

# National Debate Tournament

# Alumni News

*Reporting on the 2020-2021 Season and Celebrating the History of Policy Debate*

Spring 2021

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## Greetings from the NDT

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 75th NDT was held online and hosted by the Harvard Debate Council.

This issue reports on all of the tournament results from the 75th NDT, including the announcement of the award recipients for the coaching, service and distinguished alumni awards for 2020 and 2021.

The newsletter also provides extensive coverage of the 75th alumni reunion program and includes six memorials to celebrate the lives of prominent NDT alumni that we lost.

Finally, given that the first twenty NDTs were hosted by West Point, the 75th year is the appropriate time to celebrate West Point NDT history. Two stories do that -- a recounting of West Point's victory at the 1956 NDT and the origination of the George Walker second place NDT trophy.

Best regards and be safe,

NDT Alumni Committee  
Adrienne Brovero, University of Mary Washington  
Dale Herbeck, Northeastern University  
John Katsulas, Boston College  
Mikaela Malsin, Emory University

## Upcoming Tournaments

**76th NDT — March 31 to April 4, 2022**

Hosted by James Madison University  
Harrisonburg, Virginia

**77th NDT — March 26 to March 29, 2023**

Hosted by Wake Forest University  
and held at the Westfield Marriott Hotel  
Chantilly, Virginia (10 minutes from Dulles Airport)

## Contacting the NDT

Information about the NDT, including future tournaments and the posting of the alumni newsletter, can be found at our website at this link:

<https://nationaldebatetournament.org/>

Facebook users can follow the NDT at this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/National-Debate-Tournament-NDT-162782223799263/>

Alumni are encouraged to register their information to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter, along with other announcements about the NDT and related events. Please submit your information using this google document:

<https://forms.gle/hw7SCJsCm9i4TpZq5>

Ideas for future stories for the alumni newsletter can be emailed to John Katsulas at: [katsulas@bc.edu](mailto:katsulas@bc.edu)

# Dartmouth College wins 75th NDT

*Tambe & Vergho defeat the University of Michigan on a unanimous decision*

The Dartmouth College team of Raam Tambe '21 & Tyler Vergho '23 defeated the University of Michigan to win the 75th National Debate Tournament hosted by Harvard College online during March 26-30, 2021.

During the preliminary rounds, Tambe & Vergho compiled a 7-1 record, winning 20 of 24 ballots. Their only loss was to Kansas BF (8-0 and the top seed) in a split decision.

As the 3rd seed, Dartmouth received a bye during the double octo-final round. Throughout the elimination rounds, Dartmouth debated on the affirmative. In the octo-finals, Dartmouth defeated Harvard AB in a 7-0 decision and in the quarter-finals, they beat Kansas MR in a 4-1.

In the semi-finals, Dartmouth faced their closest match against the University of Pittsburgh team of Christian Mendoza & Kwudjwa Osei. By the slimmest of margins, Dartmouth beat Pittsburgh in a 3-2 decision, and advanced to the finals.

The University of Michigan team of Rafael Pierry '22 & Giorgio Rabbini '23 reached the finals by

having to debate in only two rounds. They received a bye in the double-octo finals and they walked over Michigan PS in the quarter-finals. In the octo-finals, Michigan defeated Wake KM in a 4-1 decision and in the semi-finals, they squeaked by Kansas BF in a 3-2 decision.

This set up a final round match between the two highest ranked teams in the first round at-large balloting.

In the final round, Dartmouth was locked affirmative versus Michigan. Previously, Dartmouth had defeated Michigan in round 7 when Dartmouth was negative.

In the final round, Dartmouth read a new affirmative plan: The United States federal government should not include harboring terrorist organizations under its interpretation of "armed attack" in article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

In response, Michigan read 9 off case arguments, including 2 topicality violations, 5 conditional counter-plans, and 2 disadvantages (Persian Gulf proliferation and infrastructure politics).

Dartmouth responded effectively to all of Michigan's arguments (without even arguing condo bad) and the judges in a 5-0 decision crowned Dartmouth the champion of the 75th NDT.

The victory earned Dartmouth its 7th NDT (tying Harvard for the second most), but its first since 1993. Northwestern still maintains a wide lead with 15 NDT wins.

As the coach of the winning NDT team, John Turner of Dartmouth College receives the 2021 James J. Unger award.

Holding the NDT online allowed more people to watch the final round. Prior to the NDT, observers had the opportunity to register for viewing the debates in the online classrooms. Several debates, including the final round, were also live streamed on the internet. For the final round, the peak viewing, counting persons viewing in the rooms and live-streamed, reached 752 viewers.



*Raam Tambe '21 on his graduation day at Dartmouth College*



*Tyler Vergho '23 with the permanent first place trophy, the traveling Larmon Trophy, and the Copeland Award*

# 75th National Debate Tournament

## First-Round At-Large Recipients

There are three ways to qualify for the NDT. At the end of the “regular season,” the National Committee extends an invitation to the top sixteen teams. Another forty-six teams are selected through district qualifying tournaments. To fill out the field, sixteen teams that have not qualified received “second round” bids. The teams receiving first rounds for the 2020 NDT included:

1. Dartmouth College (Raam Tambe & Tyler Vergho)
2. University of Michigan (Rafael Pierry & Giorgio Rabbini)
3. Emory University (Eugenia Giampetruzzi & Grace Kessler)
4. University of Kansas (Nate Martin & Graham Revare)
5. Northwestern University (Nina Fridman & Timothy Wegener)
6. University of Southern California (Julian Kuffour & Kevin Sun)
7. University of Michigan (Kelly Phil & Brandon Stras)
8. Wake Forest University (Ruby Klein & Alex Marban)
9. Harvard University (Kenji Aoki & Anna Farronay)
10. University of Louisville (Raveen Bryant & Deontrey Yeargin)
11. Wake Forest University (Roberto Fernandez & Tessa Harper)
12. University of Texas, Austin (Het Desai & Zachary Watts)
13. University of California, Berkeley (Julian Bellavita & Katie Wimsatt)
14. University of Kentucky (Jordan Di & David Griffith)
15. University of Kansas (Azja Butler & Ross Fitzpatrick)
16. Emory University (Andrew Pak & Shreyas Rajagopal)

## Rex Copeland Award

### ABOUT THE COPELAND AWARD

*The Rex Copeland Award is presented to the top ranked team in the first round at-large balloting. Rex Copeland, an outstanding debater at Huffnan High School and Samford University, was murdered in 1989.*

The 2020-2021 Copeland Award winner is the team of Raam Tambe & Tyler Vergho of Dartmouth College. They received first place votes from all eleven members of the NDT Committee.

Raam Tambe & Tyler Vergho compiled a record of achievement that was deserving of unanimous selection.

During the fall semester, Dartmouth’s performance was so overwhelming that it essentially clinched winning the Copeland. Dartmouth won four tournaments in a row: Northwestern Season Opener (4-2 prelims, defeating Rutgers-Newark HA in finals), University of Kentucky (6-0 prelims, defeating Emory GK in finals), Harvard College Round Robin (8-1) and Gonzaga, (5-1 prelims, defeating Emory GK in finals). Wake Forest was the only tournament that Dartmouth did not win in the fall. After going 7-1 in the preliminary rounds, Dartmouth lost in finals to Michigan PR in a 4-1 decision.

In January, Dartmouth began the next semester debating at the Fullerton/Georgetown Tournament. Dartmouth lost again to Michigan PR in the semi-finals in a 5-0 decision. In both of these losses to Michigan PR, Dartmouth debated on the negative.

Dartmouth broke their “losing streak” by winning the Dartmouth Round Robin with a 6-1 record. Tambe & Vergho also defeated Michigan PR in a debate where Dartmouth was on the negative.

In their final tournament before the NDT, the Owen Coon hosted by Northwestern, Tambe & Vergho experienced their worst performance. After going 5-1 during the preliminary rounds, Dartmouth lost in the octo-finals in a 2-1 decision to the University of Pittsburgh team of Christian Mendoza & Kwudjwa Osei.

For the entire year (including the NDT), Tambe & Vergho compiled a 87.5% won-loss record for the preliminary rounds, 90.6% record for the elimination rounds, and a 88.5% overall won-loss record.

Tambe & Vergho also earned numerous individual speaker awards. Tambe won 1st place speaker honors at the Northwestern Season Opener and the Dartmouth Round Robin and placed 3rd at Fullerton/Georgetown, 4th at the Northwestern Coon, and 5th at Gonzaga. Vergho placed 3rd at the Northwestern Coon, 4th at Gonzaga, 5th at Fullerton/Georgetown, 6th at the Dartmouth Round Robin and 7th at the Northwestern Season Opener.

