

# CONSTITUTION SOCIEDAD HISPÁNICA DE AMISTAD

Section 1. The name of this organization is the Sociedad Hispánica de Amistad, also known as the National Hispanic Society of Friendship, or the National Portuguese Society of Friendship, and shall be referred to in this document as "the Society".

Section 2. The purpose of the Society is to recognize scholarship, fellowship, and service by students of elementary and middle schools who are studying Spanish and/or Portuguese in the classroom, and to promote continuity of interest in Hispanic and Luso-Brasilian studies.

Section 3. The society is classified as a national and international service and academic society in the study of elementary and middle school Spanish and Portuguese and is sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP).

Section 4. Each unit of the Society located in an elementary or middle school is designated as a Chapter. The name of the Chapter shall be in Spanish or Portuguese and shall be chosen by the Chapter Sponsor. Chapter names may not be duplicated within a state and must be approved by the National Director. The person in charge of the Chapter is the Chapter Sponsor. If desired, two or more schools in one school district may form a Chapter. In such cases a teacher from each school serves as Co-Sponsor.

## **Article II**

### **Qualification of Schools and Chapter Sponsors**

Section 1. All accredited public and non-public elementary and middle schools are eligible for membership in the Society. Application for membership from a school seeking a Chapter is made on an official form provided by the National Director.

Section 2. The initial charter fee for school membership is established by the National Council. No monthly or annual dues or assessments are charged the schools affiliated with the Society.

Section 3. In order to remain an Active Chapter of the Society, the Chapter Sponsor must remit student initiation fees to the National Director each school year, together with the names of the respective students to be initiated.

Section 4. Failure of the Chapter Sponsor to remit student initiation fees to the National Director each school year places the Chapter on an inactive status and may result in the withdrawal of the charter, if the Chapter remains inactive for a period of five years.

Section 5. A sponsor who does not have an Active Chapter may affiliate with an Active Chapter in the area in order to promote Chapter activities.

Section 6. Sponsors and Co-sponsors of Chapters must be members in good standing of the AATSP.

## **Article III**

### **Qualifications for Chapter Membership**

Section 1. A student of an elementary or middle school who is currently enrolled in a Spanish or Portuguese class is eligible for membership in the Society. The student must be enrolled in the study of the language at the time of initiation.

A. Students shall have completed projects in order to be eligible for Regular Membership. It is expected that chapters will establish requirements for quality and quantity of projects. Projects shall be from each of the following categories:

1. Ambassadorship
2. Service to School
3. Service to Community

B. The National Office shall supply lists of acceptable projects to Chapter Sponsors. Sponsors may also design their own projects.

Section 2. The student membership fee payable before initiation is established by the National Council. The Chapter Sponsor must send names of all Regular Members to the National Office. Each student member will receive a Certificate of Membership.

Section 3. Members shall be invited to be inducted in a special ceremony, the text of which will be provided to each new Chapter as soon as it is activated.

Section 4. If a member does not continue the study of Spanish, or Portuguese, the student may remain in the Society as an Associate Member at the discretion of the Chapter Sponsor.

Section 5. Associate Members may enjoy limited privileges and benefits in the Society. They may NOT be eligible for special awards. Students are only eligible for the Honor Membership program of the Society if they are enrolled in Spanish or Portuguese at the time of becoming an Honor Member.

Section 6. Honor Membership may be granted to a student in the Society under the following guidelines:

A. The fee for Honor Membership is established by the National Council and shall be an amount equal to the student membership fee.

B. Each Honor Member shall receive a Certificate of Honor Membership.

C. Honor Members shall be nominated for this special recognition by the Chapter Sponsor, who must send names of all Honor Members to the National Office.

D. Honor Members shall have completed projects in order to be eligible for special recognition. It is expected that chapters will establish requirements for quality and quantity of projects that

are well above those for regular members. Projects shall be from each of the following categories:

1. Ambassadorship
2. Service to School
3. Service to Community

E. The National Office shall supply lists of acceptable projects to Chapter Sponsors. Sponsors may also design their own projects.

F. Honor Members must have completed a minimum of one full year of Spanish or Portuguese study. In the case of block scheduling, students must have completed the equivalent of one full year of study in a traditional scheduling situation.

G. Honor Members must have maintained an excellent academic record in the study of Spanish or Portuguese.

H. Each school may establish minimum academic averages required for Honor Members. Remember that Honor Memberships are only for those students who wish to go above and beyond the activities of regular members. Honor Members should set and achieve goals that are well above those of regular society members.

I. Honor Members shall be inducted by special ceremony, the text of which will be provided to each new chapter as soon as it is activated.

J. Honor Membership Ceremonies shall take place once a year. In the case of schools who have special schedules such as block schedules, Honor Membership Ceremonies may take place once each semester.

