



363 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON K8P 1B3
Tel: 613.962.9291 Toll Free: 1.800.267.0570
www.hastingscas.org



160 Dundas Street West Belleville, ON K8P 1A6
Tel: 613.968.5726 Fax: 613.968.9651
www.albertcollege.ca

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Craig Kielburger Makes his Mark on Belleville

Belleville, ON - As part of a year-long celebration marking Hastings CAS 100th birthday and Albert College's 150th anniversary, *New York Times* best-selling author and founder of *Free The Children*, Craig Kielburger spoke to adults and youth alike on Tuesday at Albert College.

Both Albert College and Hastings CAS have been dedicated to educating and serving the needs of children for a century and who better to speak about the importance of these needs than Craig Kielburger. Albert College Head of School, Keith Stansfield, says, "We are delighted to be co-hosting Craig Kielburger with Hastings CAS and are honoured that Craig could join us in our anniversary celebrations." Craig spoke to an audience of 300 about Achieving True Well-Being through Social Involvement, a topic that reflects both Albert's 150th school-year theme of preparing global citizens for the future and underscores the 100 years of caring for children provided by Hastings CAS.

Albert College students have been learning about Craig and his work and have been anticipating his visit since September. Albert College has been fundraising to build a school through Craig's Brick By Brick Campaign and presented a cheque for \$6,600 to Craig and *Free the Children*. Albert College's donation will build a new school in a developing country from the ground up.

In April of 1995 when Craig was only 12-years-old he was looking through his local newspaper in search of the comics section when he came across an article about the murder of a child labourer-turned-child rights activist in Pakistan. Outraged, he began seeking ways to carry on this work for "voiceless" youth. Craig shared this story and many others on Tuesday night as he spoke to a sold-out crowd of 300. Craig travels around the world speaking to more than 350,000 people every year. His message empowers people through leadership education, providing them with the inspiration and tools necessary to effect positive social change.

Craig Kielburger announced to his audience on Tuesday night that he and Oprah have teamed up to create a new program called O Ambassadors which will be presented to the world in the next two weeks on the Oprah show. *Free The Children* is an organization funded and driven by the energy of young leaders and adult supporters and has more than one million youth involved in innovative education and development programs in 45

countries. The organization has received the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child (also known as the Children's Nobel Prize), the Human Rights Award from the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, and has formed successful partnerships with leading school boards and Oprah's Angel Network. Craig will also be accepting The Order of Canada this Friday in Ottawa.

According to organizers from both Albert College and Hastings CAS the event was an overwhelming success. Attendees included staff and students from Albert College, Hastings CAS staff, foster parents, students from Sir James Whitney, children in care, teachers and other community members. Thank you to the event sponsors: Quinte Children's Foundation, Albert College Parent Guild, Bioniche, Supportive Soles, The Good Water Company, MH Ad and the Ramada Inn.

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For more information please contact:

Melanie Jordan,
Communications and Development Coordinator, Albert College
613-968-5726 ext. 2254
mjordan@albertc.on.ca