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## Laurier professor awarded 2013 Polanyi Prize

WATERLOO – Laurier researcher Diane Gregory's investigation into low back pain has been recognized with a 2013 John Charles Polanyi Prize, one of the most prestigious academic awards in Canada. Gregory, an assistant professor in Laurier's Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, and Health Sciences, will receive her award at a ceremony later today at Massey College in Toronto.

"The Polanyi Prize promotes the exceptional research being performed by Ontario scholars in the early stages of their career," said Joan Norris, dean of Laurier's Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. "Laurier is tremendously proud of Dr. Gregory, and this award is a testament to her dedication, skill and the high quality of her innovative research program."

Gregory's research focuses on intervertebral discs as a source of low back pain. Her research sets out to determine the relationship between the mechanical and physiological environment of the spine and their relationship to injury.

"Eighty per cent of individuals will suffer from low back pain at some point in their lives, making it an extremely common ailment," said Gregory. "My research focuses on understanding and ultimately preventing low back injury and pain."

"Winning this award so early in my career makes this award even more exciting, and I hope that my research will help put Laurier on the map in the area of spine health."

The John Charles Polanyi Prize is valued at \$20,000, and is awarded annually to outstanding researchers in five different fields. This is the fourth time a Laurier researcher has won a Polanyi Prize. Past Laurier recipients include Joel Faflak (2001), Quincy Almeida (2007) and Jennifer Esmail (2013).

### About the Polanyi Prize

In honour of the achievement of John Charles Polanyi, recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in chemistry, the Government of Ontario established a fund to provide up to five prizes annually to outstanding researchers in the early stages of their career who are continuing to post-doctoral studies or have recently started a faculty appointment at an Ontario university. The prizes are available in the areas of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature and economic science.

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