

Parents and Students, Class of 2012:

I'm excited to begin communicating with you about our annual senior class trip. I know, I know, it's still only September, but through many years of chaperoning and leading this venture, I've concluded that it's almost never too soon to begin the discussion. Over the past few years we have made several key changes in our trip. The class of 2009 was the first group to travel with these new expectations and we have had three great senior trips. I wanted to send this information to you this fall and then encourage you to come to a senior trip meeting on **Thursday night, September 29 at 6:00 p.m. in the AC auditorium**. Our open house starts at 7:00 this same evening.

I'm glad to share that we will once again be traveling to the Dominican Republic with SCORE International. SCORE provides a great experience as they minister through groups like ours all throughout the year. Their ministry is expanding, and the lives of Dominicans are being changed through the willingness of Americans traveling to the island week after week. This trip has been an amazing experience for so many Worthington Christian students; thus returning each year has always been an easy choice.

I want to be forthright in saying that *the Worthington Christian Senior Trip is predominantly a mission's trip*. We have chosen to use the trip as a "ministry first" experience, not only because we're ambassadors of Christ, but also because serving the needy is both meaningful and enjoyable. While we will still travel to Catalina Island for a wonderful day at the beach, and the students will have ample time to walk down to the local beach, our main focus in going is to carry the loving Gospel of Christ to this impoverished area. We will emphasize raising money to feed the hungry. We will prepare long in advance to work with children whose native language is Spanish. We will train students to work alongside American physicians in medical clinics, seeing patients who may have never had a health check-up. Simply put, we believe that serving God will be enjoyable and meaningful.

Traveling to an area like the Dominican Republic does carry some unique challenges. These have led us to rethink some of our purposes and plans, resulting in a few policy changes toward the trip. In this letter, I would like to explain each of these to you and invite your student to participate in the senior trip.

First, there is no "ministry hour" requirement that will allow a student to attend the trip. Instead, this is the ministry requirement for the senior trip: each student will be required to use some time outside of the regular school day to prepare with their ministry team for the trip. It may be as simple as preparing a "school supplies drive" at the elementary school, or as complex as preparing their minds for assisting a doctor; consequently, we're all working together to get ready for this trip.

Second, the Dominican Republic is an environment with access to alcohol and tobacco products for our students. Any legal drinking age is regularly ignored by the bartenders. Students who would not be of a legal drinking age in the U.S. will have access to alcohol in the Dominican. With that in mind, we will be unable to allow any student to attend the trip who has drug or alcohol violations in their student discipline file. The temptation for those who struggle with addiction is far too great, and there is no feasible way to monitor every potential action on the trip. We have arranged many of the rules for the trip to safeguard against alcohol consumption as much as possible; nevertheless, a student who desires to get it will be able to do so with relative ease. (We no longer travel to a resort for a day nor do we leave the SCORE complex after dinner; both of these policies provide greater safety for students.)

Furthermore, it has become necessary that we clearly articulate expectations when it comes to the punishments for violating these rules. Any offense in the Dominican Republic involving alcohol or tobacco will carry an automatic, instant return home at the family's expense and a minimum punishment of a ten-day suspension from school. This is an area where we cannot afford to be tolerant. We realize that many families will have different standards on issues involving tobacco and alcohol. However, for this trip we must insist that you set

those familial preferences aside and submit to these standards, as there will be no negotiating once an offense has occurred.

Third, the last requirement for senior trip eligibility will be tied to the Community Life Grade which is a reflection of an individual student's willingness to comply with the regulations placed upon them. No matter how spiritedly they may disagree with those regulations, we will use it as a barometer of the student's capacity to participate in the senior trip. With that in mind, any student who has a failing grade on their Community Life Grade in any grading period prior to leaving for the trip will be ineligible to travel. This policy applies from the beginning of the school year.

Finally, please attend an informational meeting on Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup> at the AC auditorium at 6 p.m. This is primarily a meeting for parents, but seniors are certainly welcome. Even if you are undecided or leaning toward not going on the trip, please attend this meeting; in no way does it obligate you to go on the trip, but it does help to fully inform you of the trip details before you make a decision to commit or not. We'll be able to answer any questions that you may have about the trip at this time.

If you are "in the know" and do not need another meeting on your calendar, look for all materials to be posted on our senior trip web site linked from our high school page.

Thank you for prayerfully considering this opportunity,

Tom Anglea  
WCHS principal

Tom Burns  
Senior Trip Coordinator

### **Senior Trip 2012 Facts:**

**Dates:** Thursday, March 15, 2012 through Thursday, March 22, 2012

**Costs:** \$1425.00

**Passport:** Required

**Airlines:** (1) Delta Airlines through Atlanta, GA; (2) American Airlines through Miami; (3) American Airlines through Chicago-Miami

**Legacy Classic Fundraiser:** Your opportunity to fundraise for your senior trip and direct 60% of the funds you collect to your senior trip account.