

# KELLS ACADEMY

2016 Spring Newsletter



De Maisonneuve West

## KELLS EXPANSION PLANS

### Our Awesome New Acquisition

Last fall an interesting opportunity presented itself to Kells. The commercial building beside our elementary school came up for sale. We were not in the market for a building but when presented with an option to buy we realized that it offered us the possibility to increase our student population. Currently we are at capacity at the high school and there is very little room for expansion in elementary.

At a meeting with the administration and later with the teaching staff many ideas were brought forward. There was a unanimous agreement that creating a junior high school for grade 7 and 8 would be a good option. The faculty made the case but this would make an ideal transition to high school for elementary students permitting us to offer a schedule and a flex program tailor made to these grade levels.

The second suggestion was that we create a residence for international students on the second floor. When we brought the plans to our architect he was very excited about the project and suggested that we build it in 2 phases. As the diagram on page 2 shows phase 1 would create the junior school on the ground floor and the residence on the upper floor. Since we now have got additional land as well as buildings he suggested that the plan for phase 2 would be to build a large gymnasium.

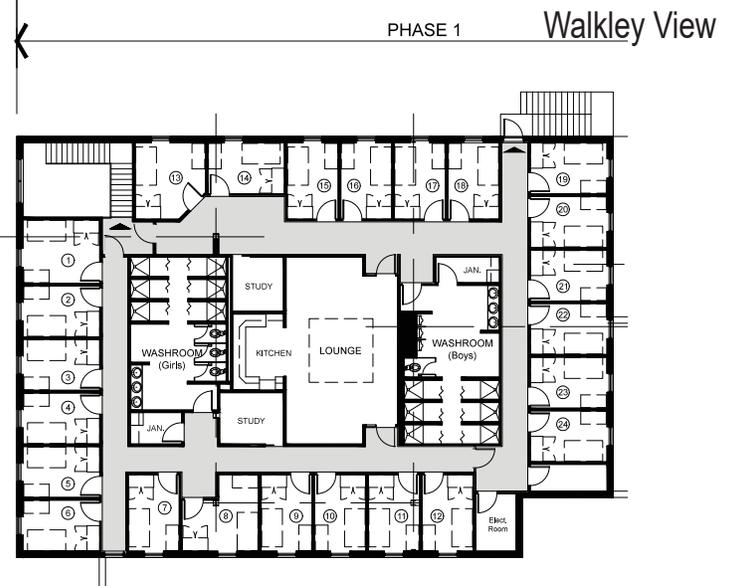
We have submitted our plans to the city of Montreal for a permit and will not be able to set a date for opening until we have heard from them. As soon as the permits have been changed we plan to invite the Kells community to an open house. In the meantime if you have any questions or suggestions to make we would be more than happy to hear from you.

**Irene Woods**  
Director



## Kells Future International Residence

Kells' residence will offer the great convenience of being on-campus for elementary students and minutes away for our high school. Living at the International Residence will connect students with a community where they can make lasting friendships, experience the city, and develop a range of academic and life skills. Our residence will not be just a convenient place to live, but an important part of the overall Kells experience. This will be your home away from home, and we plan to offer tutorial support and ESL. Social events on weekends will include sports, arts, outings and trips to local events



# Kells Proudly Presents New Award-Winning Principal

Mr. Joseph Urovitch comes to us with a great deal of experience and enthusiasm. He has enjoyed a distinguished career with the New Frontiers School Board from 1988 to 2010. In 2004, he received the AAESQ Award of Merit and in 2006 was awarded as one of Canada's outstanding principals from the Canadian Association of Principals. His responsibilities included being Assistant Director General and Director of Educational Services, Principal of Howard S. Billings, Mary Gardener Elementary School, Centennial Park and Vice Principal of Chateaugay Valley Regional High School. He was also the social studies Department Head and taught for several years at the elementary and high school levels for both the Lester B. Pearson School Board and New Frontiers School Board. In 2011, he became Director of the Association of Jewish Day Schools and most recently, a consultant for LEARN Quebec.

Mr. Urovitch has clearly indicated his passion and dedication to ensure an exciting and dynamic leadership here at Kells Academy. He is committed to all aspects of student achievement and looks forward to working collaboratively in implementing upcoming school goals while drawing from his vast experience and varied skillset. Mr. Urovitch is excited to join the Kells community and looks forward to building relationships and being part of the success that Kells has embodied for the past 38 years.

