## 2003-2004 Debate Season

**Team Continues String of Debate Accomplishments**

The first half of the 2003-2004 season has been full of debate success for the Spartans. Highlights include:

- Having at least one team advance to the Sweet Sixteen or better at every single major tournament of the semester.
- Winning fourteen individual speaker awards, including three Top Speaker Awards.
- Reaching the Final Round of the Georgia State University Tournament
- Winning 2nd place at the prestigious Kentucky Round Robin

These results have been led by seniors Greta Stahl and David Strauss, who comprise one of the best two-person debate teams in the nation. Last year they were ranked fourth in the country going into the National Debate Tournament. At the NDT, they reached the quarterfinals ("Elite Eight") of the competition and were advanced over by another MSU team, 2002-2003 seniors Calum Matheson and Joe Siegmann. According to interim Debate Director Mike Eber, “Greta and Dave are not only incredibly gifted debaters, but they also exemplify the work ethic that we try to teach to all of our younger students. They understand that if you want to be the best, you can’t just rest on your experience and talent – you need to outwork the competition.”

MSU also has several younger team members that have established themselves as the future of the team. Juniors Aaron Hardy and Shaun VanHorn (see Team Success, page 2)

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## Spartan Debate Institute Undergoes Expansion

Last summer the Debate Team hosted the thirteenth annual Spartan Debate Institute (SDI), a series of instructional workshops where students and coaches from across the country stay on the MSU campus for several weeks in order to learn more about competitive debate and argumentation. The 2003 SDI emphasized research, debate strategy, speaking skills and practice. All instruction was geared toward this year’s specific high school debate topic, which involves U.S. ocean policy.

The SDI has grown dramatically since its inception – from 43 students back in 1991 to 250 students and coaches in 2003. The most exciting recent development has been the addition of an extended four-week session for advanced and highly motivated high school debaters. This session boasts some of the very best debate instructors from around the entire country and has established the SDI as among the premier national debate institutes, on par with or better than similar camps run by Dartmouth, Northwestern, and the University of Michigan. (see SDI, p. 3)
Debate Team Yields Academic Excellence for MSU

The MSU Debate Team is more than just the sum of its impressive tournament results. Debate is also one of the many highlights of the University at large—part of the overall Spartan tradition of excellence. Having one of the nation’s best debate programs helps MSU attract and educate top students.

Because debate is an extremely rigorous intellectual activity, it naturally appeals to very bright and gifted high school students. As most any debater would tell you, the process of debating is one of the most challenging yet exciting experiences of his or her entire educational career. Not surprisingly, many high school debaters are “hooked” on the activity and at least want the option of debating in college. Geoffrey Wyatt, former MSU debater from East Lansing and current student at the Harvard Law School, was precisely one of those debaters who were drawn to MSU. “Michigan State was one of the few places that had the right combination of strength in my field of academic interest, affordability, and strong debate reputation,” according to Wyatt.

According to Will Repko, MSU’s head debate coach, “decisions over where to attend college are usually colored by several factors, but having a championship debate program is surely a feather in MSU’s cap. Year after year, the list of Alumni Distinguished Scholars and other top students drawn to MSU includes several debaters.” Besides drawing students to the University, the MSU Debate Program also gives valuable training to students who often attend high level law and graduate schools. One example is Aaron Monick, a former National Debate Tournament finalist for MSU who now attends the Boalt Hall School of Law at University of California - Berkeley. Monick firmly believes that debate helped him do well on the law school admissions test. “The mental quickness and logical reasoning required to succeed at the LSAT are the exact things that are sharpened in intercollegiate debate,” said Monick.

One shining example of the intersection between debate excellence and academic excellence is Greta Stahl, the captain of the 2003-2004 MSU Debate Team. Greta, an Alumni Distinguished Scholar and James Madison College senior with a perfect 4.0 grade point average, was also the winner of three top debate speaker awards in the Fall 2003 semester. In November, Greta (picture on right) was awarded the Marshall Scholarship, one of the world’s most prestigious scholarships for international study. The Marshall scholar-ship recognizes students who have demonstrated academic excellence and leadership potential. It covers all expenses for two to three years at any university in the United Kingdom. Greta plans to pursue an international relations degree at the University of Oxford.

Greta is MSU’s tenth Marshall Scholarship recipient since the award was established in 1954. Prior to this year (when MSU actually had two Marshall scholars—a truly impressive accomplishment), the last Marshall Scholar for MSU was Jennifer Sykes-McLaughlin in 1998. Besides being a tremendously accomplished student, Sykes-McLaughlin also was a prominent high school debater from Michigan who twice attended the Spartan Debate Institutes over the summer.

