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## Laurier names School of Business & Economics after visionary technology entrepreneur Mike Lazaridis

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University is proud to announce the naming of its renowned School of Business & Economics in honour of visionary technology entrepreneur and philanthropist Mike Lazaridis.

The newly branded Lazaridis School of Business & Economics marks the start of an exciting new era for Laurier as the university prepares to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its business and economics school and open a \$103-million state-of-the-art facility in 2016.

Laurier is poised to become a global centre for research and teaching related to the leadership of technology companies, thanks to a \$20-million donation by Lazaridis and a contribution of \$15 million from the Ontario government, both announced earlier this year. The combined \$35 million will support the creation of the Lazaridis Institute for the Management of Technology Enterprises, which will be part of the Lazaridis School of Business & Economics.

Mike Lazaridis is internationally known for creating the groundbreaking BlackBerry smartphone, building BlackBerry into an \$18-billion global business, and reshaping the global mobile communications industry. He is currently a founding partner in Quantum Valley Investments, a Waterloo-based fund that focuses on the commercialization of breakthrough technologies in quantum information science and which seeks to support Waterloo Region's growing reputation as the "Quantum Valley."

"I can't imagine a better name for a school of business and economics than the one that we are adding today," said Micheál Kelly, dean of the Lazaridis School of Business & Economics. "It's a name that is recognized nationally and internationally; it's a name that is associated with vision, innovation and excellence."

The Lazaridis School of Business & Economics will be housed in a \$103-million landmark building that is nearing completion on University Avenue in Waterloo. Known to date as the Global Innovation Exchange, this remarkable facility will be renamed Lazaridis Hall in honour of the entrepreneur's generous contributions to Laurier, the global technology industry and the community of Waterloo Region.

"Mike Lazaridis is a true visionary who understands the transformative power of technology and of philanthropy," said Max Blouw, president and vice-chancellor of Wilfrid Laurier University. "His entrepreneurial spirit and passionate commitment to improve the competitiveness of Canada's technology industry epitomizes the Laurier ethos of *inspiring lives of leadership and purpose*. We are grateful for his support and for the opportunity to partner with him to enhance management education in this country."

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Lazaridis said he is pleased to work with Laurier and the province in developing a globally competitive technology industry that strengthens the regional, provincial and national economies.

"I chose to invest in Laurier because I thought that they were uniquely positioned to transform the way that technology business managers are trained and developed," said Lazaridis. "I believe the Lazaridis Institute for the Management of Technology Enterprises will help Laurier produce exceptional tech-savvy business managers and leaders that Canadian technology companies need to grow and succeed globally. I want to thank the Province of Ontario for their continuing vision and support for technology entrepreneurship in this province."

The Lazaridis School of Business & Economics is an innovative leader in immersive learning and leading-edge research. From their very first day on campus, students work in teams to tackle real-world challenges. Through Canada's largest business-degree co-op program, students are immersed in the environments they will experience after graduation. Laurier students learn to think critically and are well-prepared to adapt successfully to a global world of ever-growing complexity.

Laurier business and economics alumni can be found as presidents and CEOs of Canada's leading companies, including Bank of Montreal, Jaguar Land Rover Canada, PepsiCo Foods Canada, AIG Insurance, shop.ca, and many more. More than 2,000 SBE alumni have started their own companies. Located in the heart of the Waterloo Region technology hub, the university has a strong track record for developing successful tech-industry leaders. Hundreds of SBE alumni work at senior-level positions in technology companies in Waterloo Region, including many at the president and/or CEO level.

Wilfrid Laurier University is in the midst of a landmark fundraising campaign. The Building Canada's Best Business School campaign aims to raise \$55 million for the Lazaridis School of Business & Economics, representing phase one of a pan-university \$125-million campaign. The business school portion of the campaign is raising funds to support student scholarships, help retain and recruit top faculty, complete the new \$103-million Lazaridis Hall, and strengthen the Lazaridis School's unique, pioneering programming. In addition to the Lazaridis gift, other donations have come from TD Bank Group, BBA alumnus Bill Webb and Agnes Wong, BBA alumnus Michael and Hennie Stork, the McGrath family, the Marsland family, Bank of Montreal, and Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada.

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