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Jesuit Debates Hosted by Gonzaga University

Spokane, WA – Gonzaga University hosted the Jesuit Debates on the weekend of November 1-3, 2025. The tournament was attended by 90 teams across Junior Varsity and Open divisions.

Debaters from across the country were asked to debate both sides of the season-long resolution about labor policy. The full wording of the topic is “Resolved: The United States Federal Government should substantially strengthen collective bargaining rights for workers in the United States.”

Students participating in 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 all divisions based on their win-loss record and speaker points. Elimination debates were single elimination for the top 4 teams in Junior Varsity and 32 teams in Open.

The Junior Varsity division showcases students competing in their first two academic years of intercollegiate debate beyond the novice level.

In Junior Varsity semifinal debate, teams from Michigan State University and Southwestern College advanced over teams from the US Naval Academy and Marian University. In the championship debate, Eleazar Asase and Will Sterbenc from Michigan State University came out on top to be named tournament champions.

In the Open division, teams from the University of Kentucky, the University of Kansas, Binghamton University, the University of Michigan, Northwestern University, Michigan State University, the University of Texas at Austin, Georgetown University, Wake Forest University, the University of Texas at Dallas, California State University Long Beach, George Mason University, the University of Iowa, Dartmouth College, Emory University, University of California Berkeley, and Liberty University reached the elimination debate.

A double octafinals round (Round of 32), an octafinals round (Round of 16), and a quarterfinals round (Round of 8), set up a semifinals debate featuring teams from Emory University, Georgetown University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Michigan.

The teams from the University of Michigan and Georgetown University met in the final round where Eleanor Barrett and Jiyeon Park from the University of Michigan were victorious.

Debaters participating also receive speaker points for each of their preliminary debates. In the Junior Varsity division, Will Sterbenc from Michigan State University was named top speaker. Daniel Gallager from Emory University was named top speaker in the Open division.

The Jesuit Debates hosted by Gonzaga University is the third ADA tournament of the season. The next ADA tournament will be the ADA Fall Championships hosted at Wake Forest University.

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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