

Oh, No!!! Where's My Underwear?

Preparing for the 2005 NLC: Reminders and Suggestions

Submitted by: Horalia Mora, HOSA, T.A. Reporter

Struggling for that one moment of success, I had diligently prepared for competition at the 2004 Texas State Leadership Conference. After taking the nerve-racking Knowledge Test-Pharmacology, all I could think about is how I should have studied more and hung out less with my friends. Anxiously going over the test in my mind, the doubts crept in: "Were the questions I thought I got right actually wrong? Why didn't I go back and check those questions I wasn't sure about?" So I sat there, with my head down, becoming more and more depressed, convinced that I didn't get any answers correct. The awards session began and winners for each event were announced. Beginning with 5th place in Knowledge Test-Pharmacology, the presenter called out the names, and I was sure I failed! "Well, there's always next year," I sighed heavily, in bitter disappointment. Suddenly I heard the words "First Place" and then my name and school! I was stunned! Out of my mouth came a scream of disbelief mixed with joy. I had just won first place in State Competition! Suddenly, I felt as if I had been awarded for my hard work. Feeling proud of my accomplishment, I marched to the stage to receive my award and thought, "here I come, Florida!"

If I thought studying every night to prepare for State was hard, I had no idea how tough things were going to get. Packing all my stuff and getting to Orlando was actually more difficult. The night before I left Houston, I found myself frantically packing my bags, trying to get everything crammed into as little space as possible. Hairbrush, toothpaste, HOSA books, shoes...did I really need all those clothes? Yet as I left my house the next morning, I felt as if something



was missing. I just couldn't pinpoint what it was. I assumed I was being paranoid and left for the airport. When I arrived at the airport, the answer hit me like a bolt of lightning – I had forgotten my HOSA uniform! In absolute panic, I called my brother and begged him to bring it to the airport. This time I was very lucky, as my brother unexpectedly transformed into my "Knight in Shining Armor" and arrived with my uniform in plenty of time before my plane's departure.

As the plane flew into the clouds, I began to relax. For the first time ever I would get to visit Orlando, FL. After two hours in the air, the plane landed, and I boarded the shuttle to the Marriot Hotel. The hotel was enormous; I could not believe my eyes. I was going to spend a peaceful

weekend in the most elegant hotel I've ever seen! Once in my room, I began unpacking my suitcase. Quite strangely, I still felt as if something was missing. But what could it be? I assured myself that everything I needed was with me. Still, I decided to make a checklist as I unpacked: "Shoes-check, pants-check, toothbrush-check, underwear – uh?.....underwear?" Frantically, I dumped everything out of my luggage, scattering the contents everywhere! "OH No! I forgot my underwear!"

I had forgotten the simplest of things. As I had done in preparation for competition, I should have packed just as carefully and made sure all was set according to plan. So learn from my experience and realize that every HOSA member attending Nationals needs room and time to organize. For a more relaxed trip, try not to forget anything. A checklist would have probably been a smart way to start.

So, when preparing for Nationals, remember to do the following:

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T E X A S

NLC REMINDERS

First thing to do is make sure the necessary forms for registration and competition arrive at the National HOSA office by May 15th. You might want to spend a little extra to receive confirmation from the post office that National HOSA received the information.

Next, buy traveler's checks for meals and entertainment needs. Almost all places take traveler's checks, which can be issued by your bank. Most places also take American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Bring some cash for those places that may not take credit cards. Check to see if your cell phone is nationwide and if Nashville is part of your plan. If not, it is advised to get a phone card. Be sure to check the telephone policy at the Opryland Hotel, as some hotels charge each time a guest dials out from the room. If this is the case, finding a payphone may be your best solution.

A checklist of everything you plan to take is a smart way to begin your trip. Think of and list everything you will need before you begin to pack. This will also help when you are packing to go home. After 4 girls or boys spend 5 days in a hotel room, there is a lot of sorting to be done, and at least you will know what is yours and what you need to find.

Bring a minimum of two professional dress outfits, including proper hosiery (bring extra panty hose) and dress shoes. Casual clothes, swimming suit, underwear and sleepwear can be packed in the suitcase you plan to check. But try to carry items on the plane that you will need for competition such as art supplies (no scissors or knives), scrapbooks, Researched Persuasive speeches, scrubs and anything else you would like to keep close. When checking items, remember the airlines will only allow suitcases that are 50 pounds or less. If your suitcase weighs more than 50 pounds, you will be required to pay extra. Therefore make sure you check your suitcase on the scale before leaving home.

Make sure everything is accounted for – from your HOSA uniform to your Career Health Display to your plane ticket. And make certain to include underwear!

Good Luck to all and Have fun in Nashville
at HOSA's 2005 NLC!!!

