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Laurier celebrates 45 years of science milestones with lab tours and awards gala

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University will celebrate its Faculty of Science with a fascinating glimpse inside science research labs and by honouring outstanding alumni at the university's inaugural Celebrating Milestones in Science gala, May 29.

The event will commemorate the following milestones:

- The **45th anniversary** of Laurier's first Bachelor of Science degree (in Chemistry) – which was also the 1,000th degree awarded by the university
- The **15th anniversary** of the Science Building on Laurier's Waterloo campus
- The **10th year** since Laurier's Faculty of Science became a stand-alone faculty at Laurier (separate from the former Faculty of Arts and Science)
- The **5th year** of science research in the Science Research building
- Introducing the **third dean** of the Faculty of Science, physicist Paul Jessop, who will assume his role July 1 ([news release](#))

"It has been an amazing decade of growth for the Faculty of Science at Laurier," said Deb MacLatchy, vice-president: academic and provost. "This is a great opportunity to stop and reflect on our achievements while looking forward to an exciting future."

As the master of ceremonies, psychology professor emeritus Don Morgenson, who has taught psychology to thousands of Laurier students since the early 1960s, will highlight Laurier's strengths in science research and education and celebrate the next generation of scientists emerging from Laurier.

The university's first **Celebrating Milestones in Science Awards** will be presented to an alumnus from each of the Faculty's original six departments (Laurier introduced its seventh, health sciences, last year). The awards were established to recognize graduates who have made a significant contribution to society through the field of science and who serve as an inspiration to current science students. Award recipients include (please click on names to view recipients' biographies):

- **Biology:** [Dr. Jeffrey Richards \(BSc '95\)](#), associate professor, zoology, University of British Columbia
- **Chemistry:** [Ms. Elizabeth Young \(BSc '06\)](#), environmental research analyst, Exova
- **Kinesiology & Physical Education:** [Dr. Kevin Shoemaker \(BA '90\)](#), associate professor, kinesiology, University of Western Ontario
- **Mathematics:** [Tracy \(Walker\) Lemieux \(MSc Mathematics & BMus Music '03\)](#), musician, piano instructor, former university mathematics instructor
- **Physics & Computer Science:** [Mike Morrice, \(BBA Honours Computing & Computer Electronics '08\)](#), co-founder, executive director, Sustainable Waterloo

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- **Psychology:** [Gail Czukar \(BA '73, MA '75\)](#), executive vice-president: policy, education, health promotion, legal services, Canadian Association for Mental Health

Photo and interview opportunities for the media:

Celebrating Milestones in Science Award recipients will be available for photos and interviews at the event, May 29. Science Lab tours begin at 5:30 p.m. in the Science Building courtyard and include:

Department	Researchers	Research Description	Location
Kinesiology & Physical Education	Dr. Jayne Kalmar Jason Gould Simon Sharples Shawn van Bakel	Neurophysiology of human fatigue and movement disorders. Investigating brain and spinal pathways that suppress the activation of muscle during fatigue and in Parkinson's disease using intramuscular recordings and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS).	Science Research Room 214
Psychology	Dr. Paul Mallet Sarah Voll	Behavioural and neural effect of drugs, especially drugs of abuse. Long term changes in brain function caused by repeated exposure to addictive drugs. Demonstration showing how repeated exposure to THC (in marijuana) can alter the brain's response to addictive drugs like heroin.	Science Research Room 318
Psychology	Dr. Diano Marrone Dr. Elham Satvat	Determining the physiological factors that cause cognitive impairment (memory loss) in the elderly. Explores cellular bases of learning and plasticity, relationship to creation of long-lasting memory and how these are altered in aging. Demonstration of confocal microscope used to capture gene expression and activity in brain cells.	Science Research Room 314
Chemistry	Dr. Lillian Debruin Meraf Kebede Baindu Kosia Brittany Shaw	Displays of undergraduate experiments in the biochemistry/biotechnology program.	Science Building room N3017
Physics & Computer Science	Dr. Chinh Hoang Sean McConnel Dale Hadwen	iPhone application programming demonstrations.	Science Building room N2076G

The Celebrating Milestones in Science gala will be held in Laurier's Science Building Courtyard May 29. Lab tours begin at 5:30 p.m. and dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. For more information or to register for the event, please contact Kristen Porritt, associate director: development, kporritt@wlu.ca or 519-884-0710 ext. 3719.



FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Origins:

The Faculty was formed in 2000, although six of its academic departments are longstanding members of the Wilfrid Laurier University community.

Mandate:

To offer selected contemporary and competitive programs designed to attract the highest quality students, and to provide them with a stimulating education and thorough preparation for employment or further studies.

To provide and sustain a supportive climate for research in the pure, social, and applied sciences, with particular focus on collaboration and multidisciplinary research.

Dean of Science:

Dr. Paul Jessop is a physicist whose research expertise is in the area of optoelectronic materials and devices, specializing in silicon-based photonics. Jessop will commence his role as Laurier's dean of science July 1, 2010. Formerly chair of Engineering Physics at McMaster University, Jessop completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Waterloo and his master's and doctoral degrees at Harvard University. He holds leadership positions in the Canadian Institute for Photonic Innovations and has authored over 150 journal papers and conference presentations.

Unique blend of seven academic departments/programs:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Health Sciences
- Kinesiology & Physical Education
- Mathematics
- Physics & Computer Science
- Psychology

Faculty, staff and students:

- Number of full time faculty: 104
- Number of staff: 43
- Students enrolled as majors in science programs: 2,839 undergraduates, 93 graduate students
- Canada Research Chairs in Neuroscience, Mathematics and Social Psychology
- Ontario Early Researcher Awards: Biology, Mathematics and Psychology

Strengths:

- Broad-based and specialized undergraduate programs

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- Program specialties in: aquatic biology and water science, biochemistry & biotechnology, computing & computer electronics, financial and applied mathematics, health sciences, kinesiology, photonics, and community, social, neuro, developmental & cognitive psychology
- Double degrees: business & computer science, business and computing & computer electronics and more degrees in development
- New Science Research Centre
- Focused graduate programs in areas of research strength and faculty expertise
- Strong faculty mentorship for students
- Curriculum focused on active participation by students through laboratories and skills development, experiential learning and community service

Research funding:

More than 85 per cent of faculty members hold federal Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grants, and many other grants and contracts.

High success in Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and Ontario provincial fund applications have built and outfitted new state-of-the-art Science Research Centre and additional research labs.

Research centres and institutes:

- [Centre for Community Research, Learning and Action](#)
- [Laurier Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience](#)
- [Laurier Institute for Water Science](#)
- [Sunlife Financial Laurier Movement Disorders Research and Rehabilitation Centre \(MDRC\)](#)
- [SHARCNET@Laurier](#)