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Fiona Lester named Outstanding Woman of Laurier

WATERLOO – Fiona Lester has been named the 2013 Outstanding Woman of Laurier. Lester, the captain of Laurier's varsity women's hockey team, received the award today during a luncheon at the Waterloo Inn Conference Hotel.

"Fiona is an outstanding athlete who also shines as a student and a volunteer," said Peter Baxter, Laurier's director of Athletics and Recreation. "This event gives Laurier the opportunity to showcase our exceptional female student-athletes and how they inspire lives of leadership and purpose."

Lester is a fourth-year Biology and Math major from Peterborough. She has twice been named an OUA First Team All-Star and three times a CIS Academic All-Canadian.

"It's really exciting to win this award," said Lester. "There are so many great female athletes out there, so many that I'm friends with, that it's just awesome and a great honour."

Lester accepted her award in front of more than 250 people attending the awards luncheon. Seven women competed for the prestigious award this year, including two who joined Lester as finalists: Carmen Baker and Doreen Bonsu.

In 2012, Lester was one of only two Canadian student-athletes to be named to the Capitol One Academic All-America College Division first team. She also earned the 2012 Luke Fusco Academic Athletic Achievement Award, which recognizes the Laurier female athlete who best combines academic and athletic achievement.

In the summer, Lester works at the Laurier Girls Hockey Camp as a counselor and instructor. She has also worked as a supervisor with the Ontario Ranger Program at the Killarney Camp.

Laurier launched the Outstanding Women of Laurier award in 2006 to recognize female students who combine athletic and academic achievement with an active commitment to the community through volunteerism.

The event included an inspirational keynote address by Kitchener native Kelly VanderBeek, a three-time World Cup downhill skiing medalist and participant at the 2006 Winter Olympics. The event was hosted by Laurier alumna Daiene Vernile, anchor and producer for CTV Southwestern Ontario's *Provincewide*.

This year's event raised approximately \$18,000 to help support women's athletic initiatives, scholarships and the mentoring program at Laurier.

The event was made possible by leadership sponsors RBC Royal Bank, RBC Dominion Securities, M&M Meat Shops and Miller Thomson LLP. Contributing sponsors included the City of Cambridge, Ernst & Young LLP, the Waterloo Inn Conference Hotel, as well as a number of Wilfrid Laurier University departments. In-kind sponsors included Robin's Goldsmithing.