

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 11-15-2023

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ADA Fall Championship Crowns Western Kentucky University Junior Varsity Champions and Liberty University Novice Champions

Winston Salem, NC – The American Debate Association (ADA) held their fall national championship the weekend of November 11-13, 2023, on the Wake Forest University campus. The tournament was attended by 55 entries between Junior Varsity and Novice.

Debaters from across the country were asked to debate both sides of the season-long resolution about nuclear weapons in six preliminary debates. The full wording of the topic is “Resolved: The United States should restrict its nuclear forces in one or more of the following ways: adopting a nuclear no-first-use policy; eliminating one or more of the legs of its nuclear triad; disarming its nuclear forces.”

Students participating at the tournament debate 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 both divisions based on their win-loss record and speaker points. Elimination debates were single elimination for the top 11 teams in each division.

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

In the Junior Varsity partial octofinals, teams from the University of Houston, Liberty University, and Wake Forest University defeated teams from the University of Texas – San Antonio, Liberty University, and the University of Georgia. In the quarterfinals, teams from Western Kentucky University, Liberty University, Samford University, and George Mason University advanced over teams from Wake Forest University, the University of Minnesota, the University of Houston, and James Madison University.

The teams from George Mason University and Samford University were eliminated in the semifinals to set up a final round between Western Kentucky University and Liberty University. Nik Schintgen and Chase Shockley from Western Kentucky University were crowned the Junior Varsity champions.

In novice, team from Liberty University, the United States Naval Academy, and George Mason University bested teams from the United States Naval Academy, Cal State Fullerton, and Towson University in the partial octofinals. In the quarterfinal round, teams from George Mason University, Liberty University, and George Mason University advanced over teams from Liberty University, the United States Naval Academy, Indiana University, and George Mason University.

That set up a semifinal where a team from George Mason University advanced over another team from their school and a team from Liberty University advanced over another team from their school. When teams from the same school are set to debate in elimination debates, the higher seed advances.

In the championship round, Gabriel Sanders and John Hoegerl came out on top and were named Novice champions of the ADA Fall Championship.

Debaters participating also receive speaker points for each of their preliminary debates. In the Novice division, Kalani Wineman from Liberty University was named top speaker and Ella Ford of Samford University was named top speaker in Junior Varsity.

The ADA Fall Championship is the last American Debate Association tournament of the fall semester.

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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