Finally, we congratulate Mr. Urovitch and we look forward to his arrival in August!

**Irene Woods**  
Director



# Robotics

## Redesigning Knowledge

Kells Technology Specialist, Alireza Kamali taught the first (but definitely not the last) Robotics class. Alireza's overall objective was to inspire students to think big. He says, "If students have a little bit of technology knowledge they can do big things, so if they learn more and have a greater knowledge, they can do greater things!"

With this in mind, students underwent a thorough interview process designed to ensure Robotics was the right fit for the students. Some of the topics included in the course were: Basic Logic of Programming, Lego Programming Language, Car Mechanics, Gear Structure, Creating Smart Cars, and Designing A Remote Control for a Custom-Built Robot.

Alireza shares, "Students were very excited and hard-working. They were thirsty for new objectives, challenges, and projects.



They started to realize whether they are more interested in the mechanical aspect of the course or the programming part of it, and I adjusted the groups so they were able to do what they liked most.

The students were fast learners and as soon as they understood the concept, they taught each other."

For example, Alireza shares that there are some cars designed to automatically brake when they get too close to an object. This concept was taught in the Robotics class and students witnessed how simple this actually is. When you have the knowledge, you have tools to act. "Perhaps one day, they too can invent something."

**Tina Mancini**

Alireza looks forward to the next Flex Robotics Course. He envisions students working as a team and building one big robot. The students, as well as Alireza, found the experience to be highly stimulating! What's to come? Alireza hopes to take the students to Robotics Competitions!





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## Future Science Leaders Right Here At Home

### Kells Takes Regional Science Fair By Storm!

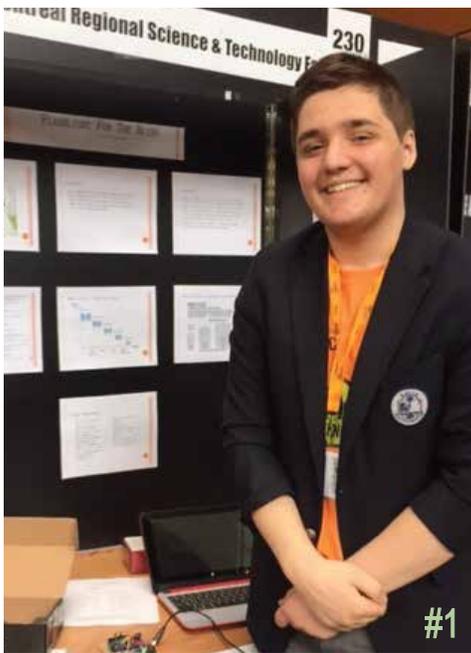
This has been another successful year for Kells scientists. Kells students have proven once again that science is one of their passions from class presentations to the school-wide Science Fair, and the Montreal Regional Science and Technology Fair. Outstanding achievements in the field of science is at the top of Kells students' priorities!

The exciting scientific ride started in September when all Kells students started working on their Science Fair projects. A multitude of ideas involving design and experimentation, were translated into interesting projects ranging from building holograms and identifying the best material for sound proofing a room, to

designing a flash light for the visually impaired and making magnetic paint, to crossing the electromagnetic spectrum and studying the factors that result in tornado forming and severity. Since everyone participates, the experience is an integral way that the students engage within the school community.

The best projects in each grade level were presented in the January local Science Fair. Trophies and acknowledgement certificates were distributed to the winners as well as the entire participating group. From there, six projects were selected to go to the 34th Hydro-Quebec Montreal Regional Science and Technology Fair held at Concordia University.

**Raffaat Ghanem**  
Science Department Head



The Regional Fair was an even greater successful event, providing Kells students the opportunity to showcase their excellent projects to the larger academic community.

