

Supreme Court of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20543

CHAMBERS OF
THE SAMUEL ALITO

February 22, 2007

Tara L. Tate
President, National Debate Coaches Association
Director of Debate, Glenbrook South High School
4000 West Lake Avenue
Glenview, IL 60090

Dear Ms. Tate:

Thank you for your letter of January 16, 2007. I applaud your efforts to promote high school and college debate.

I debated in both high school and college, and consider my participation in debate to be one of the most important parts of my education. In high school, I competed with my sister Rosemary in what is now called policy debate, which helped me develop intense research and teamwork skills that have served me well throughout my life and legal career. In college, I participated in a more freestyle form of debate. From this style, I learned the art of extemporaneous analysis and persuasive public speaking, which also have served me well.

I commend forensics as part of a well-balanced series of student activities. Past and present Justices of the Supreme Court are and were former debaters, and this year all four of my law clerks at some point participated in speech and debate. But the skills developed through competitive debate are not limited to helping a legal career: top-notch research skills, quick analytical thinking, and strong public speaking are tools needed to be successful in almost any profession.

Sincerely,



Samuel A. Alito, Jr.