Great Expectations for a Strong Team

For the first time since MSU won back-to-back CEDA National Championships in 1995 and 1996, MSU enters the 2001-2002 season widely considered the best debate team in America. Over the past several years, MSU has maintained an impressive record, finishing in the top five nationally for eight consecutive years. This year, however, MSU debaters and coaches have the lofty goal of earning recognition as the best team in the nation instead of being merely one of the best. The team’s performance thus far demonstrates that this goal may well be within reach.

The team of senior Austin Carson and junior Calum Matheson are leading the charge to the coveted national championship title. Last year, they reached the final four of both the CEDA and the NDT National tournaments. This is only the third time in history any team has accomplished this feat - once by the University of Kansas and now twice by MSU (in 2000 MSU became the only team in history to reach the final round of both tournaments). Carson and Matheson’s cumulative performance at the two national tournaments was better than any other team in the country last year, raising expectations that they are the number one contender for the 2001-2002 season (see pg 2).

Team Honors David Marvin

Esteemed Lansing area attorney David Marvin has long been committed to the MSU Debate Team. A team member in the late 1960s, Mr. Marvin won several awards in the Novice Division as a freshman at MSU, but stopped debating when the team was disbanded at the end of his first year. Mr. Marvin remains fond of his debate experiences, however, and has gone on to have a very successful legal career. After graduating from MSU in 1972 with a B.S. in Social Science and pre-law, Mr. Marvin received his law degree from Wayne State University Law School, and then entered private practice with the Lansing Office of Fraser Trebilcock Davis & Dunlap, P. C. where he has worked for over 25 years. Throughout his legal career, Mr. Marvin has enjoyed many accomplishments, including two victories before the United States Supreme Court. He has also served terms as President (see Marvin, p. 3).
The Debater

Expectations (from page 1)

Their debut at the Kentucky Round Robin confirmed those expectations. Held annually in October, the Kentucky Round Robin is the most prestigious round robin of the first semester. Often viewed as a barometer of team strength for the year to come, the round robin invites the top nine teams in the nation. Carson and Matheson met the challenge with an impressive 7-1 record, and took home the first place trophy. Matheson also received honors as the top speaker. Although MSU has attended the Kentucky Round Robin several times since the merger of the two major intercollegiate debate organizations, the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) and the National Debate Tournament (NDT), this is the first time that MSU has won a traditional NDT tournament, much less one of the caliber of the Kentucky Round Robin.

Other MSU teams are also playing a prominent role. Greta Stahl and David Strauss, both sophomores, have also emerged as a top twenty team. Already this duo has defeated many teams with far more college debate experience along their way to winning the Capitol City Tournament held at Catholic University and reaching the semi-finals of the Kentucky Tournament. Stahl has also been recognized with honors for being among the top twenty speakers at numerous tournaments this semester. As they continue to hone their talents, their future looks very bright. MSU also welcomes the return of Geoff Lundeen after a year of absence from the MSU Debate Team. Already this semester Lundeen has received speaker awards at several tournaments, including the honor of top speaker at the Capitol City Tournament. He and his partner, sophomore Amber Watkins, have had strong performances including elimination round participation at the University of Northern Iowa and Capitol City Tournaments.

In addition, MSU has numerous talented team members returning for their second year, and a freshman class of eight students, including several of the top high school debaters from Michigan. These teams have also had strong early performances at first semester tournaments, including appearances in the quarterfinals of the Wayne State Tournament by the freshmen team of Maggie Ryan and Gabe Murillo as well as the freshman-sophomore combo of Aaron Hardy and Greg Rudy.

According to Head Coach William Repko, "This year's team has as much talent and greater depth than any that I have coached in five years at MSU." While he hesitates to make any bold predictions about impending national championships saying that, "thousands of things have to go right to achieve our ultimate goals," he is confident that, "with hard work and perseverance, our students have the talent to be the very best."

