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Monday, January 24, 2005



# CALGARY SINCE 1884 HERALD

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## U of C takes quantum leap

**Gwendolyn Richards**  
Calgary Herald

Sunday, January 23, 2005

A perfectly secure computer network may still be the dream of scientists, but the University of Calgary moved one step closer to that reality Friday with the launch of its Institute for Quantum Information Science.

The institute is the second to be created in Canada and among only a handful around the world.

Director Barry Sanders said quantum information science could contribute to the development of new materials, devices or methods of encryption.

"We're trying to get total security through the laws of physics," he said. "But, ultimately, we don't know what the potential is."

Quantum information science is a collaborative area of research that will pull together people from other areas of study, including mathematics, computer science and physics.

"We can't operate as loners," Sanders said.

While quantum information science could lead to an impervious computer network, 10 to 20 years from now the same technology could be used to crack existing encryption, rendering websites' firewalls for such secretive institutions as banks and the military useless.

"A quantum computer would be a nuclear bomb on the Internet," said Sanders.

General Dynamics Canada chief technology officer Grego Luoma, on hand for the launch, said people don't recognize how vulnerable technology is, a major concern considering how much personal and medical information is kept electronically.

"Solutions that come out of Calgary will have an impact on the world," he said.

About 50 people, from students to scientists, will be a part of the institute, which is expected to have a yearly budget of \$3.5 million.

Part of that funding will come from iCORE, an organization established by the provincial government to promote world-class research in the field of computer technology at Alberta universities.

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