

Basic Facts

Areté (Excellence) Diké (Justice) Timé (Honor)

Cum Laude

The presence of a Cum Laude chapter at a secondary school is an indication that superior scholastic achievement is honored. From an induction ceremony, which can range from a formal, separate event to a segment of an awards day, to service projects, scholarly writing or other scholastic activities, individual chapters of Cum Laude create programs appropriate for their own campus that benefit the larger community as well. In several schools younger students are commended by Cum Laude, encouraging them in their scholastic pursuits, while in others visiting scholars are presented by the chapter membership for the edification of all.

Operations

The affairs of the Cum Laude Society are conducted by the Officers and Regents. The Officers are: President General, Deputy President General, Secretary General, Registrar General, and eight District Regents. All are elected for three year terms at the time of the Triennial Convention. In addition there are Regents-at-Large, who are former Presidents General and who serve additional three year terms.

The daily affairs of the Society are conducted at the central office in Louisville, Kentucky under the supervision of the Registrar General. There all records and materials of the Society are kept; financial affairs are handled; correspondence is sent to the chapters; reports are collected; complete files of Cum Laude members, past and present, are maintained; and questions of operation and procedure are answered or directed to the proper Officer or Regent.

For administrative purposes, each chapter is assigned to one of the eight geographical districts, and each district is under the supervision of a District Regent. Although the districts are quite uneven in geographical size, each has approximately 40 chapters.

The Executive Committee, composed of the President General, the Deputy President General, the Secretary General, and the Registrar General, reviews the current business and problems of the Society, previews membership applications, and plans agenda for the Regents' meetings. Any three Officers, in consultation, are empowered to act on financial and investment matters between annual meetings.

Each chapter may decide whether or not to be an "active" chapter or merely to hold annual ceremonies for the induction of members. Active chapters sponsor lecture series, tutoring programs, or seminars on scholarly subjects, or produce special literary publications.

The degree to which a chapter is active in promoting the intellectual life of the school depends to some extent upon the time of year it holds its elections and the number and types of other organizations and groups already functioning in the school. If a chapter wishes, it may include in

its activities students who are not yet members, but whose academic records and scholarly concerns meet the standards of the Society.

The Chapter Secretary, a faculty member, is asked to be responsible for carrying out several important functions. Before July 1, the Secretary prepares and submits the Annual Report which gives important statistics on the elections of that year, the chapter's activities, and the names of officers for the next year and renews annual dues. The names of the officers and contact information must also be updated on the online account. Also, the Secretary records the names of the inductees on the Induction Registration Form and pays appropriate fees and places the order for the pins and certificates the chapter will need in its elections of the next school year. A Manual for Chapter Secretaries is published and distributed after each Triennial Convention.

Ten Year Chapter Review

Once every decade, each chapter is asked to file a Ten-Year Chapter Review, the purpose of which is to insure the Regents that the school is maintaining the same high academic standards that made it eligible for a charter in the Society originally. The Regents study these reports with great care.

Student Membership

Each Chapter may elect up to 20% of the members of the Senior Class in the college preparatory curriculum who have an honor record. Half may be elected at the end of the junior year or at any time during the Senior year and the remainder at the end of the Senior year. The 20% limit is not to be construed as a requirement to elect the full number permitted every year. If for some reason the chapter feels that in a particular year more than the 20% should be elected, they should seek permission to do so from the District Regent before the elections are held. Because classes do vary in academic quality from year to year, especially in smaller schools, it has been a judgment in many schools that the election of a smaller percentage will on occasion better serve the purposes and goals of the Society, and in such cases the school is urged to restrict the number of students honored by election into the Cum Laude Society. The definition of what constitutes an academic honor record and the determination of how to select members are left to the discretion of the individual chapter. Chapters shall be free to elect members who have demonstrated academic excellence in accordance with the philosophy and policies governing their individual schools. In the broadest sense, the Regents assume chapters will elect to membership only students who have demonstrated good character, honor, and integrity in all aspects of their school life. Since there are other agencies for the rewarding of achievement in areas such as social services, extracurricular activities, citizenship and athletics, Cum Laude elections should be based on academic excellence, in keeping with the original purpose of the Society.

Chapter Leadership

The operation of a local chapter of Cum Laude is entrusted to a few faculty members and administrators at each member school. Faculty members are usually drawn from those who are members of Phi Beta Kappa and others judged to have suitable qualification. Each chapter may decide whether or not to be an "active" chapter or merely to hold annual ceremonies for the induction of members. Active chapters sponsor lecture series, tutoring programs, or seminars on scholarly subjects, or produce special literary publications.

Administration

The administration of the Society Cum Laude is directed by a board of four officers, nine regents and one staff person. The daily affairs of the Society are conducted at the central office in Louisville, Kentucky under the supervision of the Registrar General. There all records and materials of the Society are kept; financial affairs are handled; correspondence is sent to the chapters; reports are collected; complete files of Cum Laude members, past and present, are maintained; and questions of operation and procedure are answered or directed to the proper Officer or Regent.

Cum Laude

The Society, a non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational organization, has financed its operations and constant growth solely by its modest fees. From 1963 to 1987, the Central Office was located at the headquarters of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) in Boston. In 1987, it was moved to the campus of Tilton School in Tilton, New Hampshire. In 1993, the Central Office was relocated to Park Tudor School in Indianapolis, Indiana, then to Florida under the same leadership. In 2008 the offices were relocated again to Louisville, Kentucky to the campus of Kentucky Country Day School. As of 2013 the Society consists of over 380 chapters, approximately two dozen of which are located in public schools and the rest in independent schools in the United States, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Canada, England, France and Spain. Some 4,000 new student members are inducted annually.

As one studies the new chapter applications and the Annual Chapter Reports, it becomes evident that more than eight decades later, Dr. Harris's dream of giving scholastic achievement in the secondary school the honor and recognition it deserves has been realized.