

## **The Ursa Major Chapter of the National Honor Society Information Sheet**

### **What is the NHS?**

Membership in the National Honor Society (NHS) is one of the several options available at CSS for active student involvement. Founded in 1921, the National Honor Society's original "objectives were to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in the nation's secondary school students"(NHS Handbook 3). These objectives remain at the root of this now world-wide, American organization to this day. Individual schools apply to the National Council for permission to have a chapter, and overall supervision of each chapter rests with the school's principal. In 1993, CSS was granted permission to open the Ursa Major Chapter of the NHS, and now, nearly eighteen years later, our chapter has grown into a vibrant, active element of our Upper School.

### **How can I become a member?**

Many of the rules for selection come directly from the Constitution of the National Honor Society, while others have been amended by our chapter's Faculty Council to better meet the needs of our students. Regardless, though, "membership in local chapters is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities"(Article VIII. Section 1. NHS Constitution).

According to the NHS Constitution and the Ursa Major Chapter bylaws, the selection process is as follows:

- At the beginning of each semester, the NHS Faculty Advisor notifies those juniors and seniors who are academically eligible for NHS consideration (minimum 3.25 cumulative GPA and in attendance at CSS for at least one semester) by giving each a letter inviting the student to attend an informational meeting where the selection process is reviewed, information forms are distributed, and membership responsibilities are outlined.
- Interested academically eligible students will complete the Student Activity Information Form and return it to the NHS Faculty Advisor by a set deadline.
- The NHS Faculty Advisor will then survey the entire faculty and staff for input about each interested student's character, leadership, and service.
- The NHS Faculty Council (5 faculty members chosen each year by the principal, with input by the NHS Faculty Advisor) then convenes to discuss and review each submitted Student Activity Information Form and returned faculty/staff surveys.
- "The selection of each (NHS) member to the chapter shall (then) be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council"(Article IX. Section 3).
- The Faculty Advisor and another faculty member will then meet individually with each interested student to discuss the Faculty Council's deliberation and decision.

It should be noted that "selection to NHS is a privilege, not a right...This is not an election, nor is membership automatically conveyed simply because a student has achieved a specified level of academic performance. NHS is more than just an honor roll"(NHS Handbook 23), and the Ursa Major Chapter strives to place equal emphasis on each of the four tenets of the NHS: scholarship, character, leadership, and service.

**If I am nominated for selection, what will I have to do?**

First of all, once nominated, a student may accept or decline the honor, for acceptance carries with it certain obligations, ranging from required attendance at chapter meetings to the performance of additional service hours to maintenance of all levels of academic, leadership, character, and service expectations by which the student received his/her nomination to begin with.

The Ursa Major Chapter meets nearly every week and participates in many service opportunities both on and off campus. At the same time, members are expected to uphold a high level of model behavior and academic excellence.

NHS Faculty Advisor: Ms. Amy Johnson-Smith

2010-2011 NHS Faculty Council:

Ms. Candace Craig  
Ms. Jennifer Gaskin  
Ms. Jennifer Hedden  
Mr. Hans Wolfe  
Dr. Paul Young