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Laurier to host physics education conference exploring diversity in STEM fields

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University will host the 38th annual **Ontario Association of Physics Teachers (OAPT) Conference May 12-14** at its Waterloo campus. The conference will include lab tours, active learning workshops and an exploration of diversity in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and physics education.

This year's theme, "**Capturing Diverse Perspectives in STEM**," will focus on innovative ways to teach STEM topics to a diverse audience, integrating technology and social media in STEM education, exploring STEM careers in the future and how to achieve equal representation in STEM fields.

"At Laurier we are committed to creating a learning environment in which our diverse student body can succeed," said **Shohini Ghose**, Laurier Physics professor, director of Laurier's Centre for Women in Science (WinS) and conference organizer. "We are very excited to partner with OAPT to host this important annual gathering of educators in order to build connections, exchange ideas and enhance our collective efforts to provide a strong physics foundation for all of our students."

WinS will present a unique interactive photo exhibit to open the conference. Inspired by women's real-world confrontations, this event focuses on experiences of female scientists and the consequences of confronting sexism in STEM.

Laurier faculty will also host several workshops and sessions:

- **Loophole-free Quantum Spookiness:** Ghose will explore the EPR paradox (developed by Albert Einstein, Boris Podolsky and Nathan Rosen) and the implications for quantum computing and secure communications.
- **Learning by Doing: Optics Lab Tour:** Li Wei, professor in Laurier's Department of Physics and Computer Science, will discuss optics and photonics demos and labs.
- **Physics in Technology:** Terry Sturtevant, lab coordinator and instructor in Laurier's Department of Physics and Computer Science, will demonstrate and discuss physics in technology, including computer hardware Arduinos and Raspberry Pi, sensors and components that can be used in the classroom.
- **Survivor - University Style: What's it Really Like?:** Laurier physics students will share their experiences in university as well as their motivations, dreams, goals and challenges on a Q&A panel.

The Ontario Association of Physics Teachers is composed of physics educators from secondary and post-secondary institutions in Ontario. The mission of OAPT is to advance the teaching of physics in schools, colleges and universities, and to promote professionalism and collegiality amongst its members.

The conference will be held on Laurier's Waterloo campus in the Science Building May 12-14. All sessions are open to the media. To register, visit oapt.ca.