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From youngest to oldest, Hillfield Strathallan students practise the skills of leadership. It starts in the Montessori and Primary Schools and culminates in the time-honoured tradition of prefects.

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Can nine-year-olds understand Shakespeare, and even perform it? You bet! Grade Four students are taking to the Bard like ducks to water.

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When the Hindu Temple in Hamilton was burned down after 9/11, the faith community acted quickly. It turned to Tony Hughes, visual arts teacher at Hillfield Strathallan, to design a high impact ad for *The Hamilton Spectator*. The result, “An attack on one is an attack on us all,” has received international recognition.

art of teaching

Tony Hughes – teacher, coach, and acclaimed graphic designer

Hughes has become well known for his talent in graphic design, which he donates to worthy community and charitable ventures. “I do all my best work for free,” he says. Three years ago he created the design work for the commemoration of Pier 21 in Halifax, the point of entry for most of Canada’s immigrants between 1928 and 1971. The entire design package, which included the invitation to the opening and the CD cover, won three gold awards at the Advertising and Creative Excellence Awards (ACE).

Pier 21 has a special significance for Hughes, who immigrated to Canada from Wales in 1977 to join Hillfield Strathallan. “The School wanted a jack of all trades,” he says, “someone who could do photography, look after the Year Book, build stage sets, teach art and

math, and coach sports.”

Now in his 26th year at the College, Hughes teaches Visual Arts from Grades Five through Ten. In his teaching he takes the approach that all children have the ability to make art. “Basically we’re all consumers of art,” he says. “When students feel that they can create art, then they learn how to really appreciate it.”

Hughes likes teaching because it keeps him young at heart. It’s also why he loves to coach volleyball. In recent years his boys’ and girls’ volleyball teams have enjoyed exceptional success, winning 12 CISAA Championships, including a string of seven straight years. Coaching is important to Hughes because it allows him to see the kids in another context. “A student who may not be a great artist can be a great volleyball

player,” he says. “When you can talk to kids about something they do well, they appreciate it.”

Hughes has put his mark on school sports in another way. He has created a special medal for presentation to each team that wins a CIS sports championship. This medal, commissioned by the Conference last year, is the most recent of Hughes’ many contributions to the development of a unique corporate identity for CIS schools.

Hughes believes that his work as a graphic designer keeps him enthusiastic in the classroom. His contribution to worthy causes, like the poster of tolerance, sends a powerful message to his students. “We’re so lucky to live in a country like Canada,” he says. “I long for a world that no longer needs a poster to promote tolerance.”