



September 2025

Live, Learn, Love, & Lead at Houghton Academy!

What's Happening at Houghton Academy

The first weeks of September in Houghton have been beautiful: blue skies, mild temperatures, and rapidly developing, brightly colored fall foliage. Sports are underway, including Girls' JV and Varsity Volleyball and Boys' Varsity Soccer. Our students are involved in nine different clubs, ranging from Audio-Visual to Self-Defense. Academic classes are also in full swing, with students being challenged and enriched by their courses both at the Academy and at Houghton University. A visitor to our school would observe a happy and busy place, where American students intermingle effortlessly with their friends from Brazil, China, Indonesia, Poland, Rwanda, and Vietnam as they attend classes, chat in the hallways, or eat in the cafeteria.



Houghton Academy Interim Head of School, Mr. Stockin, Academic Principal, Mr. Prichard, and student Harry Dang (11th grade, Vietnam.)



Boarding students Kaitlyn Reeves (12th grade, USA) and Emily Xie (12th grade, China.)

Homecoming Weekend

On Friday the 19th, our Varsity Girls treated us to five sets of intense competition as they managed to edge out Fillmore Central 15-13 in the final set (thanks to a match-winning ace from 9th grader, Lucy Jordan), kicking off our Homecoming weekend in style. The next morning, the girls once again prevailed, this time over Andover, while our boys' soccer team lost 2-0 to Bolivar-Richburg. Our local parents provided a delicious lunch, and everyone enjoyed relaxing in the shade on this unseasonably warm fall day.



Clubs

This year, student clubs are playing an even bigger role at Houghton Academy than in the past. Two clubs enrich our weekly Chapel services. The Worship Team, led by Mrs. Kathie Hilsher, provides spirited songs with instrumental accompaniment, thereby greatly enlivening, enriching, and enhancing our services. At the same time, the A/V Tech Team, under the direction of Mr. (Pak) René Sompie, provides the sound and lighting that are essential to the Chapel experience.

A first for Houghton Academy this year is the Cricket Club under the able leadership of Mr. Ayub. They are in the initial phase of training and getting to know the equipment and the rules of the game. Club members are trying to master the game's fundamentals such as catching,

bowling, and batting. One of the most daunting tasks at this early part of the year is to correctly master the rules of the game, which were previously unknown to most of our students. Thank you to a generous donor for the Cricket Club equipment!



Note from the Academic Principal

I am working on combining our courses' Scope and Sequences with our Course Description Catalog. I think it is important to establish a baseline for where we are, enabling us to better create assessments for students entering our school. This will also allow us to easily show the parents of potential students what we teach in each grade as we prepare their student for college. Finally, it will provide a tool for us so we can improve upon each subject and challenge our students in ways that will prepare them for what lies ahead.

Mr. David Pritchard



Panther Profiles

Faith, Volleyball, and Lots of Homework: Meet Mrs. Hilsher

At Houghton Academy we are blessed with some teachers that go way beyond only teaching, and a great example of that is Mrs.



Hilsher: she's not only our English teacher, but also the volleyball coach, advisor for the National Honor Society and Worship Team, and director of Ignite Week. So basically, if something's happening on campus, there's a good chance she's part of it. Even though she's a Houghton native, Mrs. Hilsher was actually born 20 minutes away (no surprise, considering there's no hospital here). Her dad taught chemistry at the University, which meant she grew up surrounded by teachers and as the baby of the family, she happily claims the title of "the spoiled youngest

kid." After college, life took her to Indiana for two years, then Philadelphia for six years after marriage, until eventually, Houghton pulled her back in.

Her history with the Academy is almost as long as the periods on Tuesdays and Thursdays. She first worked here as a RA in the dorms in her college days, after that, in the late 1990s as a teacher and volleyball coach for three years, then returned in 2015 and since then, she's been teaching, coaching, and making her mark in every corner of campus. When asked what she loves most about Houghton Academy, her answer came quickly: "The students." And it shows, in the classroom or on the volleyball court, she's always cheering us on.

Talking more about her family, Mrs. Hilsher seems full of happiness and proud of what her faith and love have become, a.k.a. her two children: one that already graduated and the other that is currently in college. Just like her own dad was a teacher, she's carried on the family tradition of shaping young minds.

