

HISTORY OF CHAPTER 4617 OF THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

Near the beginning of the present century, when great increases in enrollment in the secondary schools of the country stimulated the development of the social aspects of high school through extracurricular activities, forward-looking educators began to realize that scholarship was not receiving its rightful emphasis among the social and athletic activities which already were holding the center of the stage. Incentives to improve scholarship had long been part of the administrative routine of American schools, but little effort had been made to provide social stimulation of scholarship, by having the desire to improve come from the student body itself.

The first high-school honor society that had as its primary aim the encouragement of high scholarship was the Phi Beta Sigma, organized the last day of the school year in 1903 by five girls of high scholastic standing. Under the direction of Dr. Wm. B. Owne, principal of the old South Side Academy in Chicago, the organization continued when the Academy became a part of the University of Chicago High School in 1904, and still exists as an independent society, although its rules and regulations are very similar to those of the National Honor Society.

The idea of an honor society for high schools on a nationwide basis spread rapidly, and in 1919 a committee proposed formation of such a society to the National Association of Secondary-School Principals at their Chicago meeting. The proposal was quickly accepted and the American Torch Society later to be the National Honor Society was founded.

Members of the National Honor Society must meet the qualifications of local and national constitutions. These qualifications have varied slightly through the years on such ideas as level of scholastic attainment and age of candidates. At the present time juniors in the third term and seniors are accepted into Braintree's society upon reaching a 3.2 average in four areas: scholarship, character, leadership, and service.

Our chapter was started officially with the first induction of 77 students on May 15, 1952. Miss Edna M. Parker was made advisor to the organization. She was succeeded in September, 1961 by Miss Virginia C. Olson.

Chapter 4613 hopes to continue its stimulation of social and scholastic interest for many more productive years.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna J. Hurd

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