



A message from the Interim Head of School:

Commencement is in sight and then one more month in the Academy's fiscal year. As we reflect and look ahead, we can only sit in amazement at all God has done and is doing in this pivotal 143rd year of our existence. Students have put their trust in God, academic achievements abound, and financial needs to date have been met....Jeremiah 33:3 "things" without a doubt.

What a tremendous blessing it was to have Tysinger Auditorium almost at capacity for two performances of The Sound of Music. This was our drama department's first major musical since 2019. Kudos to students, directors, and volunteers who worked long and hard together to bring our stage back to life. And my cameo role just added to my excitement.

Amid the successes noted above, there remains a financial challenge in the last two months of this fiscal year. The Lord has used you and others to provide \$775,000 of the \$850,000 goal we set back in September. We continue to work hard to keep costs to a minimum but unexpected facility needs that cannot be put off have increased our expenses and it is clear more than the \$75,000 to reach our initial goal will be needed. I can only be open and honest with you, our alumni and friends, who have prayed and supported the Academy all year. Folks are amazed when I share all that the Lord has provided through you.

Enrollment for next year is increasing. A balanced operating budget for the future is taking shape. Best practices throughout are being restored. There is much about which to be encouraged and thankful. If you would like to learn more of the details or simply ask questions about anything Academy related, please don't hesitate to contact me.

With a very thankful heart, I remain yours for Houghton Academy,
Philip G. Stockin
Interim Head of School



[Make a Gift](#)

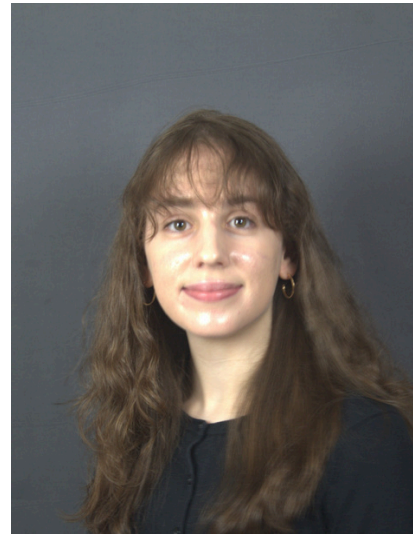
Student Life and Academics

Academic Achievement

A special dinner for the Class of 2026 was held on Wednesday, April 29, at Houghton University. After a brief program offering advice for college and life, Interim Head of School, Philip G. Stockin, announced the top academic honors for the class. The Valedictorian is Ellie Brubaker, the daughter of David and LuAnne Brubaker and granddaughter of Carolyn Paine Miller '56. The Salutatorian is Julia Winkens, daughter of Noelle Gurley '91 and granddaughter of Allen and Sylvia Gurley. All of the aforementioned live in Houghton. In a very high achieving class, Ellie's GPA was 98.8 while Julia followed close behind at 97.8. Congratulations to Ellie and Julia and all the members of the Class of 2026. We thank the Lord for all of you and your many accomplishments.



Ellie Brubaker



Julia Winkens

Theater



On April 17th and 18th, our dedicated staff and students brought music back to the Houghton Academy drama program with Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music*. Ellie Brubaker and Silas Miller led the cast in an extraordinary performance. Special thanks to the many donors who made this event possible. We are looking forward to next year already!

Hands-on learning



As part of MS American History II's study of the Great Depression, our students learned all about FDR's game-changing CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp). Did you know that there were four CCC camps at Letchworth State Park, each housing 200 men? Did you also know that when these CCC men went off to WWII, their former barracks (located at the Lower Falls Recreation Area) were used to house German Prisoners of War? As always, our middle school methodology includes active learning and subject integration; at each stop on our beautiful mid-morning hike, students were assigned an interpretive role (See Evidence #6 above).

A Taste of the World



Our club started in 2023 from a friendship between Melody and Rebecca. Melody really loves making food. Whether it's baking, Chinese food, or Western food, she always wants to try making it. Melody was surprised to find that Rebecca shared the same hobby —baking and cooking. So two ninth-grade girls decided to start a cooking club so that people with the same love for cooking could gather together to make food.

