

# NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier  
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## **Laurier announces recipient of Outstanding Business Leader of the Year Award**

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WATERLOO –Laurier announced Wednesday that its 2006 Laurier Outstanding Business Leader award recipient is Annette Verschuren, president of The Home Depot Canada. The award will be conferred on October 24, 2006 in Waterloo.

Annually since 1987, Laurier school of business and economics faculty members, business leaders and previous winners have searched across Canada for an award recipient who exemplifies the leadership traits that the university seeks to instill in its students. Verschuren was selected for her outstanding accomplishments as a retail executive, as well as for her emphasis on corporate social responsibility and employee morale.

“It is a real pleasure for me to name Annette as the top contender in our competition this year,” said Ginny Dybenko, dean of the Laurier school of business and economics. “Annette has demonstrated her outstanding leadership capabilities consistently throughout her astonishingly successful career—in her business ventures and also in her not-for-profit activities. Annette’s strong management style and impressive community involvement make her an excellent role model for Laurier’s business students as they begin to forge their own leadership approach.”

Joining the Canadian division of The Home Depot in 1996, Verschuren took the U.S.-based, multi-billion-dollar home improvement retailer from 19 Canadian stores to more than 140 stores today.

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Previously, as president of Michael's of Canada, Verschuren performed a similar feat when she brought the company to Canada from the U.S. and opened 17 stores in 26 months. A development veteran who was drawn to the stimulating environment of the retail industry as the vice-president of corporate development for Imasco Ltd., Verschuren describes herself as one who embraces change. She also cites her most important leadership attributes as inspiration, motivation and coaching.

These attributes have been recognized in numerous ways: she was the recipient of the 2005 Distinguished Canadian Retailer of the Year from the Retail Council of Canada, she has received two honorary doctorates, and she was recently appointed by Prime Minister Steven Harper to the North American Competitiveness Council under the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America.

Illustrating her belief in the value of corporate social responsibility, Verschuren also lends her expertise to charitable causes, chairing Habitat for Humanity's national president's council, and spearheading the Corporate Council on Volunteerism. She also serves as chancellor of Cape Breton University, and is on the board of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives.

To learn more about The Home Depot Canada, please visit [www.homedepot.ca](http://www.homedepot.ca).

With more than 3,000 students enrolled in its programs and approximately 100 full-time faculty members on campuses in Toronto and Waterloo, the Laurier school of business and economics is one of Canada's largest and most innovative business schools. Please visit [www.wlu.ca/sbe](http://www.wlu.ca/sbe) for more information about the SBE.

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