

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Laurier's Champions Across the Ages to welcome incoming students Orientation week promotes academics, community and fun to a record number of first-years

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WATERLOO – The largest first-year class in Laurier's history will participate in a week-long orientation designed to foster a sense of community and begin the transition to university-level academics.

Over 600 volunteers and 101 residence-life dons will welcome just over 2,800 new students and lead them through a series of activities during orientation week. The theme for this year's event is *Laurier Champions Across the Ages: Where Unity Is Victory*. The new students will attend academic sessions, participate in colour team competitions and join a national fight to cure cystic fibrosis (CF).

"Orientation week is designed to make the new students feel comfortable and there are 600 volunteers committed to making that goal a reality," said Amanda Dopson, vice-president of student activities. "Helping new students make the transition from high school to university is a very important first step in succeeding academically."

Most students begin the week on **Monday** by moving into residence and are divided into four colour teams. Members of the Gold Gladiators, Green Vikings, Red Titans or Blue Knights will be officially welcomed at opening ceremonies that begin at 8:30 p.m. at the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex.

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Tuesday afternoon, the focus shifts to academic preparation as students attend sessions held by the faculties. The dean of each faculty will outline common pitfalls students face, give tips for a successful year and answer any questions. Students have the opportunity to make necessary changes to their academic schedules on Thursday.

A champions' village will be set up on Willison Field from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Wednesday. Campus clubs and organizations will host games and activities that include the joust, a dunk tank and a carnival.

At 3 p.m. students will attend a presentation in the athletics complex on CF in preparation for Saturday's Shinerama fundraising blitz. Colour teams will compete in a shine-off at 4:30 p.m. in the parking lot between the athletic complex and science building. They'll shine vehicles provided by local media and businesses, with the winner being announced just after 6 p.m.

Students will enjoy water park and sports activities at Bingemans Incorporated between 10:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on **Thursday**. Galaxy Cinema in Waterloo will host a movie night in the evening.

On **Friday**, the four colour teams will compete in the orientation week cheer-off to determine which team has the most Laurier spirit. The event begins at 4:30 p.m. and the winning team declared just after 6 p.m. Students return to the athletics complex for an annual talent show at 8:30 p.m.

Central to the week is Shinerama, a national fundraiser founded at Laurier in 1961. The event has raised more than \$13 million for the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation since 1964 and 60 schools now participate. In 2002, Laurier set the per capita record for most money raised in a year by donating \$161,000.

Students will be at locations throughout Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph on **Saturday**, shining shoes, glasses and windows. Local bars and restaurants will show their support by offering 'shiny shoes' – which are stickers indicating someone has donated at least a dollar – to their patrons. The students hope to raise \$123,456.78 during the one-day blitz.

Orientation week will close with students cheering on the Golden Hawks football team as it battles the Guelph Gryphons at University Stadium at 7 p.m. on Saturday. Organizers will announce the amount raised by Shinerama at halftime during orientation week's closing ceremonies.