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Waterloo family donates \$1M to help 'build Canada's best business school' at Laurier

WATERLOO – Larry Marsland's memories of Waterloo are defined by the factory whistle. These whistles regulated the work day in the rubber factories, furniture manufacturers, tanneries, meat packing plants, shirtmakers and button makers across the city. Over his family's long history in Waterloo, Marsland has witnessed the transformation of business from one of whistles and skilled manual jobs to one of knowledge and technology.

To support the education of the next generation of workers, Marsland and his family have made a \$1 million donation to Wilfrid Laurier University's School of Business & Economics.

"When my family first started our businesses in Waterloo, no one could have foreseen how much universities were going to contribute to our community," he said. "Laurier is providing the level of education and practical experience necessary to survive in today's new economy. We fully understand that connection between the university and our community. It has also benefitted us. That is why the Marslands are providing this gift."

Marsland's wife Margaret, son Brad and daughter Melanie are all sharing in the donation. The Marslands' gift will support the Laurier Startup Fund and the university's new Global Innovation Exchange building.

Laurier's Startup Fund exemplifies the university's approach to education that immerses students in real business challenges. The fund provides business students with real money to invest in start-up businesses. The Global Innovation Exchange (GIE), opening fall 2015, will be the new home of Laurier's School of Business & Economics and the Department of Mathematics. In recognition of the Marsland's generosity, a 150-seat lecture hall on the first floor of the GIE will be named in their honour.

"The members of the Marsland family are business leaders, community leaders, and generous philanthropists, who have, over the course of time, employed many people in our community. Their ability to adapt and thrive over four generations is a powerful lesson for our students," said Laurier President and Vice-chancellor, Max Blouw. "On behalf of all of us at Laurier, I want to share my profound thanks with the entire family."

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