



NEWS

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El Camino College to Host National Parliamentary Debate Tournament *ECC Becomes First-Ever Community College to Host Prestigious Competition*

El Camino College will host the 2016 National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence (NPTE) March 13-16, becoming the first community college in the history of the tournament to host the prestigious competition.

The NPTE is the most competitive and rigorous parliamentary debate tournament in the country, where hundreds of students from colleges and universities all over the U.S. will vie for top honors. The tournament will also be a homecoming for a few ECC alumni, as grads come back to campus with their university programs to compete against their former teammates.

El Camino College's top team of Isaac Curtiss and Mason Jones are the first from ECC to receive a first-round bid to the NPTE and are currently ranked 36th in the nation. The pair will likely face off against teams including Southern Illinois University's seventh-ranked Arielle Stephenson (ECC '15) and University of Oregon's Alyson Escalante (ECC '14) – ranked third in the nation, and a favorite to win the NPTE.

“There is a chance that we will compete directly against our former teammates, Arielle and Alyson,” Mason said. “These will be very difficult rounds, as these are two of the most competitive debaters in the country. This is actually something that I'm looking forward to. Being able to debate against people who have taught me so much in the past will be fun, plus I know it will be a huge learning experience.”

El Camino College has a long-standing tradition as a debate powerhouse. ECC has surpassed all other community colleges by having debaters qualify for this tournament year after year. Isaac and Mason have consistently performed well at local and national circuit tournaments. Both have been offered scholarships to some of the most competitive debate schools in the nation.

“Though I'll be nervous debating against Arielle and Alyson, my first NPTE appearance will be an unforgettable experience,” said Isaac. “Additionally, the fact that the tournament will be hosted at ECC means that all alumni within the debate community, coaching and competing from a variety of colleges and universities, get a chance to see each other and reconnect on what it means to come from the best community college.”

The NPTE includes the top 64 of more than 700 debate partnerships in the nation; teams must qualify in order to attend. This year, competitors will come to ECC from dynamic debate schools such as Southern Illinois University, Washburn University, University of Utah, and University of Oregon, as well as other local teams such as CSU Long Beach, Concordia University and the University of California, Berkeley.

El Camino College hosting a national debate tournament of this caliber is a turning point in the history of parliamentary debate. It acknowledges the skill and competitiveness of community colleges, as well as turning ECC into a hotspot for university recruitment.

ECC debate program members include: Zara Andrabi, Jamilah Bazille, Isaac Curtiss, Eman Dalili, Jamie Gilman, Mason Jones, Hayden Linz, Hannah McCann, Eduardo Paez, Kelsea Posantes, Curtis Wang, and Vicki Wong. Debate students are coached by Professor Francesca Bishop, director of forensics, and debate professors Mark Crossman and Joseph Evans.

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