



DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA  
Achieving Success Together

# News Release

October 19, 2007

For Immediate Release

## **Celebrity Fort Erie Secondary School Alumnus Establishes Creative Writing Award**

He works with Hollywood's A-List, rubs shoulders with Steven Spielberg, and his television and film projects have earned him top awards including an Oscar. R. Scott Gemmill visited Fort Erie Secondary School to help celebrate the school's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, reconnect with old classmates, and to witness the renaming of the theatre in his honour.

The accomplished writer of the shows JAG and ER addressed students in an assembly and reflected on his experiences at Fort Erie Secondary School. "This is where I gained my confidence, and learned how to appreciate my creativity," said Gemmill. "Hanging out in the theatre was not a very cool thing at the time, but I like to think it paid off," he joked.

Gemmill shared his advice with students on his success as a writer, noting that a willingness to make mistakes, and perseverance earned him the respect of his colleagues. With a big beaming smile, the writer also noted that giving back was personally important to him. "I am proud to be a Fort Erie Secondary School graduate, and I would like to encourage students to pursue their creativity," he said, unwrapping a plaque. Gemmill announced that he has established a creative writing award in his name, which would annually recognize a Fort Erie Secondary School student for creative writing talent. "I hope I'm still around for the next 32 years to give his award," he said with a wink.

Shirley Scott, principal of Fort Erie Secondary School, held back tears as she thanked Gemmill for his generosity. "Fort Erie is a very special community, and our graduates recognize that. Scott's award is very meaningful, as it reinforces the values of hard work and literacy."

The first R. Scott Gemmill Creative Writing Award will be given in 2008.

### **Media Inquiries:**

Kim Yielding, Manager, Communications and Public Relations  
*District School Board of Niagara*  
905-641-2929 ext. 4160  
kim.yielding@dsbn.edu.on.ca  
191 Carlton Street, St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7P4

