

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



Heritage block expands with new residence/recreation facility

For Immediate Release

**June 19, 2006
45-06**

**Contact: Dr. Bruce Arai
Acting Dean, Laurier Brantford
(519) 756-8228 ext. 5702**

**or Tamara Rasokas
Administrative Assistant, Development
(519) 756-8228 ext. 5769**

BRANTFORD – Laurier Brantford will add one more piece to its heritage block with the grand opening of the Wilkes House residence and recreation centre on Thursday, June 22 at 4:30 p.m. The building, built by Albert J. Wilkes in the 1870s and later used as the Memorial Boys and Girls Club, has undergone a \$4.5-million heritage-preserving renovation. Entrepreneur Shawky Fahel facilitated the purchase and developed the Wilkes House property.

The new recreation centre will provide Laurier Brantford students with their own facility for athletics, and includes fully equipped weight, cardio and special interest rooms in addition to a gymnasium and change rooms. The residence portion of the building will house 40 students in newly renovated apartment-style rooms.

“I’m very pleased to be part of the Wilkes House grand opening and to partner with Laurier on this exciting initiative. The Wilkes House project reflects the university’s commitment to the redevelopment of the heritage block and its commitment to the revitalization of the downtown core,” says Fahel, president of the JG Group of Companies.

– more –

“We are pleased that with the opening of Wilkes House, our students, staff and faculty can enjoy recreational activities in our own state-of-the-art facility,” says Ingrid Hanrath, director of student services. “We understand this wouldn’t have been possible without the support of the Brantford community, and we want to say thank you.”

Acting Dean Bruce Arai will welcome visitors and introduce Dr. Robert Rosehart (Laurier’s president and vice-chancellor), Mayor Mike Hancock, Beverly Harris (chair, WLU’s Board of Governors), Leo Groarke (dean of Laurier Brantford) and Ingrid Hanrath, who will comment on the building. Also on hand will be additional members of the university’s Board of Governors.

For more information about the Wilkes grand opening, please contact Tamara Rasokas at **(519) 756-8228 ext. 5769** or via email at trasokas@wlu.ca.