Raam Tambe is a senior, majoring in Comparative Literature. In high school, he debated for Palos Verdes Peninsula High School in Rolling Hills Estates, California. Tyler Vergho is a junior, majoring in computer science major. In high school, he debated for Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, California

This year marked the sixth time that Dartmouth has won the Copeland Award. The former winners from Dartmouth were Alex Berger & Ben Thorpe (2002), Ara Lovitt & Steven Sklaver (1993), Ara Lovitt & Kenny Agran (1992), Lenny Gail & Mark Koulogeorge (1984), and Cy Smith & Mark Weinhardt (1981).



*John Turner, director of the Dartmouth Forensics Union and coach of the team that won the Copeland Award, received the James J. Unger Coaching Award for 2021.*

# 75th National Debate Tournament

## District Qualifiers and Second-Rounds

Baylor University (Chase Laibe & Ciarra McClinton)  
Baylor University (Katlin Nguyen & Anthony Wyatt)  
Binghamton University (Ronak Ahuja & Kate Marin)  
Binghamton University (Rosalisy Peguero & Harrison Picallo)  
California State University, Long Beach (Noah Christiansen & Diego Flores)  
California State University, Fullerton (Vontrez White & Jared Burke)  
Dartmouth College (Madeline Gochee & Ali Safieddine)  
Dartmouth College (Nicholas Mancini & Arvind Shankar)  
Emory University (Adrian Gushin & Henry Mitchell)  
Emporia State University Keryk Kuiper & Niko Sims)  
George Mason University (Ky Buckner & Noah Graham)  
George Mason University (Nicholas Loew & Ian Morris)  
Georgetown University (Kelly Anderson & Ethan Greer)  
Georgetown University (Kieran Lawless & Katherine Martinez)  
Georgetown University (Bernard Medeiros & Zidao Wang)  
Gonzaga University (Avalyn Hine & Holly Martin)  
Harvard University (Samar Ahmad & Aden Barton)  
Harvard University (Oge Ogbogu & Lynn Yeboah)  
Indiana University (Mehul Gupta & Aryan Jasani)  
Indiana University (Janet Oluwayomi & Payton Holland)  
James Madison University (Ashley Harris & Aubree Smith)  
Johnson County Community College (Thomas Babcock & Travis Babcock)  
Liberty University (Morgan Copeland & Natalie Robinson)  
Liberty University (Justice Wallenmeyer & Ryan Wittstock)  
Michigan State University (Duvall Adair & Piper Meloche)  
Michigan State University (Nathan Glancy & David Koster)  
Michigan State University (Lena Grossman & Ezra Serrins)  
Missouri State University (Clayton Engelby & Oliver Grace)  
Missouri State University (Zach Kauffman & Peyton Reeves)  
New York University (Faizan Hussain & Maggie Pierce)  
New York University (Alex Sherman & Eugene Toth)  
Northwestern University (Jack Landgraff & Nikola Stamenkovic Diez)  
Purdue University (Imaan Sidhu & Daniel Joseph)  
Samford University (Sawyer Emerson & Maddox Gates)  
Samford University (Alyssa Gregory & Joey Tarnowski)  
Southwestern College (Joaquin Arreola & Khamani Griffin)  
United States Naval Academy (Will Lewis & Kathleen Rock)

University of Michigan (Jeremy Margolin & Ethan Muse)  
University of Minnesota (Jordan Frese & Peter Moriarty)  
University of Minnesota (Josiah Ferguson & Bryce Rao)  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas (Max Reese & Allie Ryerson)  
University of Texas, Austin (Samantha Healey & Ben Noriega)  
University of Texas, Dallas (Dustyn Beutelspacher & Ragya Kaul)  
University of Texas, Dallas (Storm Lasseter & Hasan Mubarak)  
University of California, Berkeley (Michael Eusterman & Mark Eusterman)  
University of Central Oklahoma (Grant Colquitt & Zach Huffman)  
University of Georgia (Jack Mruz & Daniel Wakefield)  
University of Houston (Patrick Fox & Gabriella Lea)  
University of Iowa (Elizabeth Bennett & Spencer Roetlin)  
University of Kansas (Mickey McMahon & Michael Scott)  
University of Kentucky (Lex Barrett & Christopher Lucas)  
University of Louisville (Jahne Benthall & Acia Diallo)  
University of Michigan (Jeremy Margolin & Ethan Muse)  
University of Pittsburgh (Zachary Lim & Alex Reznik)  
University of Pittsburgh (Christian Mendoza & Kwudjwa Osei)  
University of Rochester (Ben Morbeck & Ali Abdulla)  
University of West Georgia (Deon Davidson & Regina Sturgis)  
University of Wyoming (Mack Kramer & Ec Powers)  
University of Wyoming (Joshua Mitchell & Kiana Radcliffe)  
Wake Forest University (Ana Bittner & Ari Davidson)  
Wayne State University (Luke Bagdon & Brandon Reynolds)  
Western Washington University (Cameron Allen & Lydia Haindfield)  
Wichita State University (Kayla Benson & Connor Mitchell)

NOTE: Three teams were added to the field to replace teams that dropped out during the tournament:

Liberty University (Kat Cazeau & Jordan Ramsey) replaced West Georgia (Deon Davidson & Regina Sturgis) before round 1  
Harvard University/Amherst College (Chris Gilmer-Hill & Rishi Mukherjee) replaced Louisville (Raveen Bryant & Deontrey Yeargin) after round 2  
University of Kentucky (Sophia dal Pra & Dashiell Weinhardt) replaced the University of Kentucky BL (Lex Barrett & Christopher Lucas) after round 5



*The University of Michigan team of Rafael Pierry '22 & Giorgio Rabbini '23 finished in second place and won the Walker Cup. For more about this trophy, read the article in his newsletter about the extraordinary debate career and legacy of Cadet George W. P. Walker.*

# 75th National Debate Tournament

## Elimination Round Seeding

1. Kansas BF (Butler & Fitzpatrick)	8-0	19 ballots
2. Northwestern FW (Fridman & Wegener)	7-1	21 ballots
3. Dartmouth TV (Tambe & Vergho)	7-1	20 ballots
4. Kansas MS (McMahon & Scott)	7-1	18 ballots
5. Michigan PR (Pierry & Rabbini)	6-2	19 ballots
6. Kansas MR (Martin & Revare)	6-2	19 ballots
7. Emory GK (Giampetruzzi & Kessler)	6-2	17 ballots
8. Fullerton WB (White & Burke)	6-2	17 ballots
9. Wake Forest FH (Fernandez & Harper)	6-2	16 ballots
10. Southern California KS (Kuffour & Sun)	6-2	16 ballots
11. Wake Forest BD (Bittner & Davidson)	6-2	16 ballots
12. Wake Forest KM (Klein & Marban)	6-2	16 ballots
13. Kentucky DG (Di & Griffith)	6-2	16 ballots
14. Harvard AB (Ahmad & Barton)	5-3	17 ballots
15. Berkeley BW (Bellavita & Wimsatt)	5-3	16 ballots
16. Dartmouth MS (Mancini & Shankar)	5-3	16 ballots
17. Minnesota FR (Ferguson & Rao)	5-3	15 ballots
18. George Mason BG (Buckner & Graham)	5-3	15 ballots
19. George Mason LM (Loew & Morris)	5-3	15 ballots
20. Michigan PS (Phil & Stras)	5-3	14 ballots
21. Georgetown MW (Medeiros & Wang)	5-3	14 ballots
22. Berkeley EE (Eusterman & Eusterman)	5-3	14 ballots
23. Michigan MM (Margolin & Muse)	5-3	13 ballots
24. Liberty CR (Copeland & Robinson)	5-3	13 ballots
25. Dartmouth GS (Gochee & Safieddine)	5-3	13 ballots
26. Pittsburgh MO (Mendoza & Osei)	5-3	12 ballots
27. Pittsburgh LR (Lim & Reznik)	5-3	11 ballots

## Speaker Awards

1. Azja Butler, University of Kansas
2. Nate Martin, University of Kansas
3. Nina Fridman, Northwestern University
4. Rafael Perry, University of Michigan
5. Raam Tambe, Dartmouth College
6. Eugenia Giampetruzzi, Emory University
7. Tyler Vergho, Dartmouth College
8. Tessa Harper, Wake Forest University
9. Grace Kessler, Emory University
10. Roberto Fernandez, Wake Forest University
11. Giorgio Rabbini, University of Michigan
12. Grahm Revare, University of Kansas
13. Julian Kuffour, University of Southern California
14. Katie Wimsatt, University of California, Berkeley
15. Ari Davidson, Wake Forest University
16. Ruby Klein, Wake Forest University
17. Vontrez White, California State, Fullerton
18. Kevin Sun, University of Southern California
19. Het Desai, University of Texas, Austin
20. Kenji Aoiki, Harvard University
21. David Griffith, University of Kentucky
22. Kwudjwa Osei, University of Pittsburgh
23. Julian Bellavita, University of California, Berkeley
24. Zachary Watts, University of Texas, Austin
25. Ana Bittner, Wake Forest University



*Azja Butler of the University of Kansas holds the Ross K. Smith Award presented to the top speaker at the National Debate Tournament.*

## LAURENCE TRIBE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

*The Laurence H. Tribe distinguished alumni award was established in 2019 by the Board of Trustees to honor NDT alumni with extraordinary career accomplishments and named the award after Laurence Tribe, who was the first recipient. Tribe won the 1961 NDT and became a preeminent constitutional law scholar at Harvard.*



*Laurence Tribe*



*Ouita Michel*



*Erwin Chemerinsky and David Zarefsky*

## Ouita Michel awarded the Tribe Distinguished Alumni Award for 2020

The 2020 recipient of the Laurence Tribe Distinguished Alumni Award is Ouita Michel.