Our students had a wonderful time participating in this prestigious event, and represented us proudly by being the recipients of several prizes:

**#1 Jason Papagiannis** - Flashlight for the Blind -Great Distinction and McGill University Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering Award

**#2 Justin Haigh** - Rock Out, Block Out - Great Distinction

**#3 Samantha Alessi** - Fog Tornado - Great Distinction

**#4 Zhi Lin** - Hologram Pyramid - Distinction

**Thi Cam Sa Pham** - Hologram Pyramid -Distinction

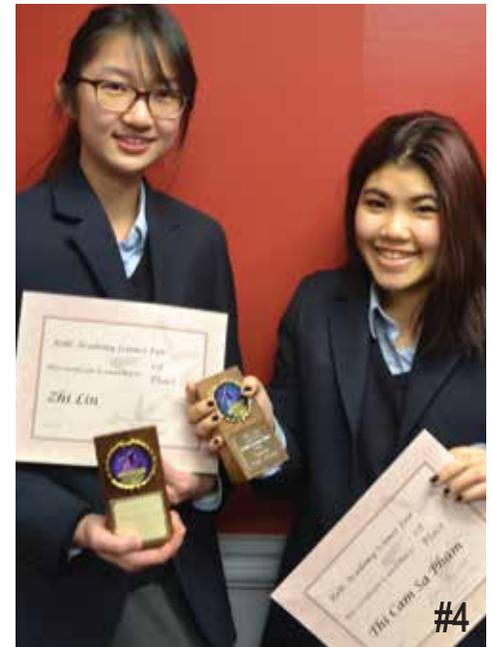
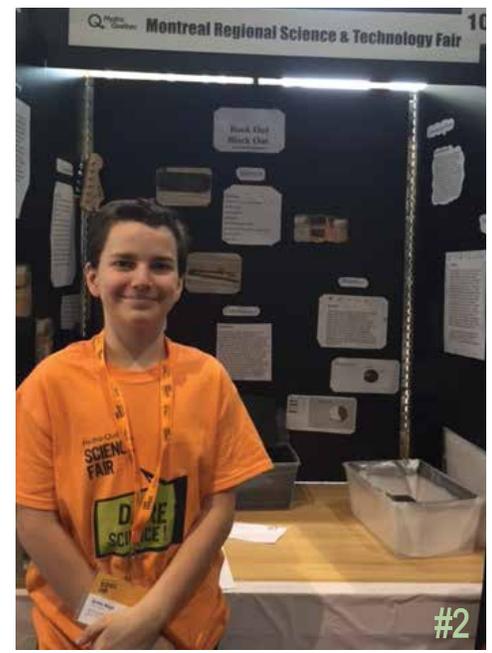
**#5 Haya El Madhoun** - Cool for the Summer- Distinction

**Layan Ziad** - Cool for the Summer - Distinction

**#6 Benjamin Fisher** - Magnetic Paint - Honourable Mention

Congratulations to all participants for their outstanding performance!

Warm your engines to start a new science fair ride next September



# Kells Goes Green

## Planting 101

Last fall, our director, Ms. Woods had the opportunity to hear a talk by Steven Ritz, a teacher in the South Bronx who spoke about how he and his students designed and implemented gardens and green spaces in their neighbourhood. She came back inspired and convinced that Kells, with the collaboration of the NDG community, could do the same thing on a slightly smaller scale. Fast forward to March and the first seeds have already been planted in Mr. Jankowski's junior Science Class. Students are enthusiastic about learning how to grow and cultivate various plant species, and in doing so, they are making the first contribution to the beautification and "greening" of their school. With the arrival of warmer weather, the next step is to move outside and plant a garden! Our plan is to transform the slope at the corner of De Maisonneuve and Park Row West, right across from the school into a community vegetable garden. Proceedings with the City of Montreal have already begun and once we have the green light we will form a committee to plan the details of the planting and cultivation of this space. Our hope is that students and staff at Kells will work alongside our neighbours in order to maintain a community vegetable garden that will undoubtedly benefit our local community; our goal is to grow enough fresh produce to be able to donate to the NDG Food Depot!

**Sarah Fraser**



# NEW FITNESS ROOM AT KELLS

## Encouraging good health for all!

Jamie Bolduc, Kells' Physical Education Teacher

Last spring, a group of grade 9 students asked if it would be possible to start a weight training club during lunch or after school. Thanks to this request, we were inspired to open a Fitness Room at Kells, encouraging good health for all.

We decided we would create a room at Kells dedicated to fitness training that would be available year-round to students and teachers alike. With the addition of several cardio machines, a punching bag, a multi-functional machine, free weights and much more, the weight room is quickly becoming an important part of the Kells Athletics program and serves several purposes:

- Access to this room provides more physical activity time to students who wish to lead a healthy lifestyle, but aren't necessarily interested in competitive sports.
- Fitness and weight training is being integrated into the Kells Physical Education curriculum for smaller classes at the senior level.