#### **Article IV National Organization**

Section 1. The Society is an affiliate of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. It is a sister society to the Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica, an honor society for high school students of Spanish and Portuguese. Both the Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica and the Sociedad Hispánica de Amistad consist of school chapters, which at this time are governed by a single National Council.

Section 2. The National Council consists of a President, a Vice President, SHH National Director(s), an SHA National Director, four Regional Directors, the Editor of *Albricias* (The publication of the high school society), and the Executive Director of the AATSP.

Section 3. In order to be eligible to serve as an officer, a person must have served for a least one year as a Chapter Sponsor and be the sponsor of an active chapter of the Society at the time of his or her election. If at any time an officer no longer serves as a Chapter Sponsor, except for the National Director who is not required to be a Chapter Sponsor, he or she may complete the

respective term of office upon approval of the National Council. Vacancies, except in the office of President (See Article VII, Section 3), are filled by the National Council.

Section 4. All elected officers are chosen by majority vote.

Section 5. Members of the National Council as such shall not receive any compensation for their services, but by resolution of the National council a fixed sum, or expenses of attendance, if any, may be allowed for attendance at the regular or special meetings of the National Council; but nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Council Member from serving the Society in any other capacity and receiving compensation therefore by resolution of the National Council. Compensation for the services of the National Director shall be granted by such a resolution.

## **Article V**

### **Legislative National Convention**

Section 1. The legislative body of the Society is the National Council, which meets each year to approve policies for the progress and welfare of the Society. The meeting is held in conjunction with that of the AATSP.

Section 2. The National Council has the power to call a special National Convention.

Section 3. Each member of the National Council has the right to speak and vote at the National Convention. Each member of the National Council shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members of the Council. The rights of the ex officio members of the Council shall be identical to those of elected members. The president may vote in all matters and business of the Council, and may vote to create or break a tie. Voting rights of a Council Member cannot be delegated nor exercised by proxy.

Section 4. Chapter sponsors are invited to attend the meeting of the National Council, but shall not be present in executive sessions and may not speak unless placed on the agenda by the National Director before the meeting, and may not vote in National Council meetings.

## **Article VI**

### **Powers and Duties of the National Council**

Section 1. The National Council is the governing body of the Society and shall have supervision, control and direction of the property, activities, business and affairs of the Society, its committees and publications; it shall determine its policies and changes therein. The policies and actions of the National Council shall be subject to the direction and approval of the Meeting of Members. Matters of general policy shall be approved by the Executive Council of the AATSP.

## **Article VII**

### **Powers and Duties of the Officers**

Section 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer and the official representative of the Society, shall preside at all business meetings of the Society, and shall perform such duties as

pertain to the office of President. The President appoints the Chairperson and new members of the Nominating Committee, the State Directors, and makes other necessary appointments with the approval of the National Council. The President is elected for a term of three years and will be retained as a member of the National Council for an additional year to serve in the capacity of Consultant to the incoming President. The term of office begins January 1. The President is not eligible for re-election for a consecutive term of office.

Section 2. The Vice President performs the duties of the President if the latter is unable to serve. The Vice President is to remain cognizant of all business and policies of the society and will serve as chairperson of one of the awards offered by the Society, as designated by the President and approved by the National Council. The Vice President is elected for a term of three years and will be considered as one of the candidates for the presidency on the completion of his or her term of office. The term of office begins January 1. The Vice President is not subject to re-election for a consecutive term of office.

Section 3. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President during his or her term of office, then the Vice President shall succeed to the office of President for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office, without any further action therefore and with all rights and responsibilities of the office. The term of office shall be for the remaining period of the former President's term of office, plus the period of time necessary to complete one full three (3) year term as President and until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and qualified, or until his or her earlier displacement from office by resignation, removal, or otherwise.

Section 4. The National Director has charge of the business management and correspondence of the Society, is custodian of all funds, collects charter and membership fees and other moneys due the Society, pays all moneys owed by the Society, and keeps an account of all receipts and disbursements for presentation to the National Council and the Executive Council of the AATSP on June 30 and at the end of each fiscal year. (The fiscal year is December 1 to November 30). No major expenditures are made without the previous consent of the National Council. At the National Convention the National Director shall report on the financial condition and state of affairs of the Society to the Meeting of Members and at other times when called upon by the President. The National Director, elected by the National Council for a term of three years, is subject to reelection by the National Council for two additional three-year consecutive terms. The term of office begins on January 1.

Section 5. The Regional Directors will nominate Chapter Sponsors for the position of State Directors and submit these names to the President for approval and appointment. The Regional Directors with the Vice President will serve as Chairpersons and administer the special awards and contests of the Society. They will remain in contact with the State Directors of their area and solicit a yearly report from each State Director. The Regional Directors are elected for a term of three years. The term of office begins January 1. The Regional Directors are not subject to reelection for a consecutive term of office.