Sherry Hall, a member of the NDT Board of Trustees and a Harvard Debate Coach, made the presentation speech.

Debating for the University of Kentucky, Ouita Michel (formerly, Ouita Papka) won the 1986 NDT.

Sherry Hall indicated that the Board enthusiastically chose Ouita to demonstrate that successful careers for debaters were possible without becoming a lawyer.

Instead of attending law school, Ouita enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America, where she met her husband, Chris. After they both graduated, Ouita and Chris relocated to Kentucky and began an immensely successful career as restaurant proprietors: Ouita, as the chief, and, Chris, as the business manager.

Currently, Ouita and Chris are operating six restaurants, a bakery and a pop-up curry operation in the Lexington area.

Sherry Hall remarked that Ouita Michel was the face of Kentucky cuisine. She has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Southern Living*, *Garden & Gun*, on the Food Network and the Cooking Channel. She was a guest judge on Bravo's Top Chef Kentucky series.

Ouita has won numerous awards, including being nominated as a James Beard Foundation Award nominee as Outstanding Restaurateur and as Best Chef in the Southeast numerous times.

Sherry Hall also lauded Michel for promoting diversity and inclusion in her businesses and for practicing sustainable food practices.

## Erwin Chemerinsky awarded the Tribe Distinguished Alumni Award for 2021

The 2021 recipient of the Laurence Tribe Distinguished Alumni Award is Erwin Chemerinsky.

Erwin Chemerinsky is the Dean of the Berkeley Law School as well as the Jesse H. Choper Distinguished Professor of Law.

Dr. Karla Leeper, a member of the NDT Board of Trustees and Executive Vice President for Operations at Augusta University, Georgia, made the presentation speech.

Leeper noted that Chemerinsky was a highly decorated debater for Northwestern, qualifying for the NDT three times. He reached the octo-finals in 1973 and 1975. He was the fifth place speaker in 1974 and 1975.

Leeper praised Chemerinsky as a prolific scholar—the author of 11 books and over 200 law review articles. He has written leading casebooks and treatises about constitutional law, criminal procedure, and federal jurisdiction. In 2016, he was elected as a fellow to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, which is rarely given to a person without a Ph.D.

Leeper concluded her remarks by declaring Chemerinsky as one of the most influential legal thinkers of today. To support her point, she read a quote from Thomas Goldstein, an NDT alumnus from the University of North Carolina and a prominent litigator before the Supreme Court. Goldstein stated: "It's impossible to overstate Erwin's influence on American law. He is the nation's leader in progressive legal thinking. Erwin approaches everyone with utter kindness and a ready smile. But he is utterly uncompromising in how he tells it like it is. In his clear eyed, laser focus, articulation of how he believes, the shift to the right, particularly on the Supreme Court, has betrayed the fundamental promises of the constitution. Everyone listens to what Erwin has to say."

## LUCY M. KEELE SERVICE AWARD

*The Lucy M. Keele award was established in 1996 by the NDT Board of Trustees in honor of the former Director of Debate at CSU Fullerton and a long-time member of the Board of Trustees, to recognize an individual for outstanding service to the debate community.*



Lucy Keele

## John Katsulas receives Keele Award for 2020

The 2020 recipient of the Keele award is John Katsulas, the Director of Debate at Boston College.

Dr. Edward Panetta, a member of the NDT Board of Trustees and the former Director of Debate of the University of Georgia, made the presentation speech. In his speech, Panetta applauded Katsulas for serving the debate community in a variety of roles for over 30 years.

Panetta first noted Katsulas' contributions to the NDT, which includes having served on the NDT Committee for 13 years. On the NDT Committee, Katsulas is a member of the appeals and alumni committees. Three years ago, he suggested reviving the long dormant alumni newsletter, and he assumed the responsibilities for developing and writing the stories for the past three newsletters.

Panetta also remarked that Katsulas has made significant contributions to the American Debate Association (ADA). He has served as its President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. On three occasions, Boston College has hosted the ADA Nationals tournament (1995, 2003, and 2016).

As the Treasurer of the American Forensic Association, Katsulas is responsible for filing the taxes for the NDT. And he continues to file the taxes for the ADA long after his retirement as treasurer.

Panetta also recognized Katsulas for revitalizing the prison debating tradition at MCI-Norfolk. From the 1930s to the mid-1960s, the Norfolk Prison Debating Society competed against prestigious colleges and boasted a record of 144 wins and only 8 losses against Harvard, MIT, Princeton, and others. Panetta noted that Malcolm X was Norfolk Prison's most famous former inmate.

After half a century of inactivity, Norfolk prison challenged BC to a debate. Katsulas accepted the offer and negotiated the details for holding a debate in December 2016. Subsequently, Katsulas has served as an advisor to the Norfolk Prison Debating Society and has assisted them in holding debates against Harvard, MIT, and Cornell.

## Matthew Vega receives Keele Award for 2021

The 2021 recipient of the Keele award is Matthew Vega. From 2009 to 2020, he served as the Director of Debate at University of Missouri, Kansas City.

Joshua Zive, the Chair of the NDT Board of Trustees and an NDT alumnus from the University of Kansas, made the presentation speech.

In his speech, Zive praised Vega for his long-time service as a member of the NDT Committee. From 2015 to 2020, he served as the District Three representative to the NDT Committee. Zive highlighted how Vega's votes on the committee always took into account the views of his district. Vega even went so far as to allow each school in district 3 to be involved in voting for the at-large bids for first and second rounds.

While on the NDT Committee, Vega served as the head of bid allocation process. He devised a google spread sheet that quickly and accurately determines how to allocate the 46 bids to the districts. Ryan Galloway, who is now in charge of bid allocation, thanked Vega for his creation.

Zive also recognized Vega's contributions in supporting the urban debate league, Debate—Kansas City. Under Vega, UMKC has provided extensive year-round support to the DKC, including hosting their city championship and providing judging and coaching assistance. UMKC and Matt Vega have also supported the Women's Debate Institute (WDI) by sponsoring fellowships for students.

Throughout his tenure at UMKC, Matthew Vega has been a strong advocate for supporting regional debate tournaments. During the fall semester, UMKC has hosted a large regional tournament called the UMKC "Baby Jo." Vega has also supported the Emporia tournament by serving as its tabulation director.

Despite enjoying enormous competitive success and providing valuable contributions to the wider community, the UMKC debate program was terminated in May 2020.



John Katsulas



Matthew Vega

## GEORGE ZEIGELMUELLER AWARD

*The George W. Zeigelmuller award was established in 1999 by the Wayne State alumni in honor of their beloved and immensely successful Director of Debate (1957 to 2006), who made countless contributions to the forensics community, including serving as the AFA president and the editor of their journal.*



*George Zeigelmuller*



*Alison Harper*



*Eric Morris*

## Allison Harper receives the Zeigelmuller Award for 2020

Dr. Allison Harper is the Associate Director of Debate at Emory University. She received her Ph.D from George Mason University. Previously, she coached debate at Samford and George Mason.

Dr. Edward Panetta, a member of the NDT Board of Trustees and the former Director of Debate of the University of Georgia, made the presentation speech.

Panetta noted that Dr. Harper is an accomplished scholar. She has presented five, top-five papers, at academic conferences and her work has been published in *Argumentation & Advocacy*.

Allison Harper has achieved a high level of competitive success. She has qualified teams to the NDT while at George Mason, Samford, and Emory. This year, Emory qualified 3 teams to the NDT and the top Emory team was ranked 3rd in the Copeland voting. And, she has coached teams to first round at-large bids at George Mason and Emory and had numerous teams qualify for the elimination rounds at the NDT.

