

# NEWS RELEASE

## Wilfrid Laurier University



### **Scotiabank donates \$500,000 to assist students with disabilities and enhance diversity at Wilfrid Laurier University**

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Waterloo, ON – Scotiabank’s donation of \$500,000 to Wilfrid Laurier University is helping to improve campus diversity by enhancing services for students with disabilities and increasing support for international students and those students participating in international exchanges.

“Scotiabank believes in creating opportunities that will help students achieve their full potential,” said Pat Krajewski, Scotiabank Senior Vice-President of Human Resources International Banking, and a Laurier alumna. “By supporting a diverse range of educational programs, and assisting with educational accessibility, Scotiabank hopes to help give students the skills, tools and experiences to develop their potential, ultimately enriching themselves and the broader community around them.”

Thanks to Scotiabank’s generosity, Laurier is now better able to accommodate the academic needs of its students with disabilities through the creation of both the Scotiabank Assistive Technology Lab and the Scotiabank Exam Lab within Laurier’s Accessible Learning Centre, which assists students with disabilities in reaching their full academic potential.

Supported through a portion of the \$500,000 donation, the two labs will provide Laurier students with the proper atmosphere and resources to learn, study and write exams. New resources available to students include computers loaded with accessible software, a lending library of assistive technology resources, accessible workstations and an

## Scotiabank donation helps students/2

environment that limits distractions. Additionally, Laurier has been able to enhance the available equipment, including hearing impairment devices and a Braille Lite.

Janelle Gordon is one of the Laurier students who will benefit from the Scotiabank donation. Before a portion of the donation helped create a new learning lab for students with disabilities, Gordon could spend up to two hours to read through half a chapter in one of her textbooks. Thanks to the equipment funded by Scotiabank, Gordon can now read the same chapter in its entirety in just half an hour.

“It means a lot to me that Scotiabank has ensured that I have these resources available. Now I’m not faced with as much of a hindrance,” Gordon said, explaining that she has a central auditory processing disorder. “I have used a number of the different technologies available and they’re very helpful. I am able to read faster and process information easier. It has helped to cut down on the time I need to spend reading and studying, and has really helped me to understand what I’m learning.”

International students are being helped through the creation of the Scotiabank International Entrance Scholarship. One of only a few scholarship opportunities available to international students at Laurier, the scholarship has already had a significant impact by funding Laurier students from international destinations.

Finally, Scotiabank’s pledge was also used to establish the Scotiabank International Student Exchange Award Endowment, which is to be used to help fund international exchanges for Laurier students interested in furthering their education abroad.

“As a longstanding supporter of Laurier, Scotiabank has proven itself to be a true champion of higher education,” said David McMurray, dean of students at Laurier. “This generous gift has gone a long way toward helping to increase diversity at Laurier, in turn making the university experience richer for all.”