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Laurier recognized for 2014 sustainability efforts

WATERLOO – Since creating its Sustainability Office in 2010, Wilfrid Laurier University has made significant strides in improving its environmental sustainability.

These efforts, outlined in Laurier's 2014 annual sustainability report, recently led to a Greater KW Chamber of Commerce Environmental Sustainability award, and a nomination by the local Chamber for the 2014 Ontario Chamber Business Achievement award for sustainability. The Greater K-W Chamber of Commerce commended the university for taking action "through self-initiated environmental practices and programs beyond legislative requirements."

The award recognized Laurier's numerous sustainability initiatives of the past year, which are outlined in detail in the Sustainability Office's annual [sustainability report for 2014](#). Some of the projects included:

- Using new design standards to install efficient systems, such as new LED light fixtures, which consume about half the energy of the existing fixtures, in the Science Building on Laurier's Waterloo campus as well as replacing 10 rooftop air-handling units with more efficient models.
- Expanding a central waste and recycling program with full-scale recycling and composting capabilities in several buildings on the Waterloo campus and introducing the program on the Brantford campus.
- Finalizing a campus-wide plastic water bottle phase-out plan and installing three new water refill stations.
- Redeveloping Mid-campus Drive on the Waterloo campus as a part of an overall transportation demand management plan to make the area safer and more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists and constructing a new secured bike storage area on the Brantford campus.

"Through ongoing assessment and stakeholder participation, the goal of sustainability at Laurier is to leverage key opportunities and strengths while considering existing and emerging trends," said **Claire Bennett**, manager of Laurier's Sustainability Office. "From this information, the past year's projects were undertaken to benefit the directives of Laurier sustainability as a whole. The focus of 2015 is to formalize these initiatives and services into flagship programs and strategies that contribute to further the overall goals and resiliency of the university."

In 2015, Laurier's Sustainability Office plans to open more outdoor gathering spaces, improve conservation programming in residences through local partnerships, and initiate transportation demand management projects such as electric vehicle charging and bike share stations, which will be informed by surveys on the [Waterloo](#) and [Brantford](#) campuses.