Panetta also remarked that Harper was an exceptionally successful high school coach. While coaching high school students at North Broward and Mountain Brook High, her debate teams have won the Baker Cup, NDCA Nationals, and the Tournament of Champions.

Dr. Panetta praised Dr. Harper's commitment to coaching students of all experience levels and for serving as a mentor to young women and men. Since these are the principles that guided the career of George Zeigelmuller, Panetta concluded, Dr. Harper's was a richly deserving recipient of the award.

## Eric Morris receives the Zeigelmuller Award for 2021

Dr. Eric Morris is an associate professor and the Director of Debate at Southwest Missouri State.

Dr. Karla Leeper, a member of the NDT Board of Trustees and Executive Vice President for Operations at Augusta University, Georgia, made the presentation speech.

Leeper began her speech by mentioning the numerous coaching achievements garnered by Dr. Morris, including qualifying teams to the NDT for the past 15 years and having teams reach the elimination rounds for the past 6 years.

Dr. Morris' excellence in coaching was recognized by the NDT in 2008 when he was named the Coach of the Year. In that year, he coached teams to the semi-finals and octo-finals of the NDT. Morris is also an outstanding debate judge, who provides deliberative and thoughtful advice to improve the debating skills of students.

Leeper also praised Morris for being an outstanding teacher. As evidence for this, she cited the ability of Missouri State to field winning teams in all experience levels and winning the overall CEDA points standings.

Since 2018, Eric Morris has served as the Executive Secretary of the American Forensic Association (AFA). His primary responsibilities including maintaining membership information, producing and distributing the AFA newsletter, and overseeing the election of officers.

Finally, Leeper commended Dr. Morris for maintaining an active research program in the areas of political communication and public argumentation, while also serving in a variety of roles to promote the affairs of the NDT, CEDA, and the AFA.



# Special Awards and Honors



## Special NDT Service Award

Lincoln Garrett is the 2021 recipient of a special service award given by the Board of Trustees.

Lincoln Garrett is the Head Debate Coach at the University of Kentucky, and he received this award for helping to demonstrate the feasibility of holding debate and speech tournaments online.

Sherry Hall, a member of the NDT Board of Trustees and a Harvard Debate Coach, made the presentation speech.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in March 2020, it imperiled the holding of speech and debate tournaments as they normally were done at a physical campus. Sherry Hall credited Lincoln Garrett for helping to save debate by playing an instrumental role in facilitating a fast and successful transition to online debating.

Garrett worked closely with Priten Shah in the development and testing of the Classroom Cloud platform to enable holding the Tournament of Champions Tournament at the University of Kentucky online, which took place only a few months after the pandemic began. Subsequently, he stayed involved in providing input to refine the platform.

Sherry Hall also complimented Lincoln for writing an instructional manual for how to operate an online tournament and making it widely available to everyone. She said Lincoln went out of his way to answer questions and provide assistance to other schools



## Smith National Coach of the Year Award

The National Coach of the Year Award is named after Ross K. Smith who was the two-time national champion head coach and director of debate at Wake Forest.

The stewardship of the award began at Emory and later moved to the University of South Carolina and then to Wake Forest. Beginning in 2021, the NDT will assume control of the award.

Dr. Jacob Thompson is a Professor in Residence and the Director of the University of Las Vegas debate program.

Joshua Zive, the Chair of the NDT Board of Trustees and an NDT alumnus from the University of Kansas, made the presentation speech.

At the outset of his remarks, Zive made clear that the determination for the 2020 Ross K. Smith award followed the old rules for the award and the selection was not made by the Board of Trustees. This meant that the 2020 award was determined by a vote of the previous winners of the award.

Zive praised Dr. Thompson for building the UNLV program into a debate powerhouse. Previous to his hiring, the program had floundered over many years. With Thompson's hire in 2007, UNLV debate has witnessed a resurgence and has achieved a consistent, level of excellence.

Thompson has qualified UNLV teams to the NDT for the past 12 years. UNLV teams received first round at-large bids in 2018 and 2019. UNLV teams reached the elimination rounds of the NDT in five consecutive years, 2015 to 2019.



## Top Speaker at the 75th NDT

Azja Butler of the University of Kansas won top individual speaker honors at the 75th NDT. She became the first Black woman in the history of the tournament to be named top speaker and the third KU debater to win the award, joining Herbert Bell (1955) and Jacob Hegna (2019).

Azja and her partner, Ross Fitzpatrick, were the top seed at the tournament after going 8-0 with 19 ballots. Butler & Fitzpatrick were defeated in the semi-finals in a 3-2 decision by the University of Michigan PR.

Over the course of the 2020-2021 season, Butler earned four top ten speaker awards: 10th speaker, Fullerton/Georgetown; 6th speaker, Wake; 6th speaker, Gonzaga; and 5th speaker, Kentucky.

The Cross-Examination Debate Association (CEDA) awarded Butler the Brian "Baby Jo" Johnston Debater of the Year Award for 2021.

Butler is a junior from Lansing, Kansas and the Co-President of the KU debate team for 2021 with Nate Martin, who was the 2nd speaker at the 75th NDT.

As a team during 2020-2021, Butler & Fitzpatrick reached the elimination rounds at every tournament and earned a first round at-large bid to the NDT (ranked as the 15th best team).

Butler & Fitzpatrick are coached by Dr. Scott Harris and Dr. Brett Bricker.

# In Memoriam



## Robert D. Beck

Robert Daniel Beck, an outstanding debater for the University of Kansas, died of a heart attack on February 10, 2021 at the age of 71.

Dan Beck began debating as a sophomore at Shawnee-Mission North High School in Overland Park, Kansas. He attended the University of Kansas on a debate scholarship. It was an excellent investment by the Jayhawks.

Debating with Bob Prentice, Beck won more than 50 trophies over 3 years. During their senior year, Beck & Prentice won 78% of their 132 debate rounds prior to competing at the NDT.

The NDT is the tournament where Beck & Prentice achieved their greatest fame, reaching the semi-finals twice. In the 1970 NDT semi-final round, Beck & Prentice lost to the Canisius team of David Goss & David Wagner. However, Kansas still won the NDT, because the Kansas B team of Robert McCulloh & David Jeans went on to defeat Canisius in the finals. In the 1971 NDT semi-final debate, Beck & Prentice lost to the Oberlin team of Scott Lassar & Joe Misner, who were defeated in finals by Don Hornstein & Barrett McInerney of UCLA.

In January 1971, Beck was selected by the Speech Communication Association, along with Paul Callen of Seton Hall, to the U.S. international debate team that would take a three month tour of the British Isles. After the tour, Beck remained in Europe and worked in Amsterdam while exploring Europe by train and hitchhiking. Upon his return to the United States, Beck moved to Wichita and served as a volunteer debate coach for seven years at Wichita East.

For the remainder of his life, Dan Beck devoted himself to artistic pursuits. He created over 2000 paintings and became a master sculptor of limestone and other rocks. The marvelous sculptures and flower beds that he created in his backyard are documented in "Grassroots Artists of Kansas" and the PBS documentary, "Rare Visions and Roadside Revelations."



## Jay Busse

Jay Busse, a retired associate professor of communication studies and Director of Debate at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) for over 40 years died on November 13, 2019 from prostate cancer at the age of 72.

Busse earned his B.A. at California State University, Fullerton, and his M.A. at California State University, Northridge.

In 1969, LMU hired Busse as a lecturer and promoted him to a tenure track position in 1973. He was granted tenure in 1977 and promoted to associate professor in 1990.

As the Director of Debate, Busse's teams achieved tremendous success at the NDT. Eight of his teams received first round at-large bids. In 1982, two of his Loyola teams received first round at-large bids (Tom Cotton & Jeff Thomas; Tim Sander & John Doran).

Across three decades, Busse advanced 9 teams to the elimination rounds of the NDT, including 4 teams reaching the quarter-finals (1983, Larry Panek & Tim Sanders; 1984, Todd Gabler & John Doran; 1987, Peter Ferguson & Peter Graham; 1990, David Breshears & Madison Laird ) and 3 teams reaching the semi-finals (1985, John Doran & Peter Ferguson; 1988, Todd Flaming & Madison Laird; 2012, Jack Ewing & James Mollison).

Busse served for two terms on the NDT Committee representing District 1 (1987-1990). For many years, he served as a member of the committee that ran the District 1 tournament.

For more than two decades, Busse hosted large high school tournaments at LMU and developed the Urban Debate League on the West Coast, and was also a pioneer in the development of the U.S. Universities Debate Championship and Parliamentary Debate.

Jay Busse retired from Loyola in 2015.



## Brian T. Fletcher

Brian Thomas Fletcher, a former Northwestern University debater, died on April 5, 2021 at the age of 46.