In 2024 we formalized the club, beginning a weekly cooking and baking journey. Each week we make different country's food: Indonesian fried rice, Vietnamese spring rolls, Chinese-style egg tarts, Venezuelan Tequeños, Spanish Tortilla de Patatas, Korean bibimbap, Japanese daifuku and so on.

But we don't just cook for ourselves. We believe food is meant to be shared. We've made snowflake cookies for children at a local church, offering a small taste of international culture through homemade treats. We've also represented our school at the International Cookie days, baking 50 chocolate chip cookies for school.

We offer a real kitchen to cook in, a community of food lovers, hands-on experiences with global recipes and opportunities to give back to your family.

HA Yardsale: From Your Home to Their Future

On Saturday, May 9th, Houghton Academy will be hosting a yard sale from 8am until noon in front of the old fire hall (9694 Route 19). All proceeds will benefit Houghton Academy, and we would greatly appreciate donations of clean, working items (no clothing or shoes, please).

You may drop items off at the main office anytime before the end of the school day on May 8th.

Thank you in advance for helping make this sale a success!



Student Spotlight



Silas Miller, a Houghton Academy senior, joined His Majesty's 64th Regiment of Foot Grenadier Company based out of Rochester, NY when he was just 12 years old. Having never played a wooden instrument. Additionally, Silas was able to craft his own bearskin hat (from original materials and original 18th century blueprints) to compliment his striking uniform. Silas loves having the opportunity to bring history to life and looks forward to a full schedule this summer as America 250 events occur up and down the East Coast. Learn more about HM 64th and becoming a reenactor at blackknots.org

HA Gives Back: a note from Jeff Prentice - Athletic Director / Physical Education



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

CHANDLER SACKETT
5K
MEMORIAL

On Saturday April 25th we held the 6th annual Chandler Sackett 5k. Even though the weather didn't cooperate, we still had a wonderful time together remembering Chandler and the kind, loving, and friendly student and family member he was.

The event was moved indoors to the Kerr/Pergula Field House at Houghton University. Some people walked laps while chatting and enjoying each other's company and some others took on the challenge of running 24.8 laps (5k) around the indoor track. Our walkers and runners were represented by old and young, near and far (the farthest was South Carolina I heard). After a quick reminder of the importance of gratitude we moved to the Academy for a cookout and time for an open gym.

We have raised approximately \$2,700 with more donations still coming in. We are excited to fulfill the request from Chandler's Mom to provide a scholarship for an Allegany County resident to attend Houghton Academy in the upcoming school year.

A special thank you to Houghton University for allowing us to pivot to their indoor facility, for all the generous donations, to the HA Leadership Class, to the Dorothy Lendel/family and her continued support, and to all the participants who braved the rain and cold to come out and support a worthy cause!

Our students were able to participate in a chapel service with Pastor Mark Harley prior to the walk and now as we move into May, which is Mental Health Awareness Month, I pray you can take time to focus on gratitude and God's faithfulness.

Please join us in welcoming: Mrs. Gelene Sousa

Houghton Academy's new Middle School Science Curriculum Consultant

Gelene Sousa is a 39-year teaching veteran and curriculum development specialist with a dual degree from Fitchburg State College in both Moderate Special Needs and General Education in grades 1-6. She also holds a licensure for Middle School Science in the state of Massachusetts and is her district's middle school science coordinator.

Gelene began her career as a special education teacher at a residential school for boys who had experienced significant emotional and learning challenges; teaching all content areas in a self-contained classroom, developing an innovative curriculum across multiple skill levels, motivating and engaging reluctant learners who had emotional, behavioral, or trauma-based challenges. This was followed by a twelve year stint as an enrichment teacher, developing and implementing a new, extensive, logic-based enrichment program that integrated reasoning and thinking skills into current curriculum in all content areas for students in grades 5-8.

Gelene is passionate about the inclusion of all learners, holding the axiom that "All students can learn." She has created multiple techniques that address specific student needs, including behavioral and emotional supports for struggling learners. Inquiry-based labs, writing in the sciences, and meeting and exceeding state standards all give evidence to the breadth and depth of her expertise.

