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Jan 2026 Houghton Academy Newsletter

1 message

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Note from the Board of Trustees

At the start of this year, we shared an ambitious fundraising goal of \$850,000—nearly three times what we have raised in recent years. We did so prayerfully, trusting that God would provide what was needed to strengthen and sustain the mission of Houghton Academy.

This year has been different. Through the generosity of friends, families, and supporters of Christian education, \$504,000 has already been raised. We see this as a powerful testimony to God's faithfulness and to the deep commitment of this community to Christ-centered education. We are profoundly grateful.

Throughout this year, we have witnessed God's provision in timely and unexpected ways—often arriving just when it was most needed. As we enter the final stretch of the year, we once again find ourselves leaning into prayer and trust. To meet our operating needs and finish the year on stable footing, we are seeking to raise an additional \$350,000.

We invite you to prayerfully consider how God might be calling you to participate in this season. For some, that may be through our upcoming day of prayer (February 3). For others, it may be sharing Houghton Academy's story with those who care deeply about Christian education. And for those who feel led to give financially, gifts of any size help make this mission possible and can be made through this link or by mailing a check. <https://houghtonacademy.factsmgtadmin.com/give/>

Thank you for walking alongside us in faith, generosity, and prayer. We remain deeply grateful for your partnership in God's work at Houghton Academy.

Houghton Academy Board of Trustees



Note from the Academic Principal

As we step into the new semester at Houghton Academy, we're grateful for a smooth transition and the chance to reset rhythms, expectations, and goals. With the start of second semester, some courses have concluded as planned, while other year long classes continue forward. This natural shift creates fresh momentum for students—new schedules, new objectives, and new opportunities to grow in both skill and character. We're emphasizing strong habits early: consistent attendance, steady effort, and wise use of time, so students can finish the year with clarity and confidence.

This month, we also want to celebrate a major academic highlight: the History Fair was a huge success, and we are especially thankful for Mr. Flitcroft and the time, planning, and effort he invested to make it such a meaningful event for students. The quality of student work and the overall engagement were a strong reminder of what's possible when excellent preparation meets student ownership.

Looking ahead, we're excited to continue building opportunities for students to present their learning in public, authentic ways. We will be hosting a Passion Project Exhibit Night at the end of this quarter—an excellent opportunity for students to share what they've been building, researching, and creating. And as we plan forward, we're also aiming to end the year with a STEM Exhibit Night at the end of Quarter 4, continuing the momentum of hands-on learning and student-driven excellence.

Chapel has also reflected a meaningful variety this month. We've had a rotating mix of chapel speakers—students, staff, and Houghton guests—each contributing to a stronger culture of shared faith and encouragement. Looking ahead, we're excited for our National Honor Society Chapel on February 19, which will be a special moment to celebrate scholarship, service, leadership, and character within our school community.

As winter settles in, we also want to offer a gentle caution: this season can bring "winter blues" for many students (and adults). Shorter days, less sunlight, and disrupted routines can quietly affect motivation and mood. We're encouraging students to stay strong—sleep consistently, stay active, remain connected, and talk to someone when they're struggling rather than isolating.

Above all, we are reminded that God is in control. When good plans are in place—when we build healthy routines, clear expectations, and supportive structures—we position ourselves to walk more faithfully in the steps He has already established for us. And we can say confidently that every challenge we've faced this year is being overcome, and those lessons are actively shaping a much stronger, more effective academic and professional year for next year. Thank you for your continued partnership as we move forward into second semester with purpose and hope.

Blessings,

Mr. David Pritchard

Our Middle School students wrapped up the first semester of American History II with triptych presentations on key figures of the late 19th century such as Ida B. Wells, Mark Twain, or Cyrus McCormick. As part of their study of Westward Expansion, they created a giant floor map of the Transcontinental Railroad. Then they visited the Rockwell Museum in Corning to view their impressive collection of Bierstadt landscapes and Remington sculptures and paintings.



Clubs

Board game club was a great time of fellowship and game play. Students could be seen playing various games like chess and UNO. Some of us learned to play a new game called "You can't say umm.." which came with a lot of laughs. All students had fun competing and playing games.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for April 17th (7pm) and 18th (2pm) as Houghton Academy's Drama Class proudly presents Rodgers & Hammerstein's beloved musical, *The Sound of Music*.

Sports

Due to much interest in basketball this year, we have a boys modified basketball team. There are 9 students on the team. The boys are learning to become better students, better teammates, and better basketball players. They are having fun at the same time! It's been exciting to see them continue to improve but also exciting to see the Houghton Academy community support the team. We are currently 4-2 which definitely adds to the fun for the players. We have one more home game, Thursday January 29th. Please come cheer them on.