While attending Northwestern, Fletcher emerged as one of the top debaters in the United States. He reached the elimination rounds of the NDT in three different years: in 1995 with Terry Johnson, octo-finals; in 1996 with Terry Johnson, double octo-finals; and in 1997 with Leslie Mueller, octo-finals.

Brian also received two first round at-large bids to the NDT (1996 and 1997) and won 16th place speaker honors in 1996 and 20th place speaker honors in 1997 at the NDT.

After graduating from Northwestern, Brian attended medical school at the University of Chicago and received his medical degree in 2004. He completed his residency and training as an emergency room physician at New York University. He enjoyed his experience so much that he worked as an E.R. doctor for the remainder of his life.

Brian worked as an ER physician at numerous hospitals, including Stamford Hospital in CT (2008-2010), Bronx Lebanon Hospital in NY (2010-2014), and Bellevue Hospital Center in New York City.

Upon moving to California in 2014, Brian worked as an E.R. doctor at Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena, Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in Burbank and Providence Cedar-Sinai and EXER Urgent Care in Los Angeles.

His good looks and humor led to a television career, playing the role of Dr. Fletcher in a TLC series. In March 2021, he announced on social media that he was signed to act in another television series for A & E.

# In Memoriam continued



## Lee R. Polk

Lee Rivers Polk, a retired professor of communication and former Director of Debate at Baylor, died on March 16, 2021 at the age of 79.

Polk graduated from North Texas State University in 1962, where he competed on the debate team. He received his Master's degree and Ph.D. from Purdue University, where he served as a graduate assistant under Ronald F. Reid. He shared an office with Ronald J. Matlon (former Director of Debate at the University of Massachusetts).

In the fall of 1970, Polk became the director of debate at Baylor, replacing the legendary Glenn Capp. In 1975, Polk coached Jay Hurst and David Kent to Baylor's first NDT championship.

In May of 1978, Polk stepped down as the debate coach to become the Chair of the Communication Department. He stayed involved with debate by serving a term on the NDT Board of Trustees, including serving as its Chair from 1995 to 1996.

His friend of 60 years, Dr. Matlon said Lee Polk was well read, solidly opinionated, an engaging conversationalist, and a great humorist. Polk once said that he grew up in a small Texas town where Velveeta could be found in the gourmet section of the local grocery store!

Polk had an enormous influence on high school debate. Every summer, the Baylor debate workshop taught hundreds of high school students. The Baylor workshop ran two sessions that lasted two weeks in length. Typically, each session attracted over 300 students. In 1977, the Baylor workshop was attended by 750 students from 42 states.

An even greater influence on high school students were *The Baylor Briefs*, which Polk co-authored and founded. *The Baylor Briefs* became the most widely distributed evidence debate handbook used by high school students.

In 2003, Polk retired from Baylor after teaching for 33 years. In retirement, he moved to San Diego with his partner, Bob Betzer.



## Daniel P. Sturgis

Daniel P. Sturgis, a former Northwestern debater, died in late September 2020 at the age of 50.

While debating for Northwestern from 1988 to 1992, Sturgis qualified to the NDT in 1990, 1991, and 1992. In 1991, he received a first round at-large bid (with Beth Murphy) but did not make the elimination rounds. The following year, Sturgis & Murphy did not receive a first round but reached the quarter-finals of the NDT.

After graduating from Northwestern with a degree in philosophy and political science, Sturgis attended graduate school in philosophy at the University of Colorado, Boulder, where he received his Ph.D. in 2002. The title of his dissertation, "Prairies and Paintings: The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature and Art," reflected his great love of the outdoors.

After receiving his Ph.D., he taught philosophy courses at the University of Colorado, Boulder, first as an Instructor and then in 2010, as a Senior Instructor. Three of his most popular courses were 'War and Morality,' 'Social and Political Philosophy,' and 'Environmental Ethics.'

Dan also served as the academic advisor to all undergraduate majors and minors in philosophy and he directed numerous undergraduate and graduate students in independent studies in Philosophy and Environmental Studies.

Dan was also one of the founders of the department's philosophy outreach program (POPCO) and served as its faculty advisor for many years. He also directed the Summer Philosophy Institute of Colorado in 1997-8 and 2005-6.

The Colorado (Boulder) philosophy department praised Sturgis' teaching, remarking that his students were unanimous that Dan was "funny, nice, and down to earth," and they lauded him for his "engaging and interactive" teaching style and his "consistent clarity and fairness in all of his interactions with them."



## Nick O. Watts

Nicholas Ogden Watts, a championship debater for the University of Oklahoma, died on February 10, 2021 at the age of 33.

Nick Watts began debating in high school at Heritage Hall in northwest Oklahoma City. He won the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (SSAA) class 6A debate championship, and received a scholarship to debate at Wake Forest. After debating for one year at Wake, Nick transferred to the University of Oklahoma.

Debating with RJ Giglio, Nick Watts achieved great success at the NDT. They advanced to the elimination rounds of the NDT in 2008 (double octo-finals), 2009 (octo-finals), and 2010 (double octo-finals). Watts & Giglio also received first round at-large bids to the NDT in 2009 (ranked 16th) and 2010 (ranked 12th). At the 2010 NDT, Nick Watts won 7th place speaker honors.

Watts & Giglio were also two-time winners of the Cross Examination Debate Association's (CEDA) championship tournament. In 2009, Watts & Giglio defeated Towson in a 7-4 decision and in 2010, they defeated Whitman in a 6-3 decision. At the 2010 CEDA Nationals, Nick Watts won top speaker honors.

After graduating from Oklahoma, Nick stayed involved in debate by coaching at numerous debate camps, coaching for a time at Harvard, and going abroad to coach debate for three years in Korea and China.

Over the last two years, Nick suffered from a debilitating condition called Guillain-Barré syndrome. This is a rare but serious autoimmune disorder in which the immune system attacks healthy nerve cells. It causes muscle weakness, reflex loss, and numbness or tingling in parts of the body.

At the time of his death, Nick was finishing his last year of law school at the University of Oklahoma.

# The Story Behind the Walker Cup

Beginning with the 19th National Debate tournament (NDT) in 1965, the George W. P. Walker Cup trophy was established as the traveling trophy presented to the second place team. David Johnson and Glen Strickland of Northeastern State College were the first team to receive the Walker trophy. For the prior eleven years, the Military Education Foundation trophy was given to the second place team.

The Walker trophy was donated by the West Point class of 1958 to honor the memory of Lieutenant George W. P. Walker, who tragically died in a plane accident on January 31, 1959.

But, before becoming the second place trophy for the NDT, the Walker trophy was awarded to the top cadet team who competed in an intramural debate competition. In this tournament, each cadet company fielded a debate team and debated the national topic ten times, taking the affirmative and negative sides against teams within their regiment. Much like a regular debate tournament, the winning teams advanced in a round-robin format until the best two teams faced off for the brigade championship.

On April 6, 1960, before the entire Corps at the noon meal in Washington Hall, General Davidson made the presentation of the first Walker Trophy to the winning company, M-1.

The same Walker Trophy awarded to the winner of the intramural debate tournament among the West Point cadets was donated in 1965 to the NDT by Mr. and Mrs. Walker. Given their son's exemplary record in collegiate debating, they thought it was appropriate that the Walker trophy should be given out at the NDT.

However, George Walker should be remembered for much more than being an outstanding debater. His life-story and record as a cadet were truly remarkable.

George William Patrick Walker originated from Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Regis High School, a Jesuit School on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. He received his appointment to West Point from Congressman Francis E. Dorn, who represented the 12th district of New York.

In his first year at West Point, Walker won the West Point Debate Council's novice tournament. In his second year, he won the 1956 Tau Kappa Alpha National Conference Tournament, where he received 4th place speaker honors among 178 participants. He also won the William & Mary tournament in February and the NDT in April, where he won 8th speaker honors. In his third year, he nearly won the NDT again, losing to Philip Hubbard and Norman Lefstein of Augustana, Illinois in the final round on a 5-4 decision. In his senior year, Walker served as president of the USMA Debate Council.

In June 1958, Walker graduated as the top academic student of his class. At the ceremonies, the Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy, Lieutenant General Garrison Davidson, commissioned Walker as a Lieutenant in the United States Army.

Walker also received 5 major awards upon graduation. In the *Congressional Record* of February 2, 1959, Representative Dorn described these 5 awards: "For having the highest rating in mechanics of fluids, a portable typewriter, presented by the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. For excellence in intercollegiate debating, a wristwatch presented by the Consul General of Switzerland. As the No. 1 man in military topography, a wristwatch presented by the Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. The Francis Vinton Greene Memorial, caliber .45 pistol, presented in the name of Mrs. Green, for standing No. 1 in general order of merit for 4 years; a set of books presented by the American Bar Association for having the highest rating in law; a silver tray--called the Eisenhower Award--presented

by Mr. Charles P. McCormick of Baltimore, Md., for excellence in military psychology and leadership."

