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MEDIA RELEASE

SFU President's Dream Colloquium examines women in tech

September 11, 2017

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There is a marked lack of women in the tech industry, yet diversity and inclusion are critical to corporate success. Simon Fraser University seeks to explore strategies for advancing gender diversity in the tech sector with this fall's President's Dream Colloquium—Women in Technology: Attracting, Retaining and Promoting Diverse Talent. The seven-part, public lecture series, which kicks off on Sept. 13 aims to educate participants on challenges and solutions that have been identified to improve gender diversity in recruitment, retention and promotion to leadership roles.

"There is a crucial need to achieve gender equality in the tech sector, especially at a time when it is growing faster than ever," says colloquium organizer Lesley Shannon, an SFU engineering science professor. She holds the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Chair for Women in Science and Engineering for the B.C. and Yukon region.

"We hope the colloquium will help people engage in a multidisciplinary dialogue about the value of creating more space in technology for women and other under-represented groups."

The speaker series is free to attend with registration except for one lecture that requires a ticket purchase. Lectures will be webcast live and available on the President's Dream Colloquium website, www.sfu.ca/womenintech.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Women and other under-represented groups' increasing participation in technology is becoming a challenging societal problem as it changes our culture and how we see gender roles.
- Statistics reveal that less than 25 per cent of those working in the science, technology, engineering and math sectors (STEM) are women, and that they earn seven-and-a-half per cent less than men.
- Statistics also reveal that Canada lags behind other countries when it comes to women in science, only 36 per cent of science PhDs in Canada are earned by women, compared with 49 per cent in the United Kingdom and 46 per cent in the United States.

FAST FACTS:

The President's Dream Colloquium schedule is as follows:

Sept. 13: SFU KEY presents: We the Data

Juliette Powell, founder, Turing AI and WeTheData.org, author of *33 Million People in the Room*

Sept. 14: Diversity 101: The Case for Diversity in Technology

Maria Klawe, president, Harvey Mudd College

Sept. 21: Women in Media and Advertising

Shari Graydon, catalyst, Informed Opinions

Oct. 12: Social Psychological Phenomena

Steven Spencer, the Robert K. and Dale J. Weary Chair in Social Psychology, Ohio State University

Oct. 26: Gender and Bias in Algorithmic Design

Cathy O'Neil, author, *Weapons of Math Destruction*

Nov 9: Gendered Language

Danielle Gaucher, associate professor, Department of Psychology, University of Winnipeg

Nov. 23: Women as Leaders and Innovators

Jo Miller, founder, Be Leaderly

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 145,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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