Debate Team Director, Jason Trice, a member of the 1995 and 1996 CEDA Championship Team, provides some context for the opportunities that lie ahead for the MSU Debate Team. "The last time MSU won a national championship was in 1996, prior to the merger of the two major intercollegiate debate organizations. Our competition, while formidable, was against a more limited field of schools. The merger pitted MSU against many more top-notch schools such as Harvard, Dartmouth, and Northwestern. It is difficult to compare previous national titles won by MSU to the prospect of success in the (see Expectations p. 3)
The flurry of success MSU has achieved in recent years is causing unprecedented growth in the size of the team. The word is getting around to high school students that if you want to excel in college debate, MSU is one of the best places to be. As a result, MSU is attracting more and more talented debaters. The effect is staggering; this year the incoming freshmen will effectively double the team size from all previous years. The problem is that the budget for the debate team is not keeping pace. The lackluster economy has contributed to an insufficient budgetary allocation from the state legislature to support the enormous expenses associated with traveling a college debate team.

The team greatly appreciates those who have already begun to provide valuable support, and encourages all debate team alumni to consider ways in which they can help our young students reap the benefits debate has to offer. All donations go directly toward supporting scholarships and travel opportunities for debate team members, and there are many creative ways of making gifts, all of which are tax deductible. If you would like to learn more about how you can increase your involvement in this award winning program, please contact Team Director, Jason Trice, at (517) 410-8568 or Honors College Development Officer Cara Boeff at (517) 355-2328.

Marvin (from page 1)
or Chairman of over two-dozen law-related organizations, including the Ingham County Bar Association and the National Resource Center on State Laws and Regulations.

Beyond his many career-related honors, Mr. Marvin has played an integral role in generating support for the MSU Debate Team. He founded both the MSU Debate Team Endowment and the Debate Team Benefactors Group in 1989. In addition, he helped to develop the concept of the Debate Team Newsletter. Such ongoing commitment demonstrates that debate has clearly been important to him personally and professionally. Mr. Marvin explains: “As a practicing attorney, I have enjoyed the benefits of my debate experience almost every day of my career. The lessons of debate are the lessons of organized thought, careful listening, effective communication, extemporaneous speech, personal confidence and stress management. These important lessons have direct application and immeasurable value in both the academic world and the business world. In my case, debate has truly had a profound and beneficial impact on my life and career.”

The MSU Debate Team sincerely thanks Mr. Marvin for his continuing support.

Expectations (from page 2)
race for a national championship in 2002 - the merger simply raised the level of competition to a whole new level. Winning a national championship in the modern debate environment would be an unprecedented accomplishment for our team. Our recent victories at the Kentucky Round Robin and the Capitol City Tournament alone mark a new chapter in the history of MSU Debate. Never have we had two separate teams win tournaments with such depth of competition.”

The topic for the season focuses on federal governmental control of Native American entities in the areas of child welfare, employment, environmental protection, criminal justice, resource management, taxation, and gaming.
The MSU Debate Team would like to extend its gratitude to those of you who made generous financial contributions:

- Fay & Jack Steelman
- James & Rhosan Stryker
- Laura Larkin & Eric Saund
- Mark & Sara Stadt
- David Marvin
- Thomas Roth
- Wayne & Jane Repko
- State Electronics

These contributions to the Debate Team Endowment help with travel expenses for an ever-growing Team and scholarships to continue attracting top-notch students to the program.

December 29 – January 4
California Swing

January 4-9
Kansas City Swing

January 12-14
U of West Georgia

February 1-3
Northwestern University (IL)

February 16-18
Heart of America (KS)

March 28-31
National Debate Tourney (MO)

April 3-6
CEDA Nationals (CA)

All alums are encouraged to attend a portion of a tournament in your area to meet the MSU coaches and debaters, say hello to old friends, watch a debate or two, and have a meal with the Team. Please contact Jason Trice in advance if you would like to join us at (517) 410-8568.

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