After graduation, George Walker was assigned for basic training to Fort Benning, a United States Army base in Georgia. At Fort Benning, he received training at the Army Armor School, whose primary focus is on the maintenance of battle tanks, armored vehicles, and other weapon systems.

Only seven months after his graduation, 2nd Lt. Walker died in a plane crash. He was a passenger in a private, small plane, flying out of Lawson Field in Columbus, Georgia with an intended destination of Floyd Bennet Airport in New York. He was flying home to Brooklyn before being sent overseas to an assignment in Korea. The pilot of the plane was Lt. Cary W. Martin, a classmate of Walker's. While attempting an emergency landing, the plane clipped a telephone pole and landed upside down in a field near Fountain Inn in Greenville County, South Carolina. Martin and the other passenger, Lt. Tomas Carpenter (also a classmate and debate partner), survived the crash.

Despite achieving tremendous academic success and winning a plethora of debate trophies, George Walker remained a humble cadet. Writing in the *Assembly* magazine of West Point, Fred Walker, (George's brother), observed that George's true glory was in developing friendships. He wrote that, "George was like the legendary Johnny Appleseed, sowing friendship, warmth and kindness wherever he went across the nation."

In 1999, West Point paid further tribute to the legacy of George Walker by naming a room after him in Lincoln Hall. The dedication ceremony was attended by George's three sisters, Pat, Karen and Diane; his debate coach, Lieutenant General Abbott C. Greenleaf, USAF Retired; Tom Carpenter, one of the two survivors of the plane crash; Jim Murphy's widow; and more than 30 classmates.



From left to right: Cadets George W. Walker and James Murphy with Captains W. F. Lackmann, R. A. Hansen, and A. C. Greenleaf, with trophies awarded to 2nd place winner at 1956 NDT; Walker, first in his class, being commissioned in 1958; and presentation of the inaugural Walker Cup to Cadets Fishburne and Olejniczak in 1960. Walker's parents are second from the left and far right.

# 75th NDT Alumni Reunion: Debate Through the Decades

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the NDT, Harvard hosted an online reunion program for alumni held after the conclusion of round 6 on Saturday, March 27th. The program had two features. In the first part, NDT alumni from the 1960s to 2020 described what it was like debating during their decade. At the conclusion of these remarks, alumni had the opportunity to meet in smaller gatherings in breakout rooms organized by decade.

## 1960s

Bob Shrum, who debated for Georgetown from 1961 to 1965, began the alumni festivities by recalling what it was like debating during the 1960s.

Shrum was the best debater in the early history of Georgetown debate. He earned 1st place speaker honors at the 1965 NDT and placed 3rd in 1964. He reached the semi-finals twice: losing to Boston College in 1964 (debating with John Hempelmann) and to Northeastern State in 1965 (debating with John Koeltl).

In the 1960s, formal attire was a requirement, said Shrum. Males wore a jacket and tie. Shrum observed that most the debaters who competed during the 1960s were male and white. Persuasive speaking was essential to success. Shrum stated legendary debate coaches like Dr. Huber from Vermont were opposed to rapid delivery.

Shrum also claimed that the announcement of the 1967 debate topic, “Resolved: That the United States should substantially reduce its foreign policy commitments,” was a major reason for why West Point stopped hosting the NDT. President Johnson, he said, pulled the plug on hosting the NDT at West Point due to his support for the Vietnam War.

In closing, Shrum stated his involvement in debate exposed him to some of the best minds and people that he has ever met.

## 1970s

The decade of the 1970s was recalled by former Harvard debaters, John Bredehoft and Michael King, who debated in the latter half of the 1970s. King and Bredehoft won the NDT in 1979.

Bredehoft began by describing how the qualification process for the NDT evolved during the 1970s. In a radical break from tradition, he noted that the

NDT allowed for the first time in 1970, for schools to qualify a second team. West Point, as the first host in 1947, established the tradition of only allowing one team per school.

It was not until 1973, Bredehoft observed, that the current structure of the NDT came into existence. While the first round at-large bids, second rounds, and the district qualification process existed in 1970, the NDT experimented in 1971 and 1972 with a new way to qualify. A team could gain automatic entry to the NDT by winning one of the ten designated tournaments.

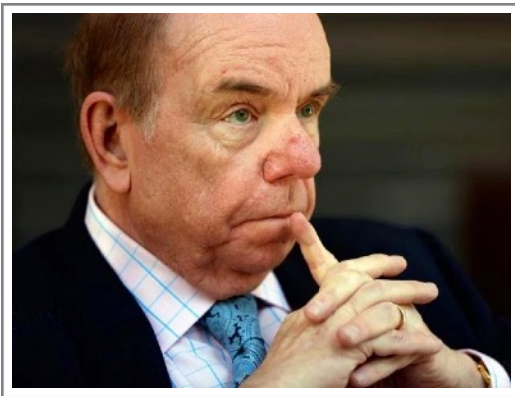
In 1973, this experiment blew up over an inability to agree on which ten tournaments should be designated. Thereafter, the NDT increased the number of first round at-large teams to 16. And “lo and behold”, Bredehoft, noted, cross-examination was adopted.

Michael King spoke about the emergence of new theoretical innovations. At the beginning of the 1970s, he said teams presented affirmative cases based on contentions and comparative advantages. By the end of the decade, King stated the focus had shifted to public policy making and truth seeking,

King also noted that the argument forms became more varied, particularly in the later part of the 1970s. The traditional counterplan was supplemented by the study counterplan, conditional counterplan, and process counterplan. Standard negative arguments like the Malthus and social priorities disadvantages became more fully developed.

Like the 1960s, King observed that a majority of debaters wore formal attire. And, while the amount of research increased during the 1970s, the evidence looked very much the same as the 1960s. Debaters wrote or typed their evidence on 4 x 6 index cards. These index cards were filed in metal trays and stored in brief cases. Top debate teams carried a dozen or more, brief cases filled with evidence cards and file folders containing briefs of arguments.

To illustrate the point about the proliferation of evidence, Bredehoft recited a story about winning a debate round against a non-topical affirmative plan defending the health benefits to eating low fiber foods. Bredehoft said Harvard won that debate by going to brief case number 23 and finding 200 cards refuting the validity of the studies advocating for the low fiber food diet.



*Robert Shrum*



*John Bredehoft*

# Debate Through the Decades continued



*Michael King*

Bredehoft argued that judging practices have changed for the worse. In the 1970s, he observed, judges acted more autonomously. He believed that today's judges were too focused on looking at the transcript of the debate. Back in the 1970s, Bredehoft observed, judges took into account the comprehensibility, persuasiveness, and even the personality of the debaters.

However, King did acknowledge one negative aspect to debating in the 1970s. The activity was largely dominated by white males and debate arguments did not recognize the existence of white privilege. He gave the example of a debate topic calling for increased police surveillance, where no teams made arguments for how this would disadvantage communities of color.

## 1980s

For the decade of the 1980s, Lenny Gail, the 1984 NDT champion and top speaker from Dartmouth, and Craig Budner, the 1987 NDT finalist from Dartmouth, provided their recollections of that decade.

Budner noted three characteristics to debating in the 1980s. First, computers did not exist for much of the decade. This required students to use typewriters to produce their arguments. He explained that evidence was typed on ditto paper and duplicated on a ditto machine. Second, cell phones did not exist. This made it impossible to locate your coach or other squad members after rounds. Third, debaters waited for long periods of time for the release of pairings. This was due to judge ballots having to be collected and tabulated by hand.

Lenny Gail recalled that students actually debated the topic, that topicality was a voting issue, and that world government was the most popular counter-plan.

More important to how debate was conducted during the 1980s, Gail said, was reminiscing about where all of his former debate colleagues ended up. A good many, Gail stated, pursued careers as successful lawyers.

One successful lawyer was Paul Brand, a 1983 NDT quarter-finalist from Georgetown, who became one of the foremost arbitration lawyers in the United States. One evening while watching a Paul Brand appearance on Nightline, Mark Koulogeorge (Gail's debate partner) called Lenny to ask if Paul Brand really knew everything in the world about arbitration law. Lenny Gail said he is certain that he answered yes.



*Mark Koulogeorge and Lenny Gail*

The debaters from the 1980s achieved fame in a variety of non-legal careers. Gail cited colleagues that became venture capitalists, biology professors, Hollywood producers and screen writers, university administrators, management consultants, and hedge fund managers.