- Access to this room means improved training for our growing athletics program. Athletes can become stronger, faster and better able to compete with other schools.
- The facilities can be used for students who need to release tension or anxiety, helping them to become more focused and centered in and out of class time.

A healthy body means a healthy mind so we encourage all students to come give the weight room a try!



# Working with Vanier College

## ESL Support

Kells is proud of our large international student body. With students coming from all over the world, students are introduced to different cultures and philosophies of life making the Kells experience truly a unique one.

Furthermore, our international students are able to experience a Quebec-Canadian experience. As a means to help them integrate and quickly develop or strengthen their English skills,

Kells is working collaboratively with Vanier College and preparing students for college.

Students attend sessions during flex and work on improving different skills: writing, reading and comprehension, listening and understanding, and conversational skills.

The more the students' learning is geared toward their specific needs, the more fun their experience becomes!



## Grade Nines Visit the Capital

On a rainy November day, the grade nine students, Ms. Sikias, Ms. Blain and Ms. Rubenovitch filed into a big yellow bus for the Annual French department's overnight trip to Ottawa. The first stop was the MINT museum, always an interesting place to visit, where students got to learn about collector coins and saw first handedly how such coins are made. It was interesting to see all the international currency made at our own MINT museum as well as the unique Olympic medals they have created. After a quick lunch, we headed back to the bus for a guided tour of Ottawa. The tour guide was very informative and taught us all about the different districts of Ottawa; he even showed us where our newly elected Prime Minister, Hon. Justin Trudeau, is

living. As our cool winter days were quickly approaching, I think everyone was delighted to have this tour inside the comfort and warmth of the bus!

Our next stop was Ottawa's oldest prison for the Ghost and Gallows tour (a prison that has now been turned into a Hostel). The grey and rainy weather made for perfect ambiance as we were guided through this eerie and ancient establishment. We were told about the many spooky and inexplicable occurrences that happened in this old building as we made our way through the old prison cells. I think we all agreed that although it was no longer a prison and was currently being used as a hostel, we were all very content to be staying at the Travel Lodge instead.

Finally, we were off to the Lonestar Café

where the students enjoyed a feast of fajitas. After dinner, we returned to the hotel and the students took advantage of the indoor water park and enjoyed some down time before bed.

Our last stop the next day, before making our way back home, was The Canadian Museum of History. Here the students had an opportunity to explore the many exhibitions on ancient civilizations and watched an IMAX production entitled Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure. The movie told the amazing story of an explorer who set off to discover Antarctica and did everything in his power and beyond to survive the cold and to lead his team back to safety. With his courageous expedition fresh in our minds, we were finally ready to head back to our own land of Montreal!