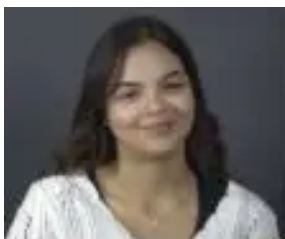
Of course, no interview is complete without asking the tough questions: like what students actually think of her class. With a laugh, she said, "I have no idea... maybe that I don't talk all the time." As for what they don't like? "Homework, grades, and expectations. But after they graduate, they like it." Sounds about right... even though most of us are still in the "suffering with the homework" stage.

Outside of class, volleyball is her clear favorite. Coaching the team has been one of the best parts of her time at Houghton. And if school was ever canceled for a day? She already has a plan. "If it's nice weather, I'd ride horses. If it's not, volleyball, baking, or skiing." Honestly, that sounds like a pretty great backup plan for anyone.

Her biggest piece of advice for students is short, simple, and maybe harder than it sounds: "Follow directions." And when it comes to what makes Houghton Academy special to her, she explained, "I love that I can talk about and use my faith, not only in classrooms but individually with students, I can pray for them when they are not feeling so great or they can pray for me." She added that she also likes to "learn about different cultures, words, books and life in general."

Spending time with Mrs. Hilsher made it even more clear why she is such an important part of Houghton Academy. She brings humor, faith, and heart to everything she does. She's proof that being "the spoiled youngest kid" can turn out pretty great.

Article by Maria Andrade (11th grade, Brazil)

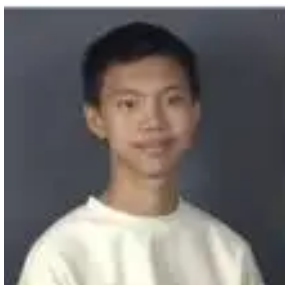


A Few of Their Favorite Things



Cora, Jaxson, and Junia are all from Houghton. This is their first year at Houghton Academy. Cora and Junia say their favorite place at the Academy is the art room. Jaxson's favorite place is the science lab. Cora and Junia love that our school is small and that they can

walk places. Jaxson loves that it is so diverse and that there are international students. All three students agree that our international students make Houghton Academy unique. For the bell music between periods, Cora would like to hear The Sound of Music soundtrack. Junia would like to hear Disney songs, and Jaxson would like to hear Camel by Camel. What are weird food combinations that these students actually eat, you ask? Cora and Junia both eat carrots with peanut butter. Jaxson likes ketchup on anything! Everyone has a dream pet. Jaxson would like a golden retriever and Cora would like a horse. Junia is dreaming of a kitten. And yes, Jaxson thinks skydiving sounds fun, the girls, not so much



Interviews by Sean Sompie (12th grade, Indonesia)

Your Giving Matters

On September 10th, Mr. Philip G. Stockin sent out an appeal letter. We are happy, thankful, and humbled before God to say that it is already bearing fruit, generating over \$150,000 in gifts. God is great!

At the same time the Board Chair addressed an appeal to local businesses, asking them to support Houghton Academy. Special thanks to the following businesses that have responded:

Pomeroy Well Drilling 8970 Lower St POB 313 Rushford, NY 14777

Don's Septic Service LLC 9100 County Rd 7B Rushford, NY 14777

Pomeroy & Reynolds Excavating LLC 9100 County Rd 7B Rushford, NY 14777

Additionally, thoughtful parents requested that we make an Amazon Wish List to make it easier for everyone to donate specific items that are needed for our offices or classrooms. We are appreciative of the swift response. Thank you! If you have not had a chance to see this yet, here is the link. [Houghton Academy Amazon Wish List Fall 2025](#)

As always, your support directly sustains our Christ-centered programs, strengthens our faculty, enhances student learning experiences, and ensures that we can continue to provide a safe and nurturing environment for every learner.

Your participation—no matter the size of the gift— will help us to continue the mission of the school. Please click on the button below to make your gift today via our secure online system. You may also mail your donation directly to:

Houghton Academy Annual Fund
9790 Thayer Street
Houghton, NY 14744

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we are shaping lives for Christ and for the world.

~ Mark Getzin, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Donate Today!



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