partners.”

The University is currently negotiating an agreement, on behalf of itself and the students, with an outside food-services provider. The successful company would contribute \$1.5-million to capital expenses in exchange for the right to operate food services for a specified period of time. The University hopes to have a signed agreement with its preferred provider within a month.

The full renovation project will be divided into three phases. The student-services portion should be complete by the fall of this year. Completion of the proposed dining hall and legislative assembly room is scheduled for December 2001. And renovation of food-services delivery, the dining hall and the PMC should finish by September 2002.