



By Josh Teder '11

Thank you, Assistant Principal Nancy Barkan. It's an honor and a privilege to be back home here at Gibbons on such an important day for you students and your families. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Josh Teder. I graduated from Cardinal Gibbons High School in 2011, going on to receive a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and minor in film studies from North Carolina State University. I currently work at Red Hat in marketing and run a YouTube channel on the side called 6 Months Later. Speaking of YouTube, if you've seen the Cardinal Gibbons LipDub video from 2011, I was the guy who played Jon Bon Jovi.

So that's a little bit about me, but now let's talk about you. Today is a very special day. Not everyone becomes a member of National Honor Society at Cardinal Gibbons, so, first, congratulations on achieving this important milestone in your high school career. This is certainly a day that is cause for celebration. But as you are about to join NHS as a member, you might be thinking to yourself...now what?

I've made it into NHS, people are proud of me, now what?

For me, being inducted into NHS was not only a halfway point in my high school career; it was a catalyst that helped shape what I would do for the rest of my Gibbons experience. This was something that I only could realize now that I'm well outside of my high school years. Before NHS, I was only involved in Gibbons Drama and did not have a ton of interaction with students outside of drama. Once I was inducted into NHS and started attending meetings, I began to make connections with others through NHS activities like the Christmas toy drive, setting up for Mass, volunteering at Open House, and Freshman Welcome Day. These are connections and friendships that I wouldn't have made otherwise.

NHS provided me the opportunity to give back to the school, causing me to feel a deeper appreciation for the school I was going to and a new goal of wanting to serve it more. This would in turn cause me to become part of student council, attend the Gibbons Leadership Conference, serve as a Kairos retreat leader, and help plan out our school's first LipDub video.

Video club, in particular, had a large impact on me. I met a lot of its members through NHS, and they eventually convinced me to join, even though I was hesitant. It helped me learn the basics of videography and fostered my creativity, as well. I got to work on many fun projects, like the LipDub project. This video experience eventually led me to work for Gibbons on the side while I was at N.C. State. That experience, in turn, helped me get a job at Red Hat. It differentiated me from the hundreds of other business administration graduates out there.

When I was sitting in your shoes almost nine years ago today, it would have been hard to fathom that NHS would be a catalyst that propelled me in a direction I wouldn't have ever imagined. It reminds me of a Steve Jobs quote that made an impression on me back when I was in high school.

“You can’t connect the dots looking forward. You can only connect them looking backward. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. Because believing that the dots will connect down the road, will give you the confidence to follow your heart, even when it leads you off the well-worn path. And that will make all the difference.”

So, my challenge to you students is: use this milestone that you've achieved to its fullest potential. Get out of your comfort zone — meet and collaborate with others you wouldn't normally. Give back to your school through service. Do something unexpected of you. But most importantly, have trust in whatever path you decide to go on in your Gibbons experience, however abrupt of a change it may be looking forward. Trust in something that will make you believe that it'll all work out in the end. Doing this won't just help you in high school, but throughout your life, as you continue to develop and grow as men and women who demonstrate scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

Congratulations again, National Honor Society inductees, and I wish you all the best in your Gibbons Experience.