

A Time for Thanks...

There are many parts of a traditional graduation: the speeches, the presentation of diplomas, and the turning of the tassels. However, NISH has a long-standing tradition of including a series of special presentations in their ceremony. Each year, all members of the senior class are asked to write a letter to an especially deserving teacher, counselor, administrator, or coach. Several letters are selected from those submitted to be read at graduation, and the educators to whom the letters are addressed are invited to the ceremony. These educators are presented with commemorative plaques, and have the honor of being thanked in front of all the attendees.

The assignment: Write a letter to a teacher (or other educator) who has taught you well, given you a new way of looking at the world, gone the extra mile, inspired you, been a role model, etc. Or to an educator you simply want to say thank you to.

Your mission:

- Think back over all of the teachers and educators who have been a part of your educational career (elementary school, middle school, and high school). Select one who you would like to praise or recognize.
- Decide what made that educator special. Was it something they did or said? Their style of teaching? Their attitude toward students? Something that they did just for you?
- Write a letter (addressed to that educator) that expresses your gratitude and explains what you remember and appreciate about them and their class. Be specific and detailed. Assume that you are writing for someone who knows nothing about that class or that person (and remember that the committee who reads these letters actually does not know about your educational experiences). Tell stories about the class and give examples of your memories and experiences. Let the reader know what you felt at that time and what this experience meant to you then or means to you now.
- Submit your letter to your English teacher or to Mrs. Gipson-Turluck in D-10 by Monday, April 20th. Clean copies (especially typed ones) are appreciated.

What you should know:

- If your letter is one of those selected, you will be asked to read it and present a framed copy to your teacher at graduation.
- If there is anything derogatory or offensive in your letter, you may be asked to edit it.
- NISH attempts to deliver all of the letters to the teachers to whom they are addressed. Therefore, please mention the educator's name and the grade/school at which they taught you in the letter. Many people have contacted NISH to say how much they appreciate these letters. (Also, the letter you give us is the letter we give them. If you give us a letter on old and torn paper, this is what they will receive.)
- To guarantee your letter will be delivered, you will be asked to print the recipient's name, current school, and that school's address neatly in the upper left-hand corner of this letter.
- In the past, many parents and family members who attended graduation have commented that this is one of their favorite parts of the ceremony. Many of the letters that are presented are personal and touching, and both laughter and tears have frequently occurred during the presentations.

