



**Launch of Heroes Foundation Comic Book:
'A Runner's Life – Lessons from an Olympian'
April 25th, 2019 | NALIS
Remarks by Ronald Adams | VP Operations, NGC**

Good morning.

He moved like a bullet. In just over 10 seconds, he had defeated 4 fierce opponents with his muscle and steely resolve. Such was his strength in that moment that when he raised his arm at the finish, he lifted an entire nation thousands of miles away.

Ladies and gentlemen, the account of Hasely Crawford's historic Montreal win could easily pass for script from a superhero comic. Better yet, the journey that led him to that achievement, his origin story, brings to mind all the illustrated heroes that rose to greatness from humble beginnings. It is therefore easy to see why the comic book is a perfect medium to share the story of our nation's first gold-medal Olympian.

In 2018, NGC embarked on a journey with the Heroes Foundation to produce a unique graphic publication that would chronicle the early life and career of His Excellency Hasely Crawford. Today, I am thrilled to help the team launch the completed book – A Runner's Life: Lessons from an Olympian. As we hoped, it has turned out to be a magnificent keepsake and important historical record.

This book represents the culmination of a year of tribute to the Olympian, which began with the inauguration of NGC's National Heroes Project. In Trinidad and Tobago's history and recent past, many exemplary citizens have led lives of impact. However, it is a sad fact that some of these icons – heroes by one metric or another – sit on the margins of our collective memory or fail to receive the recognition they deserve.

NGC took the decision in 2017 to launch a project that would profile the achievements of men and women whose lives and work brought honor to our country. As we envisioned it, the project would focus on one special individual each year and would seek to raise public awareness around that person's legacy through an appropriate programme of activities.

Hasely Crawford, our first honoree, was commemorated through a roving exhibition of memorabilia that told the story of his Olympic journey and his contributions to society thereafter. This exhibition was curated by and launched together with The University of West Indies. We then partnered with NALIS to take the exhibit through the library circuit and share Hasely's story with hundreds, most notably school children. Today, in addition to launching our comic book, we will also be handing this exhibition over to NALIS's care, so that generations to come will have access to Hasely's story.

And what a story this is, with such powerful messages for our young people. Hasely's life can give hope to children who may feel they would amount to little because of financial constraints. It demonstrates the value of having a dream and believing you can make it real, even when the odds are against you. Most importantly, his story shows the rewards that come with hard work and discipline. Too many of our young people are losing their way because they have met with failure, but they need to know that it is possible to move from poverty, injury and defeat to the height of Olympic achievement. Hasely can show them how.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank and congratulate the Heroes Foundation for their expert management of this project. I am sure you will agree the finished product is an impressive publication, and a purchase that will appreciate in value once Hasely has signed it. I also thank NALIS for their steadfast support in our

commemoration of this national hero. You will now be the custodians of the curated exhibition of his life, and we know it will reach and impact hundreds more through your efforts. NGC is intent on doing its part to ensure our national heroes are not forgotten, and we need more dedicated partners like you to join us in our cause.

Before I close, I **must** acknowledge the man behind the medal, the venerable Hasely Crawford, seated unassumingly among us today. In true hero fashion, Hasely stepped down from the Olympic podium with all the humility he had before his win, and he went on to serve his country, and young people in particular, in countless other ways. Hasely, I have so much respect for the legacy you have built, and gratitude for the work you have done. Your story will move everyone who reads it, and surely, it will inspire a generation to step up and conquer.

I thank you.