**Ms. Kimberly Blain, Kells French Teacher**



# Learning Spanish in Costa Rica!

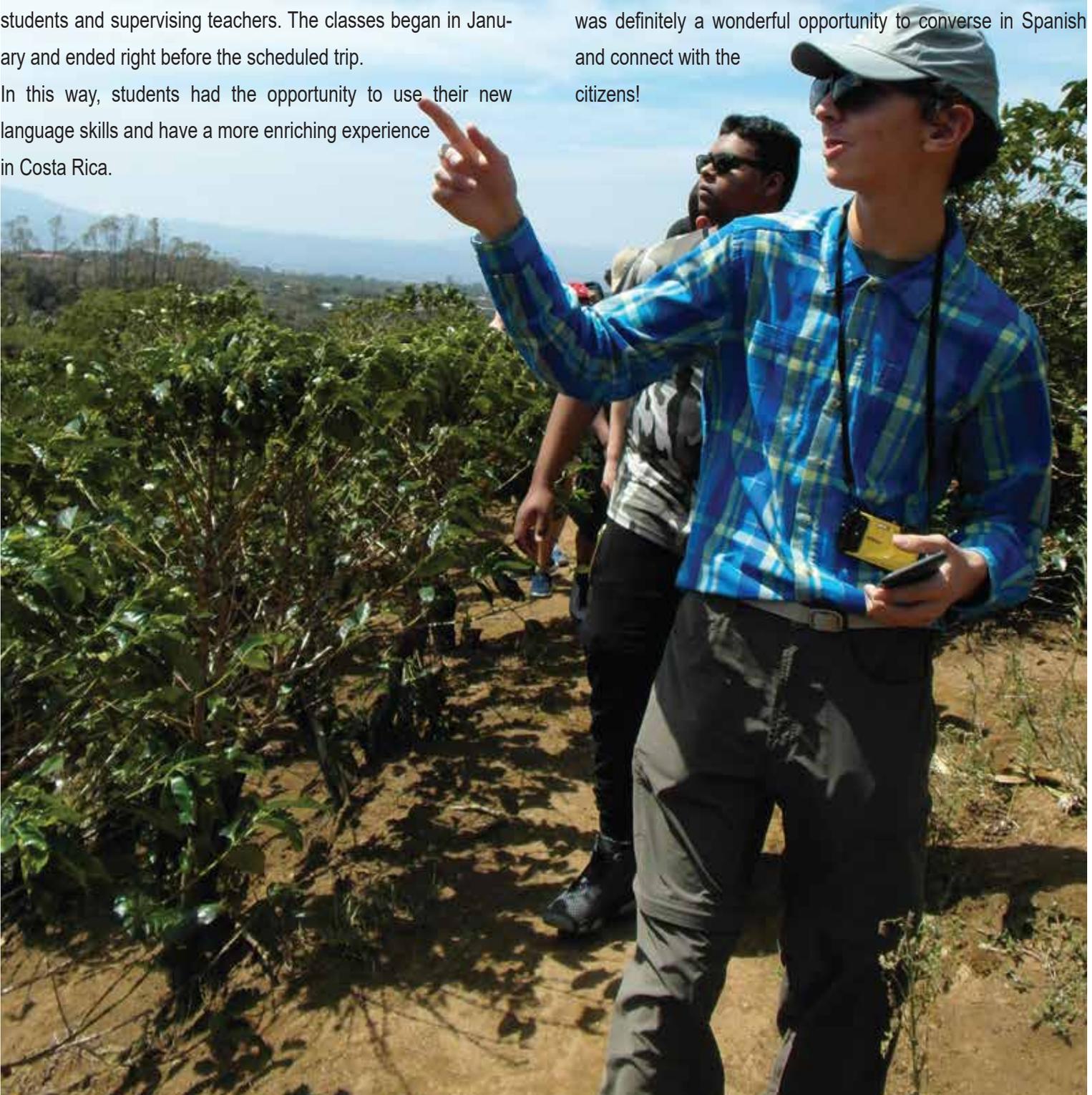
At the end of February, a group of 21 students from grades 10 & 11, along with Mr. Jankowski and Ms. Blain, travelled to beautiful Costa Rica. "Costa Rica is one of the greatest nature reserves in the world and perfect for an educational trip!" says Mr. Jankowski.

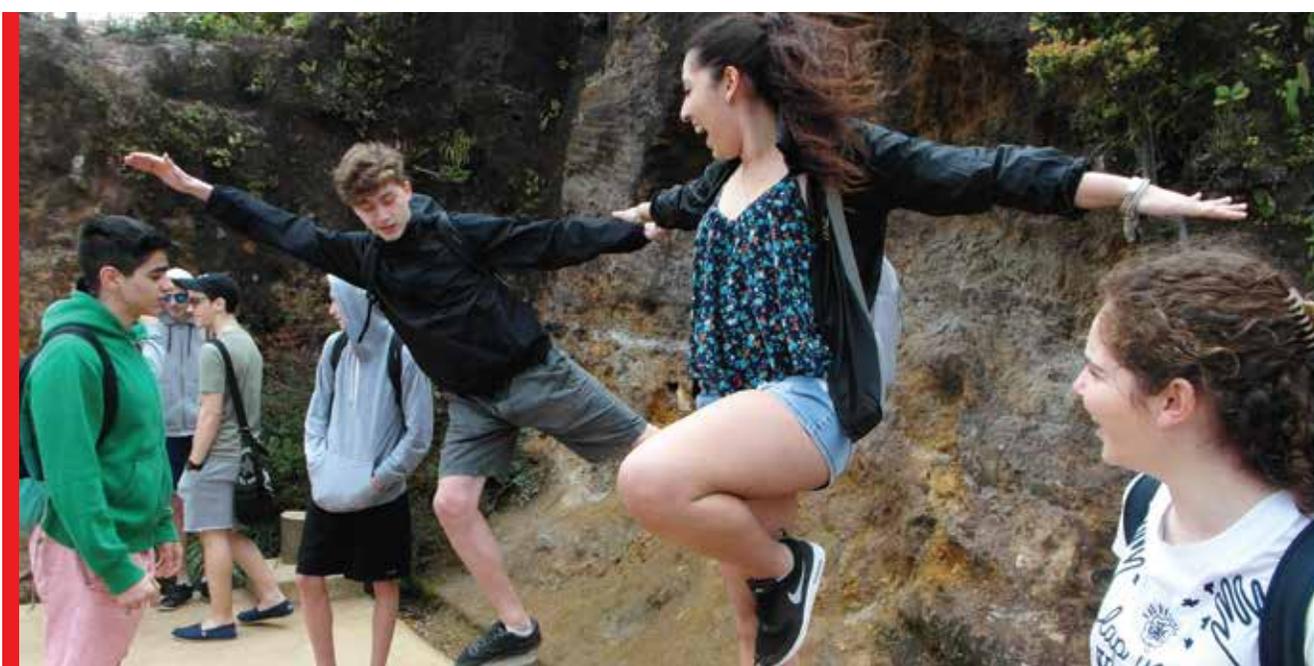
In order to encourage students to have a true cultural experience, Kells provided after school Spanish classes to Costa Rica students and supervising teachers. The classes began in January and ended right before the scheduled trip.

