

Purpose and History of the National Beta Club

Purpose

The National Beta Club is a student-centered organization that continually develops and nurtures individuals by providing opportunities and experiences that enable them to demonstrate the ideals of character, achievement, service, and leadership in a global community. The organization's motto is "*Let us lead by serving others.*"

History

The National Beta Club began as a dream of Dr. John W. Harris, a professor at Wofford College in Spartanburg, SC. His goal was to recognize academic achievement among high school students. The organization would also promote leadership and character, and get students involved in service work. So, in 1934 the first chapter of the National Beta Club was chartered at Landrum High School in Landrum, SC with 15 members. Formation of the club at Landrum was followed by the chartering of 8 other clubs in South Carolina before the end of 1934. By the end of the following year, there were 75 Beta Clubs in 4 other states.

Part of the success of the National Beta Club can be attributed to the fact that members were given a forum for their activities and a chance to actually come together as a group to practice leadership skills and display their academic achievements as well. One forum is *The Beta Journal* which began as a student magazine in September 1934. As expansion of Beta clubs progressed throughout the years, state and sometimes regional conventions were held. This tradition continues today with 33 conventions held throughout the United States.

In 1961 The National Beta Club Senate authorized the institution of the Junior Division of the National Beta Club. This new organization was officially named the "National Junior Beta

Club and was established to function as a separate division of the National Beta Club program. It provides an incentive program of scholastic and character excellence for students from the 5th through the 8th grade.

Currently, the National Beta Club proudly exists in 44 states and seven territories and foreign countries. More than 70 years after Dr. Harris's dream became a reality, we are still promoting his original ideals of Character, Service, Achievement, and Leadership.

Rules of Eligibility

Membership is a privilege and not a right. The qualifications for membership on the part of the students shall be: worthy moral, and ethical character, good mentality, creditable academic achievement, and a commendable attitude. The academic criterion requires that the students who are in 6th, 7th, or 8th grades maintain a 90+ scholastic record for the year. 5th graders are invited to join if they have all A's the first quarter of the school year.