TEAM SUCCESS (from page 1)

are in competition for a first-round at large invitation to the NDT, which is only given to the top sixteen teams in the country. Sophomores Casey Harrigan and Nathan Gibson have had an outstanding semester, including wins over some of the nation’s best teams. And Ryan Burke (sophomore) and Andrea Reed (freshman) have advanced to elimination rounds at several major tournaments. According to Will Repko, head coach, “I have coached many years when the debate team was full of talented students, but never before has MSU had four teams that are all capable of defeating any of the best debate teams”.

Overall, MSU again stands out as one of the very best intercollegiate debate teams in the country. The team is focused on the second semester of the year, which includes a serious opportunity to win either of two national championship tournaments.

This year’s college debate topic involves seven prominent issues in U.S.-European relations: reconstruction of Iraq, U.S. participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, conflict between Greece and Turkey, intellectual property rights, agricultural subsidies, genetically modified foods, and tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.
SDI (continued from page 1)

Because of the enhanced size and reputation of the Spartan Debate Institutes, the geographic diversity of its most recent student body was impressive. Last summer, students from over 30 states were in attendance (the previous record was 23 states). This is a strong sign that the reputation of the MSU Debate Team continues to grow and that the Spartan Debate Institutes are one of the nation’s best places for high school students to build their debate skills.

One of the highlights of the SDI is that students not only receive the opportunity to learn more about debate, but they also have a chance to preview campus life at MSU. Bringing hundreds of very bright students onto the MSU campus for several weeks is a huge recruiting opportunity. Students almost universally leave with very favorable impressions of the Debate Team and of the entire University. The Spartan Debate Institute thereby allows us to showcase MSU as an enjoyable, diverse, and challenging yet affordable place for interactive and advanced learning.

The SDI has always strived to provide the highest quality instruction at an affordable price. Many high school students who attend the SDI come from debate programs with scant resources and families that find it cost prohibitive to send their children to more expensive debate camps. Each summer, the SDI awards several need-based scholarships to underprivileged students. However, each summer some of these scholarship recipients still choose to forgo debate camp entirely because of personal economic concerns. If you are interested in helping to increase the ability of the Debate Team to provide scholarship support to potential SDI students, please read the section on ways to support MSU Debate.

MSU Debate Needs Your Support

All Universities, including Michigan State, have recently been under extreme budget pressure due to tightening state budgets. This has resulted in general reductions and a reexamination of what the University can afford. To preserve and maintain the MSU Debate Team, it is particularly important to increase our private support. Your contributions are necessary to help with travel expenses for an ever-growing Team as well as scholarships for top-notch students seeking to debate at MSU or in need of financial aid to attend the Spartan Debate Institutes.

There are many ways to provide your financial support for the national championship MSU Debate Team:

- **Gifts of Cash** – Personal checks made payable to Michigan State University or credit card gifts are important sources of financial support. You can now make credit card gifts by using MSU’s secure web site www.givingto.msu.edu.

- **Gifts of Securities** – You or your broker can transfer shares electronically to benefit the MSU Debate Team. Whether making a stock transfer electronically or by any other means, you are required to submit a letter of intent, explaining your intent to transfer the stock.

- **Gifts of Retirement Plan Assets** – If you have already provided for your relatives in your estate plan, you can simply name the MSU Debate Team as primary or partial beneficiary of your retirement plan assets [IRA, Keogh, 401(k) or 403(b)].

- **Charitable Life Income Plans** – The charitable gift annuity and charitable remainder trust are two of the planned gift options that are designed to pay you an income for life and provide direct benefit to the MSU Debate Team.

- **Charitable Bequest within a Will or Trust** – You can also establish a provision in your estate plan to provide support for the MSU Debate Team.

All contributions to the MSU Debate Team qualify for a full federal tax deduction. In addition, Michigan residents receive a tax credit of 50 percent of their gift up to $200 for individuals and $400 for couples.

For more information about these or any other gift opportunities for the MSU Debate Team, please contact Tim Soule, Honors College Development Officer at (517) 432-0859 or souleti@msu.edu.
The MSU Debate Team would like to extend its gratitude to those of you who have recently made generous financial contributions, including:

- David E. Marvin
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- Richard & Kathryn Lyon

If you would like to learn more about how you can increase your involvement in this award-winning program, please review the section above (“MSU Debate Needs Your Support”). You can also contact Team Director, Michael Eber, at (517) 214-6435 or Tim Soule, Honors College Development Officer at (517) 432-0859.

All friends are invited to attend a portion of an event in your area. This provides an opportunity 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 Michael Eber in advance at 517-214-6435 if you would like to join us.

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