

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Street light banners inspired by local Nobel Prize winner installed on Carden Street

Downtown Guelph, May 2019 - The Downtown Guelph Business Association (DGBA), with a funding partnership from the City of Guelph, is happy to announce its newest street light banner project: Canadian Women in STEM. This project recognizes, honours, and in many cases celebrates Women Scientists in Canada and their contributions to the world of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). From now until October, pedestrians can walk along Carden Street and learn about female scientists and the range of their contributions on a local, national, and global scale.

The project was inspired by local physicist and Nobel Prize Winner Donna Strickland. As a graduate of GCVI, and now a professor at the University of Waterloo, she offers inspiration to girls and young women in Guelph to take on the many modern challenges presented by entering a career in STEM - careers that historically have been less represented by women. With fifteen light standards to hang banners on, we wanted to mark the progress and changes that have been made in Guelph and in Canada by highlighting the massive, and often unacknowledged, contributions made by female scientists and scientists-to-be.

With co-curation from local biology Professor Fiona Rawle (U. of T. Mississauga) and local historian Dr Tony Berto, the project became an interesting investigation. When it came to choose 30 representatives for the banners, there were numerous choices to be made.

History also made things a little more difficult. The project aims to show how, since Canada began, women have been adding to our knowledge and ways of life. But finding traces of one's work, one hundred years after the fact, is not always easy. Work which was done by women in traditionally male fields can be even more obscured. Some accomplishments, when considered in light of the operational sexism that so often thwarted or downplayed their work, are all the more exceptional. In contrast to these, the project acknowledges a number of women – one still in high school - who are making remarkable contributions even as we go to press. Further, we also wanted to honour the potential of women that were unable to contribute to the sciences due to bigotry and hostility; thus, this project also reflects on the female engineering students from Ecole Polytechnique and the careers and contributions they could have made to our world.

For more information on this project please contact:

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