Experimental Science Club – An Exciting Opportunity

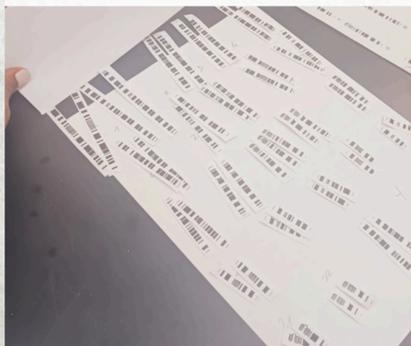
🔬 Experimental Science Club is a hands-on, curiosity-driven opportunity where students explore real scientific investigations beyond the textbook.

Members build essential lab skills while assisting with setup and preparation for weekly experiments.

Through activities like measuring mass, volume, and density, students develop accuracy, teamwork, and scientific thinking.

Featured student scientists include Hu Chenming Hu, Murphy Jaxson Alexander, Chen Shi Yu (Cissy), and Dou Junpeng (Jayden).

Students will explore, experiment, and discover the fun side of science beyond the textbook!!



National Honor Society

The selection process is underway for new inductees to Houghton Academy's National Honor Society. The Induction Ceremony is scheduled for February 19th at 2:30pm in the auditorium. Please join us!

Ignite Week

Calling all community members with a skill to share! From March 2-6 our students will be participating in Ignite Week, which is a time of breaking away from the normal school routine to introduce students to a wide variety of more hands-on skills and trades.

Do you love to sew? cook? work on cars? make jewelry? paint? build things? dance? write? play a musical instrument? knit? etc.? And would you like to share your skill with a small group of students?

If so, please contact Kathie Hilsher at Kathie.hilsher@houghton.academy for more details.

Passion Projects

Houghton Academy students have embarked on our school's 5th year of doing Passion Projects. Student projects will be highlighted each week on Facebook, and friends and family will be invited to read and comment on students blogs that are explaining the progression of each project. Exhibition Night of the projects is currently planned for March 24th.

Leila Pagano: Volleyball, Dirt Bikes, and Saying What She Thinks

By Maria Andrade

Leila Pagano is a 17-year-old senior whose experience here has been shaped by friendships and shared spaces. After growing up, mostly in China with her missionary family, in a much smaller and quieter environment, being surrounded by people has become one of the most meaningful parts of her time.

When Leila isn't in class, she's usually spending time at a friend's house, which has become one of her favorite ways to hang out and relax. Being able to constantly see others is something she really values, especially after coming from a place with few people around.

One teacher who has made a big impact on Leila is the self-defense instructor, Mrs. Gena, mostly because they share similar personalities. This means Mrs. Gena is the go-to person whenever Leila needs help, which, according to Leila, happens enough that she's very grateful.

Something people might not expect about Leila is that she loves kids, which slightly contrasts with the one word she chose to describe herself: "manly." A small thing that makes her day better here? Without hesitation, she said me (Maria), and she insisted it wasn't just flattery.

Her advice to new students is simple: don't be scared to voice your opinion, no matter the situation.

If Leila could add one new activity, it would be dirt biking, something she's obsessed with and would happily teach herself. Chapel gets points for having different speakers, but she does have one request: that people would sing out more!



David Hoang: A Senior Year in Motion

By Maria Andrade

Between practices, games, and everyday life on campus, David, a senior from Vietnam, has spent his time building memories that mostly revolve around sports, friends, and school.

David's favorite teacher is Mr. Prentice, who also happens to be his basketball coach. This makes sense since basketball is something he genuinely enjoys. Sports play an important role in his life, not just for competition, but for growth. Whether he's playing basketball or soccer, being part of a team helps him improve both as an athlete and as a person.

What David values most about this community is the quality of the teachers and how welcoming the people are. These two things make day-to-day life feel comfortable and familiar. He also appreciates Chapel for encouraging students to believe in and follow God. When asked what David would change about it, he couldn't think of anything that needed fixing.

If David could redesign one space, it would be the cafeteria. He wants more room to make it better for everyone.

When it comes to serving others, David does it in quiet, natural ways, supporting those around him and motivating them to do their best.

Some of his favorite memories come from playing alongside his teammates, moments that helped him grow not only in sports, but as a person. As his senior year comes to an end, those shared experiences are what seem to matter most.



The History & Culture Club Fair

The students in Mr. Flitcroft's 9th-12th grade classes have been working on National History Day projects over the course of the first semester of school. The National History Day contest is an international student history contest in which students in grades 6–12 choose a topic and dive deeply into the past by conducting extensive research in libraries, archives, and museums. They then present their conclusions and evidence through papers, exhibits, performances, documentaries, or websites, moving through a series of contest levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. Through this process, students develop skills in communication, project management, and historical thinking. The History and Culture Fair night was an opportunity for students to display their work and prepare for the levels of the National History Day contest. We also had the culture club provide foods and items from the various cultures in our school. It was great to see students excited about their projects and engaging with others about what they learned and created. Congratulations to all involved.



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