

Pickering College students set to tackle complex global issues through Global Leadership Program



By Chris McGowan

The Global Leadership Program is in full force at Pickering College and has been integrated into the independent school's everyday curriculum.

Introduced last school year, the program impacts students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 and focuses on developing leadership skills and potential in each student from a global perspective.

"We want our students to be courageous agents of change," said Julia Hunt, Director of Global Leadership at Pickering College. "This program ensures that they are equipped to understand and address complex global issues through a carefully-planned curriculum, co-curricular opportunities, community service and hands-on learning opportunities."

The school follows the curriculum set out by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The difference is that at Pickering, exercises and lessons are put into practical terms to enhance learning and critical thinking.

"Lessons are taught in a global, real-world context in every subject," Hunt said. "Our students are encouraged and empowered to think about how everything they do affects others both locally and globally."

With 400 students, including 100 international boarding students from more than 20 countries, the school community benefits from a global perspective. Students, from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12, learn from each other and work collaboratively through student mentorship, including a number of students who are from Aurora.

Pickering College students have the opportunity to participate in a range of international experiences to deepen their understanding of other nations and cultures. June Gleed, Grade 12 student and chair of the student committee, is excited to be one of the first to participate in the Brighton College exchange program in England. The expectation of the program is to encourage their confidence and ability to communicate for future work and life opportunities.

In March 2015, Grade Nine student, Kate Beswick will be going on a geography trip to Iceland.

"I can't wait to learn more about another part of the world" said Beswick.

In addition to exploring new nations and cultures, students are encouraged to think critically using a global lens. Grant Kavanagh is the captain of the Pickering College debate team where he participates in debates on a variety of contemporary topics, representing

Pickering throughout the school year.

His involvement does not stop there, as he has also represented the school at the Global Ideas Institute Symposium, which is a partnership with the University of Toronto's Asian Institute and the Munk School of Global Affairs. As a member of the 2014 team, he worked on a project for ending child malnutrition in India.

The Global Leadership Program at Pickering College is changing the way students learn while preparing them to be global citizens and leaders in the 21st century.