

# NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier  
University



## **Laurier presents awards to student, alumna, faculty and staff** *Awards recognize achievements, contributions of outstanding members of Laurier family*

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WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University’s alumni association is recognizing the achievements and contributions of four outstanding members of the university community. Ben Seewald, past president of the student alumni association; business graduate Beth Kidnie (1957-2000); history professor Richard Fuke; and Don Smith, retired coach and athletic administrator, are this year’s recipients of four alumni awards.

Though the criteria for each award differs slightly, all are meant to recognize the outstanding achievements of a member of a particular group: students, alumni, faculty and staff. And all of the awards generally involve exceptional service – either to Laurier or the wider community.

“Each award is designed to recognize someone of whom Laurier is proud,” explained Pamela Healey, director of development and alumni relations. “Most often the awards recognize a significant contribution to the university, outstanding success in a chosen field, or some combination of the two.”

Seewald, an English and communications studies student now finishing his term as president of the student alumni association, has been named student alumnus of the year. The award recognizes his many efforts in several positions within the association over the past four years. Last fall he created the first food bank Olympics and domino game to kick off the Waterloo Region Food Bank’s annual fall food drive.

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Kidnie, who graduated from Laurier with a bachelor of business administration in 1978, will receive the alumna of the year award posthumously. The award acknowledges that Kidnie's success as a business executive and her contributions to community brought honour and recognition to Laurier. She was treasurer and director of finance at Dupont Canada. She was also active with such organizations as the United Way and the parents' association of the Montessori School in Etobicoke.

Since her death in April 2000, Kidnie's family and friends have contributed more than \$200,000 to the Beth Kidnie Memorial SBE Bursary and the Beth Kidnie Memorial Bursary. The endowed fund provides \$5,000 annually to two students – one in the school of business and economics and one enrolled in any program – demonstrating the pursuit of excellence in work and study as well as a generosity of spirit to fellow students, the university and the wider community.

Fuke, a history professor at Laurier from 1973 until retirement in 2001, will receive the Hoffman-Little Award. The award recognizes excellence in teaching, research and professional endeavours. Fuke has served as chair of Laurier's history department, undergraduate advisor and liaison to the history club. He was a mentor, counsellor and career advisor to countless students, many of whom asked that he oversee directed-studies courses or sit on their thesis committees.

Smith, who coached a number of Laurier's winning football and basketball teams throughout the 1970s, will receive the Schaus Award for outstanding contribution by a member of the administrative staff. He has held a number of leadership positions – both as a coach and an administrator – during his 31 years at Laurier. Though he officially retired in 1999, Smith remains involved as co-ordinator of alumni athletic events and lecturer in physical education.

Seewald, Fuke, Smith and a member of the Kidnie family will accept the awards during the alumni association annual awards banquet at 6 p.m. on May 23 in the science building courtyard.