## **Article VIII State Directors**

Section 1. The President appoints a State Director in each state or territory of the United States and in each country in which Chapters of the Society are located.

Section 2. The State Director is to represent the National Council in his or her territory and will cooperate with the National Council in carrying out the purposes of the Society.

Section 3. The State Director will maintain communication with existing Chapters in the state or territory and promote new chapter growth and reactivation of old chapters.

Section 4. Term of office shall be for three years and is subject to reappointment for two additional three-year consecutive terms.

## **Article IX Nominating Committee**

Section 1. The President, in consultation with the National Director, appoints a Nominating Committee consisting of three persons: one or two outgoing members of the National Council, one Chapter Sponsor or State Director of the Year, to serve for one year, none of whom shall be the incumbent of any position to be filled. One of these persons is designated by the President as Chairperson.

Section 2. The Committee nominates candidates for President, Vice President and Regional Directors. The slate of nominees shall be delivered to the National Director and the President by April 1. Upon approval of the slate of nominees by the National Council, the National Director shall prepare and distribute a ballot with blank spaces for writing in the names of other candidates. The ballot must be signed and returned to reach the National Director by December 1.

## **Article X Insignia**

Section 1. The insignia of the Society is the official one of the AATSP, as represented on the medals which may be awarded for excellence in Spanish and Portuguese.

Section 2. The Sociedad Hispánica de Amistad has an official seal, a copy of which will be provided to each new chapter as soon as it is activated. The SHA seal is used in conjunction with the official seal of the AATSP.

Section 3. The motto of the Society is: Todos a una.

Section 4. The colors of the society are red and gold.

Section 5. The flower of the Society is the carnation.

## **Article XI Amendments**

Section 1. Any proposed amendment to this Constitution must be signed by three officers or Chapter Sponsors of the Society and sent to the National Director by January 15. The National Director arranges for publication in ¡Albricias! of such proposed amendment.

Section 2. Any amendment so published may be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of the officers and Chapter sponsors present and voting at the Meeting of Members at the General Session of the Society at any National Convention.

## **Article XII**

### **Chapter Constitutions**

Section 1. Each Chapter of the Society may adopt a constitution for its individual government, but no part of it shall be in opposition to the stated aims and requirements as expressed in this Constitution.

## **Article XIII**

### **Chapter Regulations**

Section 1. Collection of dues for local purposes must have the approval of the Chapter Sponsor and local school authorities.

Section 2. No Chapter may impose any obligations of secrecy upon its members.

Section 3. With the approval of the Chapter Sponsor and of school authorities, a Chapter may adopt projects for raising funds or for advancing the cause of the study of Spanish and Portuguese, but always in accordance with the purposes of the Society.

Section 4. No student shall be initiated before the student's name and initiation fee are submitted to the National Director.

Section 5. Initiation ceremonies shall follow the official ritual unless permission is given by the National Director for a substitute form.

Section 6. The National Director is empowered to revoke the charter of any Chapter that has been inactive for five years or more. The names of those Chapters may then be used by any new Chapters in the same state.

Section 7. Each Chapter shall promote the purposes of the Society not only in Spanish and Portuguese classes in the school, but also in the community.

Section 8. The Chapter sponsor is to sign the list of names of new members (typed or printed) and verify completion of requirements for Membership. The list and fees are then sent to the SHA National Director, who shall send the appropriate Certificates of Membership to the Sponsor.

Section 9. When a Chapter Sponsor changes schools, it is his or her responsibility to leave with another teacher or school official all records of the Chapter and to arrange for its continuance the following year. Any change of Chapter Sponsor within a school is to be reported to the SHA National Director.

Section 10. Sponsors of Active Chapters may award the Certificado por Servicios to recognize initiated members who have rendered meritorious service to their Chapter. The number awarded is limited to 10% of the total Number of certificates ordered. The certificates may be obtained from the SHA National Director of the Society at no cost.

Section 11. Sponsors of Active Chapters may award the Premio de Amistad to the best member of the Chapter. The certificate may be obtained from the SHA National Director at no cost, and will be sent upon receipt of the student's name. Each Chapter may receive only one certificate each year for Regular Members, and one for Honor Members.

Section 12. Sponsors of Active Chapters may award the Certificado de Excelencia to initiated members, winners in the National Spanish Examinations, to the Honor Member who has achieved the highest grade point average in Spanish or Portuguese for that school year, or the members who have excelled in quality and quantity of projects undertaken and completed. The number awarded is limited to 10% of the total number of certificates ordered. The certificates may be obtained from the SHA National Director of the Society at no cost.

#### **Article XIV Emergency Bylaws**

Section 1. Additional regulations for facilitating the government of the Society and the activities of the Chapters may be prepared by the National Council whenever the exigencies for such regulations may arise.