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Laurier's Gendered Violence Task Force welcomes faculty colleagues

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University's Gendered Violence Task Force welcomed three faculty colleagues this summer, demonstrating Laurier's continued commitment to address gendered violence on our campuses and create a safe and supportive environment.

The appointment of three faculty colleagues is part of the ongoing development of Laurier's [Gendered Violence Task Force](#), an organizing body that consists of over 150 student, staff, faculty and community volunteers that oversees and supports the numerous gendered-violence prevention, awareness and survivor support initiatives being undertaken at Laurier.

The faculty colleagues will work closely with senior campus leaders, forming a leadership group that will work in collaboration with the Gendered Violence Task Force and will focus their efforts on strategic planning and decision making aimed at addressing the root causes of gendered violence and sustaining efforts to address gendered violence at Laurier.

"The task force developed out of calls from students asking the university to take gendered violence on campus more seriously," said **Lynn Kane**, coordinator of Laurier's Gendered Violence Task Force. "It is heartening to see the commitment and engagement from senior leadership and faculty in response to those calls."

The addition of three faculty colleagues to the task force will bring a diversity of expertise to Laurier's senior administration on the topic of gendered violence.

The faculty colleagues are:

Rebecca Godderis, associate professor in Community Health & Society, Culture and Environment. Godderis has worked in the area of gender, sexuality and health for over a decade. Since 2009, she has been engaged in violence prevention work related to gender and sexuality on the Laurier Brantford campus and in the Brantford community.

Ginette Lafrenière, associate professor in the Faculty of Social Work, director of the Social Innovation Research Group and director of the Manulife Centre for Community Health Research. Lafrenière has worked on issues related to intimate partner violence, gendered violence and sexual violence with vulnerable populations since 2006. Lafrenière, in tandem with the Sexual Assault Support Centre and her research team, spearheaded [The Change Project](#).

Michael Woodford, associate professor in the Faculty of Social Work. Woodford brings expertise in understanding the nature and effects of discrimination on LGBTQ students and bystanders. His work addresses attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals as well as LGBTQ students' experiences and wellbeing. Woodford's research will also help shape the development of a male allies program to address gendered violence on Laurier's campuses.

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Gendered Violence Task Force faculty colleagues /Page 2

The leadership group, in addition to the faculty colleagues, consists of **David McMurray** (chair), vice-president: Student Affairs; **Pamela Cant**, assistant vice-president: Human Resources; **Laura Mae Lindo**, director of Laurier's Diversity & Equity Office; **Lynn Kane**, coordinator of Laurier's Gendered Violence Task Force; and **Deborah MacLatchy**, vice-president: academic and provost.

The task force's mandate, in part, is to implement the recommendations of [The Change Project](#), a research project designed to explore existing efforts to address gendered violence against students on campus, as well as the gaps, barriers and challenges that need to be addressed.

"I'm proud that the Change Project was in many ways a catalyst for the work now being carried out to address – in an authentic way – the issue of gendered violence on our campuses," said Lafrenière. "It is both an honour and a privilege for me to continue working on this dossier with students, faculty and staff."

What is gendered violence?

Gendered violence refers to any action or attitude that establishes, exploits, and reinforces gender inequalities resulting in physical, sexual, emotional, economic or mental harm. Gendered violence includes sexism, gender discrimination, gender harassment, biphobia, transphobia, homophobia and heterosexism, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence.

[Find more information about support services on and off campus.](#)

For members of the Laurier community who want to get involved with the Gendered Violence Task Force, contact lkane@wlu.ca.

– 30 –