Do you remember the first day you sat at the principal’s desk? Perhaps you were remembering your junior high school principal who supported you. Or maybe you reminisced about the principal at the elementary school where you taught. Now that you are the principal, it’s the perfect time for you to encourage others to join the profession by giving them the gift of membership in NAESP.

Teachers and students interested in becoming principals can join NAESP as Aspiring Principals for only $65! Membership entitles future principals to numerous benefits that will give them a head start as leaders. Aspiring Principals receive all of NAESP’s print and e-mail publications, and they can get more information about the principalship with full access to our Web site, www.naesp.org, and through discounts on books at the National Principals Resource Center (NPRC).

Aspiring Principals can also get started on professional development and earn credits through participation in NAESP workshops, online courses, and institutes at reduced member rates! You should also encourage potential principals to join us at NAESP’s 84th Annual Convention and Exposition, April 15–19, in Baltimore, Maryland. This is a great opportunity for both you and them to learn how to tackle challenges as well as to meet and network with other potential and practicing principals.

There are other ways to network with your colleagues through NAESP. Our new Principals’ Helpline allows members to get advice from trained and certified principal mentors. You might also want to think about taking a more active role by becoming a certified mentor yourself through our Principals Advisory Leadership Service program (PALS). For more information, go to www.naesp.org/pals/.

You know how difficult being a principal can be. I’m sure there have been times when you have thought to yourself, “I wish I had known more about this before I became a principal.” You can give potential principals the professional edge and help they need by giving them the gift of an NAESP Aspiring Principal membership or by nominating them for Aspiring Principal membership. Purchase memberships online at www.naesp.org or e-mail your nomination to membership@naesp.org. Membership and the benefits it affords may be the best gift they get this season!

Support Through NAESP’s Web Site

Being the only principal in your school comes with some disadvantages. There isn’t anyone in your building you can talk to about all of the responsibilities you have. If there is a problem with a teacher, you have to figure it out on your own. If a parent comes in with a complaint, you must handle it. Wouldn’t it be nice to have another principal you could talk to? Someone who could provide assistance, suggestions, and lend a sympathetic ear? Help is here! NAESP has developed the National Principals’ Helpline. Now you can e-mail your problem or question through NAESP’s Web site, www.naesp.org, and receive a response from a trained and certified principal mentor.

This year, NAESP has turned two of its publications, Middle Matters and Student and Community News Today into e-mail newsletters. Now you can get information with greater frequency about adolescents and community engagement. These are just a few of the electronic benefits we are offering to make it easier and more convenient for you to get the specific information you need. You will also be able to download a number of documents, including guides to No Child Left Behind and IDEA. All of our publications are archived through the Leadership Topics section, so you can browse through published articles on a wide range of subjects. Principals can also register online for professional development programs and the 2005 Convention, and use the Federal Legislative Action Center to stay up-to-date on legislation that affects principals.

To take advantage of these and other online offerings, make sure you register on the NAESP Web site, www.naesp.org. Use the tutorial that you can access from the Web site home page to help you update your profile and select your areas of special interest!