

# NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier  
University



## **Laurier's PROWIS conference promotes women in science**

*Young women invited to explore career opportunities and find inspiration in science*

**For Immediate Release**

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WATERLOO – Forty female high-school students from southwestern Ontario will explore career opportunities in mathematics and the sciences – fields typically dominated by men – when Laurier hosts its annual Promoting Women in Science (PROWIS) conference from May 7 to 9.

The conference provides students in grade 10 with hands-on experience through workshops that demonstrate that science and mathematics are exciting areas of study and research leading to a wide range of possible careers. Grade 10 is where women frequently abandon these areas.

“PROWIS is designed to make science come alive for young women who may be indecisive about their academic future,” says David Peirson, associate dean of the faculty of science. “The program gives them a chance to test the waters.”

PROWIS 2002 features a set of interactive workshops led by Laurier faculty and staff. The workshops cover a variety of topics from biology, chemistry, computing, geography, kinesiology, mathematics, psychology, physics and physical education.

The workshops include “A Splash in the Pond?”, which allows participants to study fish populations in their natural habitat. “Fat Free Learning” examines issues related to obesity. “Can You Keep a Secret?” explores the secret codes and ciphers of cryptography.

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The conference also features a banquet held on Wednesday evening, where participants meet and talk with women from the local community who have careers in the fields of mathematics and science.

“The opportunity to meet these successful women and talk to them on a one-on-one basis is exceptional for PROWIS participants,” says Peirson. The guests include engineers, speech therapists, research scientists, computer specialists and a veterinarian.

Many PROWIS participants attend the conference because it offers them a practical experience in the sciences not otherwise available to them. They also benefit by developing friendships with other young women who are interested in science.

“I was excited to learn that the workshops at the PROWIS conference cover aspects of science and math not offered in high school,” said Sarah Fawcett of Listowel Secondary School. “They offer a chance to learn about the unique and different aspects of science and math that I am not usually exposed to.”

Now in its 12th year, PROWIS has exposed over 400 young women to science- and math-related disciplines. A phone survey completed last summer found that more than half of former participants eventually studied mathematics or science at the university or college level.

## PROWIS 2002 PARTICIPANTS

Baden	Jennifer Schilling	Waterloo – Oxford S.S.
	Alyssa Schwartzentruber	Waterloo – Oxford S.S.
Bramblelea	Melanie Mohammed	Bramblelea S.S.
	Precious Yutangco	Bramblelea S.S.
Brampton	Cindy Chao	North Park S.S.
	Alyssa Holland	Turner Fenton S.S.
	Cheryl Rowe	Cinguacousy S.S.
Brantford	Sara Bannister	North Park C.V.S.
	Heather O’Shea	North Park C.V.S.
	Nora Gharib	North Park C.V.S.
	Shauna Belowitz	North Park C.V.S.
Burlington	Stephanie Massicotte	Burlington Central H.S.
	Sandra Zadkovic	Notre Dame S.S.
Cambridge	Rebecca Abshoff	Galt C.I.
	Elizabeth Cowie	Galt C.I.
	Alexandra Dietrich	St. Benedict S.S.
Fergus	Samantha Salter	Centre Wellington District H.S.
Hamilton	Kelly Swan	Barton S.S.
	Darlana Zhai	Columbia International College
Kitchener	Kasia Malecki	Resurrection S.S.
	Samantha Hodgins	Resurrection S.S.
Listowel	Sarah Fawcett	Listowel S.S.
Mississauga	Tina Chu	Cawthra Park S.S.
	Geraldine Albanez	Loyola S.S.
	Benita Tupchong	Streetsville S.S.
	Nevena Draskic	T.L. Kennedy S.S.
	Althea Rosales	Holy Name of Mary S.S.
	Michelle O’Brien	Holy Name of Mary S.S.
	Mina James	Holy Name of Mary S.S.
	Vidhi Thakkar	Gordon Graydon Memorial S.S.
	Lauren Kehl	Gordon Graydon Memorial S.S.
Oakville	Divya Sharma	St. Mildred’s – Lightbourn School
	Patricia Krisch	St. Ignatius of Loyola S.S.
	Erika Friesen	T.A. Blakelock H.S.
	Katarina Vulic	T.A. Blakelock H.S.
Shelburne	Paula Darling	Centre Dufferin District H.S.
	Mallory Holmes	Centre Dufferin District H.S.
Stratford	Patricia Leenders	St. Michael S.S.
Woodstock	Samantha Tanner	Woodstock C.I.
	Jessica Zehr	Huron Park S.S.