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Closure of Physics Programs at Laurentian University

The Canadian Institute of Nuclear Physics (CINP) and the Institute of Particle Physics (IPP) strongly condemn the closure of the physics undergraduate and graduate programs at Laurentian University, which was announced earlier this week. This scale of destruction of a Canadian university has never been seen before and, if carried out, will greatly damage the reputation of the Province of Ontario, as well as Canada.

Laurentian University is a key partner of the SNOLAB underground physics laboratory, and the members of the Department of Physics have contributed greatly to the important internationally renowned experiments being performed there. Not only have the Laurentian Physics Department contributions been vital to the 2015 Nobel Prize in Physics being awarded to SNO Director Arthur McDonald, but the Physics Faculty members continue to lead a new generation of experiments probing the nature of the neutrino and the identity of dark matter – two of the most pressing questions in science today. This world-leading research has given Laurentian University physics students unique opportunities that prepare them well for their future careers. It also brings students based in Northern Ontario vital international experience and exposure as they collaborate with researchers coming to Sudbury from around the globe. The Laurentian University Department of Physics has clearly played a critical role in helping place Ontario on the map of international cutting-edge research.

Moreover, Laurentian University's impressive history of supporting English, French and Indigenous communities has not only benefited the people of Northern Ontario by enabling their young people to study locally, but in bringing this diverse population into our field, it has benefited physics research across Ontario, and indeed across Canada.

This disastrous and short-sighted decision must be reversed and we call on the Government of Ontario to take action and rectify the situation immediately and minimize the damage to Ontario's reputation it has created.

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