



Student Life and Academics

2025-26 National Honor's Society



On Thursday February 19th, Houghton Academy's chapter of National Honor Society welcomed in eleven new members: Maria Andrade, Harry Dang, Jaquelin Dover, Gracie Feng, Aliza Harrison, Chenming Hu, Melody Luo, Leila Pagano, Yuki Shen, Avalon Taylor, Rebecca Wang. We congratulate these students on their hard work and dedication to scholarship, character, leadership, and service within our school community.

Returning NHS members include: Elise Brubaker, Joshua Davidson, Jack Jordan, Stephen Luo, Silas Miller, Sean Sompie, Arthur Wang, Julia Winkens, and Emily Xie



Arthur Wang was chosen as a semi-finalist for the National Honor Society Scholarship from among thousands of applicants across the country and multiple overseas NHS chapters. Semifinalists receive \$3,200 in scholarship money. Congratulations Arthur!

Students participate in a youth retreat



At the end of January, six Houghton Academy students (three local, three boarding) joined with youth from across Western NY for a weekend of worship, games, Biblical teaching, and intentional community. Special thanks to Pastor Jon, who regularly visits our campus to have lunch with students and encourages them to participate in local church activities.

A successful season



Congratulations to our seniors, Joshua Davidson, Micah Gena, David Hoang, Hoang Phung, and Arthur Wang, on wrapping up their basketball season and careers at Houghton Academy. **Special recognition to Josh, who is just the eighth student in school history to reach 1000 career points**, joining the ranks of Derek Brooks, Jessica Prentice, Aimee Bence, Shannon Daugherty, Tony Simpson, Stefanie Swanson, and Maggie Reynolds.

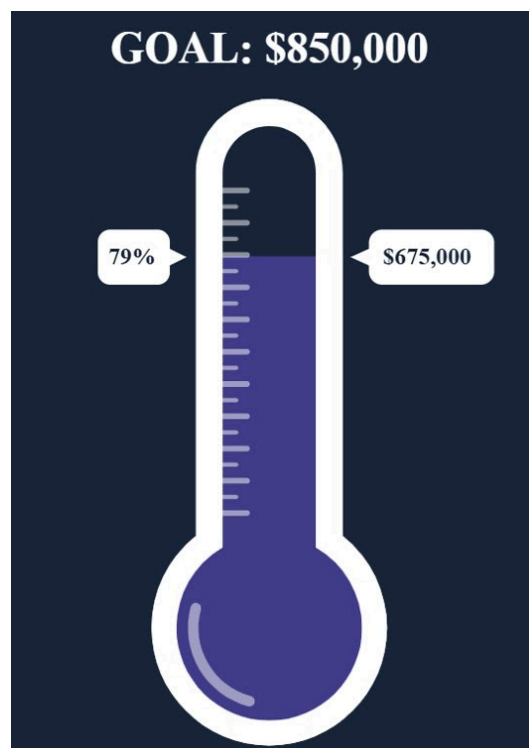
Funding Update

A message from the Interim Head of School:



“Call unto me and I will show you great and mighty things that you can’t imagine...” this slight paraphrase of Jeremiah 33:3 continues to be my daily prayer. Throughout this school year God has been doing exactly that.....showing the HA community amazing things. Chief among these is the response of HA alumni and friends to the huge financial needs.

In our September newsletter we shared the **goal of raising \$850,000** in gifts. The response has indeed been a great and mighty thing as gifts to date have reached \$675,000. **To God be the glory.**



Back in the fall with the Academy’s future in question, the board set a mid-February date for making a decision regarding the future. In early February the Lord sent some clear signs He was not through with this ministry. In three days we received gifts of \$10,000, \$50,000, and \$100,000 plus the promise of an interest free loan of \$100,000 if needed. An announcement was shared in chapel on February 5th that HA would be open for the 26-27 school year. February 5, 2026, will be a milestone marker among the many reminding all of us of the great and mighty things the Lord has done for HA.

In the midst of the good news, we are very much aware of the **work yet to be done**. Creating a workable budget for next year, recruiting students, and determining staffing needs are front and center along with raising the remaining \$175,000 needed to finish this year.

Many thanks to those of you who have given. Please pray and consider possible further giving to help us reach the goal. And please continue to pray with us for more “great and mighty things” which the Lord has yet to show us.

Thankfully,
Philip G. Stockin
Interim Head of School

Principal's Corner

From David Pritchard:



I want to begin by expressing sincere gratitude to the Lord for His provision this year. We are very thankful that He has worked through Phil and others to provide the funding needed not only for this school year, but also looking ahead into next year, allowing us to continue offering academics at Houghton Academy. **We do not take that lightly, and we recognize it as both a gift and a responsibility-**

to steward well what God has provided and to keep moving forward with purpose and faith.

As we have settled into the second semester, I've begun working through several key areas that can strengthen our day-to-day culture and raise the quality of our academic program next year. Much of this work is still in the early stages and will continue to develop through ongoing conversations, review, and collaboration. A major focus is next year's dress code. The goal is clarity and consistency—standards that are easy to understand, fair to enforce, and that help students represent themselves and the school well.

I am also developing a more routine and consistent approach to classroom observations—one that is fair to teachers and students alike and that makes sense in practice. The intention is not to add pressure, but to create a clear professional rhythm that strengthens instruction, supports teachers, and keeps student learning at the center. In addition, we are beginning to shape next year's curriculum with an emphasis on greater rigor and challenge at both levels—raising expectations where appropriate while continuing to support students so they can be successful.