In this way, students had the opportunity to use their new language skills and have a more enriching experience in Costa Rica.

Students took advantage of this opportunity and enjoyed the classes very much, shares Mr. Jankowski. He mentions Alex Mahutte who made tremendous progress with the language, and also proclaims, "Ms. Blain loved the Spanish classes!"

Some attractions in Costa Rica include the Poas Volcano National Park, La Paz Waterfall, and La Fortuna Waterfall. Students also enjoyed a cooking class and had a local school visit; this was definitely a wonderful opportunity to converse in Spanish and connect with the citizens!





# It Takes GUTZ

## Bartimaeus' Personal Development Programs for Juniors

A very special program took place in December with the grade 7 & 8 girls, GUTZ. Bartimaeus acknowledges that “It takes GUTZ to be successful in the world today.” This program is designed to help students find out who they really are and to love what they find.

Over a four day period, the girls got to know each other better, learned to accept others, embraced new things and challenged themselves. The animators, Melinda Atkinson and myself, Dana Barrington, created a safe and understanding environment. Students understood that whatever was said or done was to stay within in the confines of the group.

Some of the girls felt at ease opening up to the group immediately, but others took longer to feel comfortable sharing who they are in front of everyone.

A series of activities were facilitated over the four days, which included:

- Change – to get to know one another.
- Who are you? – it encouraged the girls to realize things about themselves which they had never thought of previously.
- Supportive table – the girls discovered that most of their negative thoughts were unrealistic ideas that they repeat to themselves on a daily basis, regardless of the validity.

· Vision board – Such a fun activity sharing things they felt represented their true nature.

· Accomplishments – The girls responded very well to this activity – they were exhilarated and happy to be celebrated.

Throughout the activities, not only did we get to see the students have so much fun, but we got to see them evolve. Everyone treated each other with respect and took the activities seriously. The girls felt this was a very positive experience and overall, a very rewarding experience for all of us!

### P.A.S.S.

While the girls experienced the GUTZ Program, the boys were participating in another social learning program, “Preparing for Adolescence and Social Success” (P.A.S.S.). Another program offered by Bartimaeus. The boys were led through a number of activities, games, and also role plays, to learn about themselves. As they explored topics such as leadership, teamwork, problem solving, they discovered “How to work together and work with our differences.

**Dana Barrington, Animator**



# Raising Digital Citizens

Dr. Alissa Sklar joined us at Kells Academy in order to share her expertise on Digital Citizenship. Parents, students, teachers, and members of the Kells community attended the event to learn more about this emerging issue.

The possibilities for technological knowledge has become endless! Naturally, as technology is now a fundamental learning tool in schools, students have access to a wide variety of information online. While this is valuable, it is still imperative to address online safety, online responsibility and to raise digital citizens. Through an interactive approach, Dr. Sklar asked the Kells community some thought-provoking questions and encouraged open dialogue with both parents and children.

Here are some highlights of the conversations that ensued:

Social media also creates social pressures! Dr. Sklar's remarks, "The more we feel connected online, the more disconnected we normally are in our lives offline." There is the concept of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), which causes people - especially teenagers - to feel the pressure of constantly making themselves look good online, as well as feeling as if one needs to be continuously "connected" by posting selfies on social media.

