

Principally Speaking

NHS Induction

The induction for new members of the ALHS chapter of The National Honor Society was held in the PAC on October 19th. Family guests and the ALHS Class of '21 attended, along with our chapter members and inductees. We inducted 88 new members at our ceremony. Congratulations to our inductees and their families. Recognition as an NHS member is a very prestigious honor. Membership in NHS carries lifetime significance, and is an impressive reflection of the personal, academic, social and ethical growth and development of the NHS member. As admission and access to opportunities after high school become more competitive in the 21st century, NHS membership can be an impressive component of your resume.

In order to be selected as a member of the National Honor Society, students must meet the following criteria:

Scholarship: Candidates with a 3.85 cumulative GPA (Wow!) after 4 semesters are eligible for CONSIDERATION. It is important to note that students with a GPA of 4.0 or above are NOT more eligible than a student with a 3.85 GPA. By national charter, GPA has no bearing on selection beyond identifying eligible students.

Service: Eligible students must submit and verify activities and organizations participate in during high school. This could be clubs, events or programs in or out of school, including social, civic and/or religious activities.

Leadership: The Faculty Council reviews recommendations and information on student leadership in determining selection for membership.

Character: The Faculty Council considers references and information on student character in the selection process.

Eligible students are responsible for the documentation and submission of all application materials. Application is not required, and eligible students may choose not to apply.

Membership and induction to NHS is extended to all students in good standing receiving appropriate approval for Service, Leadership and Character. No exceptions to NHS selection criteria are permitted. Eligible Juniors not selected for membership in the NHS are encouraged to re-apply during Senior year. We have proudly inducted senior NHS members throughout the years. Understanding how to improve in life is also an explicit purpose of NHS.

The purpose of the NHS is to promote and recognize student excellence in the four NHS criteria of Scholarship, Character, Leadership and Service. It also promotes and supports the pursuit of lifelong excellence. NHS members are challenged to maintain high standards in all areas, and face responsibility - including review and dismissal - for violating NHS principles.

While scholarship and service can be specifically measured, the attributes of Character and Leadership, equally important NHS attributes, are more difficult to assess.

Each NHS member possesses leadership qualities. Many are leaders in the normal sense. That is, many of you can lead others. Maybe you are the officers of student council or the leaders of

some organization. Perhaps you've started some club of your own. Maybe you've taken the initiative to help out in the community in some way. These are all important and commendable examples of leadership.

There is another form of leadership, the less visible kind. Everyone knows who the leader of a club is. It's recognized over the announcements, or on paper, or at meetings. This is a visible leader, one that everyone is aware of. We have many visible leaders at ALHS, both at school and in the community. But it is the less visible kind of leadership that NHS members display and which accounts, in large part, why they are invited to join this society. This leadership is the day-to-day willingness, helpfulness, and positive attitude – the "GBED"edness that inductees demonstrate. To lead is to be at the front of, behind or in the middle of something, and moving it in the direction of a goal or destination. Our inductees all lead themselves, our school, our communities, positively toward the successful and fulfilling futures we envision. They set an example for others to follow.

Character reflects the quality and consistency of attitude and behavior that sets an example for others. In 21st century high schools, character is often reflected by the courage to make good choices in the face of very intense peer pressure. The choice not to participate in inappropriate or dangerous behavior, like academic dishonesty, alcohol or substance use, at the risk of the rejection by peers, takes great conviction. **"Character is what you do when no one is watching."**

Accepting the invitation to become a member of the ALHS chapter of NHS means that members publicly state their willingness to model the 4 attributes, and to be held to a higher standard of excellence in each of the NHS areas.

Bottom line – if you want to be a member of NHS, you can't decide or state that you will not be an active and positive participant in all aspects of high school life - just get good grades. You can, but you will not be selected for NHS. NHS members are active, involved leaders of the highest character who demonstrate a commitment to life-long learning. As stated above, this designation is very attractive to college admissions officers, employers and others.

NHS sets high standards for the overall development of prospective members. It is, by design, a very selective organization. Students aspiring to NHS membership must intentionally subscribe to ALL aspects of student life. Scholarship alone carries absolutely no entitlement to NHS.

There are many choices to be made during a student's high school years. At ALHS, we work relentlessly to help our students reach their academic, career and ethical potential. The ethical aspect means developing good habits, consistently making good choices –choices that contribute to the individual and collective well-being. Doing this during a time of intense physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth is difficult, and not something that everyone is able, or chooses, to do. We recognize this, and work to inspire all students toward success. In school, as in life, potential is recognized – achievement is rewarded.

Congratulations, again, to our new NHS members. If you want to be in NHS, and were not selected, continue to work hard to emulate the four NHS attributes, think about what you can do to improve, and apply again next year. You can do it. We are proud of all of you.

Peace! GBED! Go Shoremen & Shoregals!