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Liberty University Debate Tournament hosted by Liberty University

[Lynchburg, VA/US] – Liberty University hosted the Liberty University Debate Tournament during the weekend of Nov. 4 to Nov. 6, 2022. The tournament was attended by 19 teams across two divisions including novice and open.

Debaters from across the country were asked to debate both sides of the season-long resolution about legal personhood in six preliminary debates. The full wording of the topic is “Resolved: The United States should vest legal rights and/or duties in one or more of the following: artificial intelligence, nature, nonhuman animal species.”

Students who participated at the tournament debated half of their preliminary debates in favor of the resolution and half of their preliminary debates in opposition to the resolution.

At the conclusion of the preliminary debates, the tournament seeded teams in all divisions based on their win-loss record and speaker points. Elimination debates were single elimination for the top six teams in novice and five teams in open.

The Novice division featured students who are in their first year of competitive debate. The Junior Varsity division showcased students who competed in their first two academic years of intercollegiate debate beyond the novice level.

In the novice division debates, teams from George Mason University, Binghamton University, Liberty University, the United States Military and University of Mary Washington competed. The United States Military, George Mason University, Liberty University and the University of Mary Washington were victorious and advanced to the quarterfinals. In the quarterfinals, University of Mary Washington, Liberty University, George Washington University were victorious and advanced to the semifinals.

In the semifinals, teams from University of Mary Washington and George Mason University were victorious and advanced to the final round. In the final round, Hailey Patel & Megan Rodak from George Mason University bested Luke Busch & Lance Hungar from the University of Mary Washington.

In the open division debates, teams from Liberty University, James Madison University, the United States Military, Liberty University, Wake Forest University, University of Mary Washington and the University of Iowa competed.

University of Iowa, University of Mary Washington, Wake Forest University and Liberty University were victorious and advanced to the quarterfinals round. In the quarterfinals round, University of Mary Washington, Liberty University and Wake Forest University were victorious and advanced to the semifinals.

In the semifinals, Liberty University and Wake Forest University were victorious and advanced to the finals. In the finals, Jackson Posey & Justice Wallenmeyer from Liberty University bested Jessica Cline & Cole Wolfe from Wake Forest University.

Debaters participating also receive speaker points for each of their preliminary debates. In the novice division, Brenda Reyes from George Mason University was named top speaker. Justice Wallenmeyer from Liberty University was named top speaker in the open division.

The Liberty University Debate Tournament was the fifth ADA-sanctioned tournament of the year. The next ADA tournament will be the ADA Fall Championship the weekend of Nov. 12-14, 2022.

About the American Debate Association

The American Debate Association began in 1985 as an intercollegiate debate association. It uses the resolution selected by the Cross Examination Debate Association and the National Debate Tournament. Currently they have 44 member schools. The ADA's mission is increasing participation, maintaining a balance between education and competition, and ensuring an equitable and fair activity for all programs, regardless of their size or experience.

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