Gail and Budner were gratified that many of the debaters from their era went on to become debate coaches. They cited two in particular that stood out to become hall of fame coaches. First, there was Scott Deatherage, who was a very fine debater for Baylor, reaching the octo-finals at the 1984 NDT.

But, as a debate coach, Gail said, Deatherage became a titan by winning 7 NDT championships before moving on to become the Executive Director of the Urban Debate League of Chicago.

In closing, Gail and Budner said they wanted to salute a second debater from the 1980s, Sherry Hall, who debated for North Texas State. Gail said that while Sherry Hall was a very good debater, she achieved far greater success as a debate coach at Harvard, where her teams won the NDT twice (1990, 2016) and reached the finals three times (1992, 1994, 1995).

In closing, Gail and Budner thanked Sherry Hall for hosting the NDT online and for recruiting a bunch of yokels like them to speak at the reunion program.

## 1990s

Steven Sklaver and Ara Lovitt, the 1993 NDT champions from Dartmouth, spoke on behalf of the debaters of the 1990s. Sklaver & Lovitt, provided an entertaining and satirical account of events that transpired during the 1990s.

Lovitt argued that debate reached its pinnacle in the 1990s, and then, suggested, it may have reached its peak at the NDT in Waterloo, Iowa that he won in 1993. Lovitt then observed, that debate in the 1990s was not subject to the common criticism that debate promoted unrealistic arguments (i.e., claiming every impact leads to extinction). As an example, he recalled that the central issue of the 1993 NDT finals debate was on whether genocide was good because it could reduce the surplus population.

# Debate Through the Decades concluded

Lovitt also commented on the emergence of critique arguments that began to be argued during the early 1990s. He claimed it was reaction to the style of policy debate that was heavily focused on policy research. Lovitt said that he and Sklaver marveled at the ingenuity of the critique because they were taught that disadvantages had to be unique.

Not to be outdone, Sklaver remarked that to win the NDT in the early 1990s, you had to have the last name of Cole, have gone to St. Mark's, or have gone to a school with someone from Harvard, either the high school or the college. To win the NDT in the second half of the 1990s, Sklaver said, basically, you had to have gone to Northwestern. He pointed out the dominance of Northwestern in the last half of the 1990s by winning four NDTs. Sean McCaffity and Jody Terry won the NDT in 1994 and 1995 and Michael Gottleib and Ryan Sparacino won the NDT in 1998 and 1999.

Closing with a serious message, Lovitt remarked that "the 1990s were a powerful decade in debate. New and innovative arguments, tremendous teams and topics, and wonderful coaches and teachers like Scott Deatherage, Ross Smith and Ken Strange, who sadly are no longer with us but whose legacy and memory lives on. In short, the 1990s in debate were like every other decade in debate. The decade where bright and talented students and coaches devote themselves to this activity that is both wonderful and educational."

## 2000s

For the decade of the 2000s, Julie Burke and Aimi Hamraie, the 2007 NDT champions from Emory, provided their insights on debating then.

One of the biggest changes, they said, was the emergence of technology that allowed for the production of evidence by using electronic means. Instead of cutting and pasting evidence from paper sources, students now transferred text from articles found on-line and formatted the evidence in electronic files.



*Julie Burke and Aimi Hamraie*

But because cloud storage of files did not yet exist, debaters had to print out their evidence files and carry them in rubber tubs or banana boxes. The emergence of lap top computers also influenced debate. Julie Burke stated that the availability of lap tops allowed her to type out overviews for her speeches.

A major change in argumentation style evolved during the 2000s. Aimi Hamraie observed that schools like Louisville, Oklahoma, and Towson began to challenge the format of debate for excluding students of color. They argued that the conventional style of debate grounded in rapid delivery and evidence production privileged white debaters. They used songs, poetry, and personal narratives to challenge the dominant format of debate practiced in the 2010s.

## 2010s

Lastly, for the decade of 2010s, two NDT champions from Harvard and Rutgers provided their perspectives.

Hemanth Sanjeev, the 2016 NDT champion from Harvard, made two major observations. First, he said that the decade witnessed an openness to the inclusion of diverse arguments and perspectives, including arguments grounded in critical theory and identity politics. Second, Sanjeev noted the rapid expansion of technology in debate. The most prominent development was the movement toward debating paperless and the storing of all debate arguments in the cloud. Moreover, there is now an expectation that debaters should post their arguments and/or citations to the NDT/CEDA debate wiki web page.

Devane Murphy, the 2017 NDT champion from Rutgers, Newark, provided written remarks. Murphy wrote that the decade from 2010 to 2020 was transformative in promoting the inclusion of diverse perspectives. In particular, he noted the success of identity politics arguments. For example, he cited the fact that in 2013, the NDT had its first black and queer champion and in 2014, the NDT had its first black top speaker winner.



*Hemanth Sanjeev*

# West Points Wins the 1956 NDT

At the 10th annual National Debate Tournament (NDT) occurring over April 26-28, the United States Military Academy defeated St. Joseph's to become the debate champion for 1956.

In 1956, the NDT expanded the number of teams qualifying from thirty-four to thirty-six. All teams qualifying did so by participating in one of eight district tournaments.

The preliminary rounds were held on Thursday, April 26 and on Friday, April 27, with four rounds taking place on each day. Sixteen teams qualified for the elimination rounds which began on Saturday, April 28th.

The debate topic for 1956 was, "Resolved: That the Non-Agricultural industries should guarantee their workers an annual wage."

During the preliminary rounds, the West Point team of George Walker and James R. Murphy achieved a record of 6-2 with 17 ballots. That performance made them the third seed for the elimination debates.

In their march to the final round, Walker & Murphy's first obstacle was to defeat, the formidable, 14th seed from the University of Alabama in the octo-finals. Dennis Holt of the Alabama team was the defending national debate champion, having defeated Wilkes College in the previous year's NDT final round (debating with Ellis Storey). But, debating in 1956 with Murray Allen, Holt and Alabama's dream of winning a second NDT ended with a 4-1 loss to West Point.

The quarter-finals debate emerged from what can only be described as bizarre circumstances. The opponent from the University of San Francisco (USF), Tom Jennett and Frank Trumbower, were two freshmen who did not learn they were going to the NDT until the Monday prior to the tournament. At the last minute, the team from the University of Southern California dropped out. USF and Pepperdine were the two alternates from district

one. However, the district had no procedure for selecting a replacement team.

Therefore, the debate moderators from the two schools spoke on the phone and agreed to flip a coin to determine the replacement team. Dr. Emmett Long, the Director at Pepperdine, was assigned the task of flipping the coin, and Father Willis Egan of USF was instructed to call the flip. At precisely 3 pm on April 23, Dr. Long tossed the coin on his desk. Father Egan called "tails", and the coin came up "tails." And so the matter was settled: USF would debate at the NDT.

Given the late entry, the USF team of Jennett & Trumbower performed brilliantly. They won five debates--defeating Duke, Vermont, Abilene Christian, Puget Sound, and even, Princeton, the top seed. In their quarter-finals debate against West Point, they nearly toppled the mighty Army team, losing in a very close 3-2 decision.

In the semi-finals, Walker & Murphy debated the 7th seed from Greenville College in Illinois. The Greenville team of Gary Cronkhite and Ronald Werner were a very good team who had placed second in the Xavier tournament that year. In the quarter-finals of the NDT, they upset the second seed from Macalester. But, they were no match for Army, who defeated them in the semi-finals.

The St. Joseph's team of John P. Foley and John F. Gough (referred to as the "two Johns" by their Villiger Debating Society members) entered the elimination rounds as the 8th seed after going 5-3 with 15 ballots during the preliminary rounds.

To reach the final round, Foley & Gough had to defeat some very impressive teams, beginning with an octo-final debate against the 9th seed from the University of Illinois (Chicago). Joseph W. Wenzel and Bernard Baum of Illinois (Chicago) finished as the first place team in their tough district qualifying tournament held at Purdue.

An interesting aside is that Joseph Wenzel went on to become a prominent argumentation scholar at the

University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana), who served as the editor of the *Journal of the American Forensic Association* (JAJA) (1983-1986). Several of his undergraduate students also became famous argumentation scholars, including Dale Hample, Daniel J. O'Keefe, and Charles Arthur Willard (former Dartmouth co-director of debate).

After defeating Wenzel & Baum in the octo-finals, St. Joseph's met the top seed from Princeton University. Thomas J. Farer and John H. Lewis of Princeton were 6-2 with 17 ballots during the preliminary debates. Their two losses were to Augustana (Illinois) and the University of San Francisco. In a 4-1 decision, St. Joseph's defeated Princeton and ended their hopes for winning a national title.

