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FEBRUARY 17, 2015 | 027-15

Laurier to host concussion education symposium featuring former Kitchener Ranger Ben Fanelli

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University's Kinesiology and Physical Education Department, along with the Laurier chapter of the Sports Legacy Institute Community Educators (SLICE), will present a free public concussion education symposium Feb. 28 from 10 a.m. to noon in the Senate and Board Chamber on Laurier's Waterloo campus.

Ben Fanelli, former Kitchener Rangers hockey player and creator of Head Strong: Fanelli 4 Brain Injury Awareness, will deliver the symposium keynote, "Playing the Odds."

Fanelli took a hit to the head in 2009 while playing for the Ontario Hockey League's Kitchener Rangers. He suffered severe head injuries including facial and skull fractures.

After recovering from his injuries, Fanelli returned to the Rangers to play the 2011-12 season, and began Head Strong to raise funds and awareness for the Brain injury association of Canada.

"Concussions are a serious issue that affect one's ability to perform well in all aspects of life," said Michael Cinelli, associate professor, Kinesiology & Physical Education. "Proper concussion management is the key to a successful recovery. The purpose of this symposium is to educate people on the effects of a concussion and how to best manage the injury so that one can return to life."

Symposium sessions include:

Proper Medical Management following a Concussion

Jennifer Childs, Laurier Athletic Therapist

Academic Supports and Services post Concussion

Linda Chamberlain, Disability Consultant, Laurier's Accessible Learning Centre

It's Not Just a Pain in the Head: Psychosocial Considerations in Concussion Management

Jill Tracey, associate professor, Laurier's Kinesiology and Physical Education department

The Impact of Concussion on Visual Function

Kristine Dalton, assistant professor, School of Optometry and Vision Science, University of Waterloo

Persistence of Balance Control Issues Following a Concussion

Michael Cinelli, associate professor, Laurier's Kinesiology and Physical Education department

SLICE is the community education component of the Sports Legacy Institute with chapters in North American Universities. SLICE offers a interactive concussion education programs that teach student-athletes in grades four to 12 about concussions. For event information or to RVSP, please email sliwaterloo@gmail.com.