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## Laurier celebrates Global Innovation Exchange groundbreaking

WATERLOO – With ceremonial shovels in the ground and sights set on the future, provincial government and Wilfrid Laurier University officials marked the construction start of the Global Innovation Exchange (GIE) building on University Avenue at Laurier’s Waterloo campus. The May 17 groundbreaking event celebrated the \$103-million future home of Laurier’s School of Business and Economics and Department of Mathematics, which received a \$72.6-million investment from the Ontario government in 2011.

John Milloy, minister of Government Services; Max Blouw, Laurier president and vice-chancellor; Micheál Kelly, dean of Laurier’s School of Business and Economics; and Paul Jessop, dean of Laurier’s Faculty of Science broke ground following formal remarks on site.

“The Global Innovation Exchange is an exciting step forward in Wilfrid Laurier University’s service and contributions in the City of Waterloo,” said Blouw. “As the name implies, it will connect Laurier and our region increasingly to the global community, and it will be a tangible expression of the commitment of Laurier faculty, staff and students to global outreach, innovation and excellence.”

The provincial government’s investment in the GIE is the largest single capital investment in Laurier’s history and signals the province’s confidence in the calibre of teaching and research at Laurier.

“Ontario is putting students first by creating more opportunities at our colleges and universities so we can build the skilled and knowledgeable workforce needed for the global economy,” said Milloy. “Our government’s investment in the new Global Innovation Exchange will help Wilfrid Laurier’s mathematics, business and economics students succeed in the future, while creating good jobs today.”

Housing the School of Business and Economics and the Department of Mathematics in the GIE will allow Laurier to meet the growing demand for enrolment in these programs and expand the university’s ability to deliver integrated and engaged learning opportunities to students locally and globally. It will also enhance the synergies between Laurier’s Business and Applied and Financial Math programs and represent Laurier’s leadership role in business and technology.

The 215,000 s.f. building is designed to present a bold, forward-looking presence on University Avenue. The facility design boasts four storeys, a 1,000-seat auditorium, a four-storey atrium, lecture halls including a 300-seat circular lecture hall, and a Finance Research Lab with real-time trading facilities and Bloomberg terminals.

The GIE was designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects and David Thompson Architect. It is scheduled to open for classes in Fall 2015. For more information about the GIE, including artist’s renderings and floor plans, please visit [www.wlu.ca/GIE](http://www.wlu.ca/GIE).