In the semi-finals, St. Joseph's debated the perennial powerhouse debate program, Augustana (Illinois). That year, Phillip Hubbard and David Fleming of Augustana took first place at the Xavier tournament. Hubbard, a sophomore from Rock Island, was also the top speaker at the NDT. But, Hubbard would have to wait another year to win the NDT (Hubbard would win the 11th NDT debating with Norman Lefstein), as Augustana was defeated in the semi-finals by St. Joseph's.

In the final round of the NDT, St. Joseph's debated on the affirmative side. John Foley delivered the first affirmative constructive speech. In that speech, Foley defined the meaning of a guaranteed annual wage to be the government guaranteeing 52 weeks of employment to every worker not involved in agricultural production.

The harms the plan intended to solve for were the existence of involuntary unemployment caused by seasonal fluctuations and cyclical downturns. Foley cited the examples of the automobile and farm machinery industries for support that seasonal fluctuations result in chronic layoffs of workers. He pointed to the 1938 depression, when the unemployment rate soared to 24.2 percent, as evidence for the occurrence of cyclical economic downturns.



From left to right: Walker and Murphy winning the 1956 NDT; John P. Foley and John F. Higgins of the Villiger Debating Society at St. Joseph's University; and Walker and Murphy pose with West Point Superintendent Blackshear M. Bryan after winning the 1956 Tau Kappa Alpha National Conference.



# 1956 NDT continued

Because the status quo system of unemployment compensation was inadequate to deal with seasonal and cyclical downturns, St. Joseph's advocated a plan to provide 60 to 70% of the worker's normal weekly take-home pay based on the number of household dependents. Under this plan, an individual had to accept suitable employment if offered and would be eligible for the guaranteed wage after being employed for four months. Thereafter, a person would receive one week of compensation for every two weeks they worked for up to 52 weeks. The higher income payouts under their plan as compared to unemployment compensation, Foley argued, was vital to providing greater stabilization to the economy.

St. Joseph's explained that their plan would be financed by increasing the payroll taxes paid by employers. The revenue would be invested in government bonds with the proceeds creating a reserve fund for providing the compensation to workers.

If this explanation of the St. Joseph's plan appears vague and confusing to the reader, you are not alone. Six judges voted against this plan for precisely that reason.

In his first negative speech, George Walker of West Point, pointed out some of the major flaws with the affirmative plan. First, he argued that the guaranteed annual wage was not an effective solution to preventing cyclical or seasonal downturns. The main cause for these periods of economic dislocation were the lack of demand for products. A higher wage would not solve for demand-induced economic declines.

He pointed out that eliminating unemployment compensation would harm more workers overall. For example, Walker pointed out that under the affirmative's plan, any person who has worked for less than 4 months would not receive a guaranteed wage. That, he argued, was counter-productive in stimulating consumer demand.

Moreover, Walker argued that the workers who get laid off first are those with the lowest seniority. Therefore, under the affirmative's plan, which bases the amount of the guaranteed wage on seniority, he claimed that workers who get laid off may be worse off. He argued that laid off workers were better off receiving 26 weeks of unemployment compensation than receiving 3 weeks of a guaranteed wage at 70%.

Walker also argued that eliminating unemployment compensation would include the elimination of the Employment Service Bureau, which spends 300 million dollars a year to find jobs for displaced workers.

Finally, Walker defended the efficacy of the status quo system of unemployment compensation. He observed that in 1955, thirty-two states had increased the amount of compensation provided.

To respond to these negative objections, the second affirmative speaker, John Gough, devoted most of his speech to re-establishing that cyclical and seasonal unemployment was still a problem in the United States. He also argued that the unemployment compensation system was administered in a corrupt fashion and that the payment amounts were too low. The main deficiency in his speech was in not providing clear answers to how the affirmative plan would be an improvement over the status quo or even how it would work in practice.

In the second negative constructive speech, Jim Murphy of West Point elaborated on why the affirmative plan was incapable of preventing seasonal and cyclical declines due to lack of demand. To prove his point that the guaranteed annual wage was incapable of dealing with broader cyclical declines, he pointed out that the stock market declines whenever President Eisenhower has another heart attack. Good luck applying your annual wage to preventing that kind of market instability, Murphy exclaimed.

Murphy spent the latter portion of his speech outlining why the affirmative plan did not guarantee an annual wage to persons working less than 4 months, workers with low seniority who get laid off, and workers who quit their jobs. In fact, Murphy calculated that under the affirmative plan, workers would need to work for 2 years (2 weeks work earns 1 week of guaranteed wage) and 4 months (no guaranteed wage is earned until a worker is employed for 4 months) before they would be guaranteed an annual wage for 52 weeks.

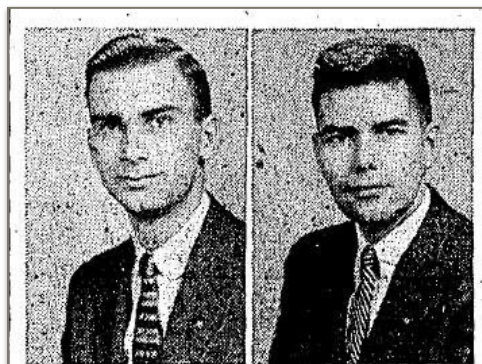
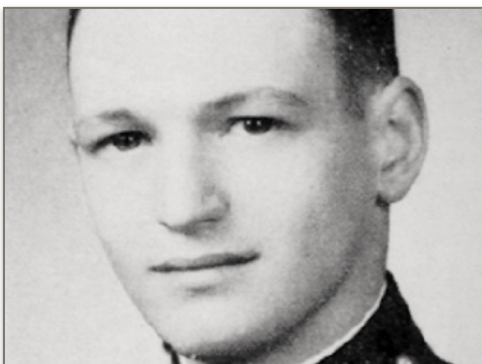
In a 6-1 decision, the judges voted for West Point.

Legendary debate coach, Martin Holcomb of Augustana College (Illinois), who wrote a critique of the debate for the publication, *Championship Debating*, wrote that he agreed with the decision of the majority of the judges voting for the negative. Holcomb concurred that the negative side presented damaging arguments against the workability of the affirmative plan.

The exemplary performances by West Point and St. Joseph's at the 1956 NDT were no fluke. The following year, Walker & Murphy reached the finals of the NDT (losing to Augustana on a 5-4 decision). And, John Foley of St. Joseph's (debating with Richard Dolan) was the second seed at the 1957 NDT, reaching the quarter-finals.

Upon graduation, all four of the finalists enjoyed remarkable careers. The brilliant, yet tragically short life, of George Walker is explored in the Walker Cup story in this newsletter.

After graduating from West Point, James R. Murphy attended Oxford University on a Rhodes scholarship where he earned a master's degree in philosophy, politics and economics. Upon his return to the United States, Murphy joined the initial cadre of the Strategic Air Command's first Minuteman missile squadron at Vandenberg Air Force Base. He then served as an assistant professor of economics and government at West Point until he was reassigned to the plans and policy directorate of the headquarters in Germany.



From left to right: George Walker; John P. Foley and John F. Gough; and Cardinal Foley.

# 1956 NDT concluded

Due to his expertise in nuclear weapons and strategic forces, Murphy was recruited by the Nixon White House to serve on the national security team under Dr. Henry Kissinger. He received the Legion of Merit Medal for his service.

Murphy attained the rank of Colonel and returned to Vandenberg Air Force Base as part of the First Strategic Aerospace Division. He died in 1983 at the young age of 49.

The St. Joseph's debaters chose very different career paths. John Gough received his law degree from Yale and became a prominent attorney specializing in business, corporate, and bankruptcy matters. He practiced law in Philadelphia for 58 years. He died at the age of 83 in 2018.

On the other hand, John Foley joined the priesthood. After graduating from St. Joseph's, he entered the St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania; he was ordained a priest in 1962.

The Archbishop of Philadelphia, John Krol, was so impressed by Foley's potential that he sent him to Rome for advanced studies and to report on the proceedings of the Second Vatican Council for the archdiocesan newspaper. In 1968, he was made editor of the *Catholic Standard and Times*. He also earned a master's degree in journalism from Columbia.

In 1984, Foley was promoted to archbishop and appointed as the first president of the Pontifical

Council for Social Communications, with particular responsibility for explaining church teachings to electronic news media. He served in that role for 23 years.

For 25 years, Foley served as the host of NBC's annual broadcast of the Pope's Christmas Mass at St. Peter's Basilica.

Pope Benedict XVI elevated Foley to Cardinal in 2007. Upon turning 75, Foley resigned as cardinal and returned to Villa St. Joseph, the archdiocesan home for retired priests. In 2011, he died at the age of 76 from leukemia.



Five decades of NDT participants viewed the 75th Alumni Reunion program.