Posting Responsibilities! After demonstrating the many reasons to post safely and responsibly, Dr. Sklar shares, "An easy rule of thumb for students before posting, ask



yourself: would I show my mom?"

Privacy? Online? Definitely! Dr. Sklar discussed how to create and adapt guidelines for safe internet use with parents. She emphasized the importance for modelling responsible digital citizenship for young adults as they get older. After all, "freedom is a privilege to be earned through constant responsible behaviour," as Dr. Sklar noted.

This was an empowering evening for parents and students alike, as Dr. Sklar demonstrated the importance of "keeping an open, ongoing conversation" when approaching digital citizenship.

To conclude, Alireza Kamali, Kells' Technology Specialist, shared the rules and restrictions implemented at Kells to further ensure online safety with parents and students. If students choose to act irresponsibly, there are many ways that Kells can restrict, block

or manage certain applications and access levels.

Following the same philosophy as Dr. Sklar, online freedom is re-granted as students become more and more responsible online.

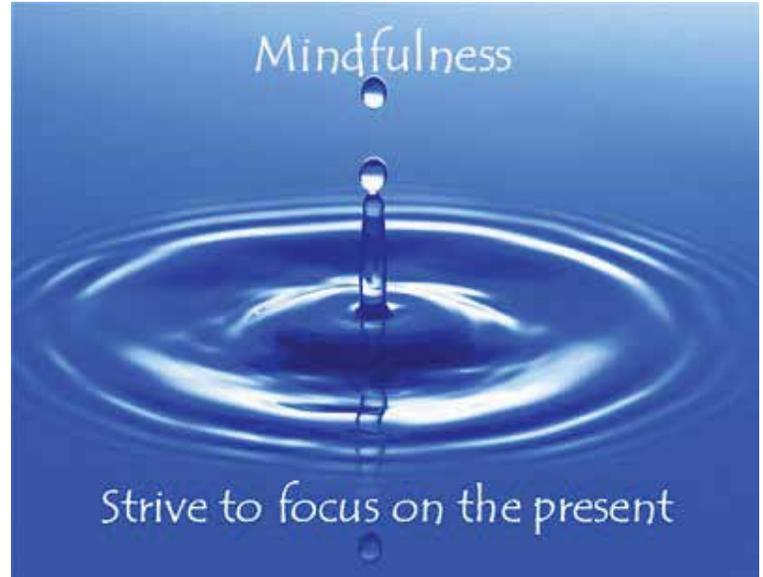
"Alissa Sklar, Ph.D. runs risk (within) reason, a Montreal consultancy project focused on kids, technology and risky behaviours. Dr. Sklar has a Ph.D. in communications and cultural studies, taught in the Communication Studies Department at Concordia University and worked in the field of adolescent risk prevention at McGill University. In addition to her academic and consulting work, Dr. Sklar is a mom of three, and a multiple award winning feature writer, with a particular interest in parenting, youth and digital technology issues."

For more information on Dr. Sklar, please visit: [www.risk-within-reason.com](http://www.risk-within-reason.com)

# The Skill You Didn't Even Know You ABSOLUTELY NEED

The staff at Kells have come to recognize the power of mindfulness in our daily lives. On our last pedagogical day, we invited Jonathan Perez, a mindfulness instructor, to open and close the session by putting us through several mindfulness exercises. The staff agreed that the impact was invigorating and expressed their interest in bringing it into their classrooms.

Some of our teachers had already begun to incorporate it into their lessons with positive responses from the students. With encouraging research results on the benefits of mindfulness, we plan to cultivate mindfulness in the classroom and the school as a staff in order to provide our students with the best of soft skills necessary for a successful (and healthy) life!



## Message from Director Irene Woods

Congratulations to our secondary V students on their acceptance to CEGEP.

Our goal at Kells is three pronged. We take pride in the fact that our graduates leave Kells with all the academic skills necessary to pursue a successful college education. We foster social skills that we hope will stand them in good stead as they transition into young adulthood.

Finally, we take pride in ensuring that our graduates leave the school with a strong sense of independence and the confidence to handle new challenges and experiences as they arise – both in their personal and professional lives. We look forward to welcoming you back as alumni.



## CEGEP Information Evening

Kells' Guidance Department, hosted the annual CEGEP Information Meeting in November for grades 10 and 11 students and their parents.

The school filled up to hear about the many possibilities that were available to them upon graduation from Kells. Representatives from Marianopolis College, Vanier College, Centennial College, Champlain College, TAV College and Lasalle College attended.

