

Nationally-Ranked Speech & Debate Students Continue to Excel



Members of this year's State championship Team may have symbolically tossed their graduation caps, but their thinking caps for speech & debate remained. Well after the 2011 - 2012 school year drew to a close, students prepared for the National Forensic League (NFL) National Championships. For the first time ever, University School was represented by Middle School as well as Upper School competitors.

Leading up to the National Championships, University School seniors Dalton Feeley and Daniel Rego won the school's first national title in Public Forum Debate at the Tournament of Champions in Lexington, KY. Joshua Tupler was recognized as the sixth best speaker in that tournament, and Michael Fried advanced to the Lincoln - Douglas octafinals. Prior to this, University School's team captured the Overall State Championship title for the second year in a row as well as two other state team titles and seven individual state titles.

By the time the season-culminating event commenced, more than 2,000 students across the country had attempted to qualify for the NFL National Championships, and only 200 students advanced. University School's Matthew Linn and Joshua Tupler were among the top scholars who shined. Tupler advanced to elimination rounds in Lincoln - Douglas debate and Linn placed 8th in the nation for international Extemporaneous Speaking.

"Matthew placed higher than any other student that I have had the privilege of coaching in extemporaneous speaking," said head coach Steven Schappaugh.



Regarding the younger cadre of University School students who competed in the National Junior Forensic League National Championship, which ran concurrently with the high school version, Schappaugh said, "This was the first year that we took Middle School students, and we were thrilled that all four who attended made it to elimination rounds at a national championship."

Thomas Ebenger, Zachary Guttman, Samantha Koreman and Jacob Ronkin were the first-ever Middle School students to compete for University School. Ebenger and Guttman made the octafinals in Public Forum; Koreman was a quarterfinalist in Lincoln-Douglas and a semifinalist in Extemporaneous Speaking; and Ronkin was not only an octafinalist in Lincoln-Douglas, but also the 4th place winner in Congressional Debate Legislation.

"These four students have begun a new tradition," Schappaugh added. "We are excited to continue taking Middle School students to Nationals in the years to come."