A connected priority is establishing regular academic rhythms and routines that are sustainable and clear—structures that support teachers in planning, support students in consistency, and reduce avoidable confusion. When routines are solid, students are more likely to thrive, and teachers can focus on what matters most: great instruction.

Finally, I've started early thinking about chapel for next year—what we want it to accomplish, how to keep it meaningful, and what consistent elements will help it become an even stronger anchor for our community.

It's important to emphasize that all of these items are still in progress. They are subject to continued conversation, review, and refinement—and ultimately subject to approval through the Head of School's leadership and decision-making process. The encouraging part is that we are back in the regular stages

of reflection and planning that allow us to finish this year strong while building a better one ahead. There is much to do, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the work of strengthening Houghton Academy for next year.

Middle School Updates and Additions

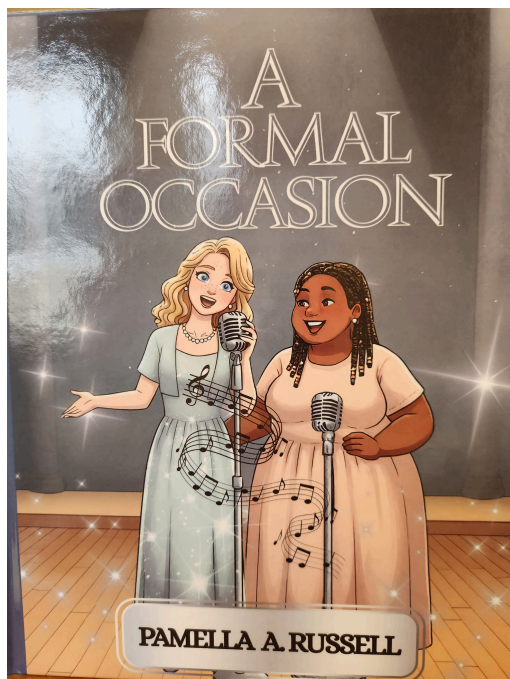
Houghton Academy's Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that we will be offering a **restructured middle school program** starting in the fall of 2026. Mrs. Nancy Gates, who has a BA in English Education and an MA in Literacy Education from Houghton University, will be directing the new program.

The four major changes include:

- **Adding a 5th grade** class
- Creating an **“electives only” Wednesday**, which will allow 5th-8th grade homeschool students to enroll for just one day per week.
- Implementing a distinctive, **interdisciplinary curriculum** built on active learning methodology
- Promoting a strong academic foundation through a limited, guided, and **graduated use of technology**

In-depth informational meetings will be held on Wednesday, March 25 or Tuesday, March 31st at 7pm at Houghton Academy. Additionally, you can email kerrie.davidson.bot@houghton.academy with any questions.

Alumni Spotlight



Congratulations to Pamela Russell, who attended Houghton Academy for two years as a boarding student from 1955-1957, on the publication of her children's book *A Formal Occasion*, which is set at Houghton Academy! We greatly appreciate her sending us a copy of the book. Locals can come see it in the main office, and others can pick up a copy using [this link](#).

Pamella was born in Buffalo, NY, but relocated to Brazil in her early teens. While living in Brazil, she graduated from a Catholic high school and later worked as a bi-lingual secretary. She fell in love with the Brazilian people, culture, language, music, and especially their rich folklore.

She is a graduate of Rutgers University with a Spanish major and followed her BA with a Master of Library Service (MLS) degree. She is also a graduate of the Institute of Children's Literature.

A Formal Occasion is a middle grade chapter book, target age 8-12, that is a coming-of-age story about finding the "perfect" dress for a big event. It is a story about the importance of friendships and how sometimes those friendships require loving sacrifices. The core message - that love is shown through action and that true friends stick together - comes through strongly."

(Note from the editor: If you have a piece of alumni news you'd like to share please email sarah.marsh@houghton.academy)

A note of thanks from Principal David Pritchard

I want to take a moment to recognize and thank several people for the excellent work they've been doing behind the scenes—and often on top of already full plates. I sincerely wish I could recognize everyone in one update; there are many more who deserve to be named, and I will make sure we get to everyone in time.

Thank you to Kathie Hilsher for her faithful leadership with National Honor Society, for holding true to our policies, and for ensuring we continue to adhere to the official guidelines of NHS itself. Congratulations to our new NHS members, and a special congratulations to Arthur Wang for receiving a national award from NHS—an outstanding accomplishment that reflects sustained effort and character. Thank you to Jeff for his consistent work with our boarding students, especially through weekend events that build community and create healthy, positive momentum outside the school day. Thank you to Doug for his work with the JV basketball team, and for now partnering with Kathie to support and strengthen our worship team.

I'm also grateful for Azmat, Caleb Hilsher, Emberlynn Nolt, and Kayann Taylor for stepping up to help cover classes for Fionah—and we continue to hope she is doing well as she adjusts to life with her new baby. Thank you to Joel for the steady work of keeping our social media updated so families and the broader community can see what is happening at the school. Finally, thank you to Shawn and his team for the essential daily work of keeping the building heated, neat, and clean, creating a stable environment where faculty, staff, and students can learn and work effectively.

Ultimately, what I get to observe every day at Houghton Academy is the realization of Paul's words: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters... It is the Lord Christ you are serving." — Colossians 3:23–24

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