After brief presentations, each introducing their school, each representative was available to answer questions from the parents and students. This was an exciting evening, as students looked forward to their bright promising futures ahead.



Norma Wasserman,  
Kells Guidance Counselor

## Interview with Alumnus

### How is life after Kells?

Life is good, it's busy and hectic but it's also rewarding.

### What are you doing now?

Right now, I'm at Concordia University majoring in Psychology and doing group electives in management and marketing. I'm doing quite well. I've decided to take a lower course load so that I could balance my academic life, with my extra-curricular life, my social life, and on rare occasions sleep!

### What are some of your accomplishments?

At Kells I was privileged enough to win the Lieutenant Governor General award. At Marianopolis I graduated on the Dean's List. As far as accomplishments go, as the Vice President of Social Affairs for the Concordia Undergraduate Psychology Association (CUPA), I really enjoy planning events for students. They take a lot of work, planning, organization, and communication and so every time an event is successful that's an accomplishment in and of itself for me.

### Can you share your experience at Kells?

Kells was a great experience for me. I was able to grow and thrive in the atmosphere they provided. I had, in my opinion, a pretty good relationship and rapport with my professors. As for the students, I still have friends that I hang with and see on a regular basis from Kells, so don't worry, CEGEP and University won't keep good, lasting friendships apart!

I'll always think back to the Kells' Quebec City trip, it was one of the best school trips I



had ever been on. The entire grade really bonded over those 2 days and we simply had a blast!

### How did Kells help you prepare for your future?

Kells definitely shaped my learning preferences, my interactions with professors, and my participation within school activities. Since they offer small, intimate classroom settings there's a different relationship that develops between students and teachers, that most other students don't necessarily get to experience. With that being said, when I decided on a CEGEP I wanted to get the same thing out of my interactions with my professors, which I was able to find at Marianopolis. Classes were small and there was a rapport you could have with your professors, allowing for an environment where learning could take place by asking questions, or having classroom discussions. Back at Kells, I was involved in almost every group or activity imaginable. Whether it was being on the soccer team, writing up advice columns in the newspaper, or being involved in student politics. Now in university I am currently the Vice President of Social Affairs for the Concordia Undergraduate Psychology

## Alice Lemay- Class of 2012

Association (CUPA). Throughout the year, I plan events for students to attend, such as Frosh, a university-wide orientation for students in the Arts and Science program, trivia nights for psychology students, networking events where students had a conference on how to get into grad school and got a chance to talk to grad students and make connections with them, as well as many other events.

### Any words of wisdom for students at Kells?

I think something we should all keep in mind is to be open to learning and to new experiences, and that what works for others doesn't necessarily work for you, and that's okay. When I was in high school, I thought I had everything figured out. I knew what I wanted and nothing was going to deter me from that. I later found out in university, that maybe what I had wanted back then isn't necessarily what I want now. I'm still trying to figure it out now, but every day I get to go to class, learn something new, and get one step closer to figuring out what it is that I want. High school is important to the extent that it molded my preferences as far as learning goes, it shaped the interactions I had with people, and my need to be involved in school, other than just academics. But life after is just as important so take the time to start figuring out what you want now, even if it doesn't necessarily pan out. Join a club, get involved, push the boundaries and test the limits – step out of your comfort zone, because as cliché as it sounds, you never know what you like if you don't try.

## WHEN

Thursday, May 5th, 2016

7:30pm

## WHERE

Oscar Peterson Hall  
7141 Sherbrooke Ouest  
Montreal, QC

Tickets \$20.00  
(available online)

# KELLS ACADEMY

Presents  
**Let's Go  
To The Movies**  
2016 Spring Concert



## EXPERIENCE BEING A STUDENT FOR A DAY

We are hosting our Student for a Day activity. If you are looking to transfer your child from their elementary or high school this day is for you.

This event will provide students with the unique opportunity to experience our innovative program which is designed to enhance your child's strengths in a positive, nurturing environment.

Come and experience the Student for a Day on Thursday, May 19th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



The day includes;

- A guided tour;
- An opportunity to have interesting exchanges with students and teachers in classes;
- A lunch courtesy of Kells.

Confirm your participation by calling us or emailing [kadmin@kells.ca](mailto:kadmin@kells.ca) before May 10th.

Reserve Your Spot Now.

