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2026 National Assistant Coach of the Year

Vienna High School Coach Earns National Award

West Des Moines, IA (June 3, 2026) — The National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) is proud to announce Julie Parr from Vienna High School is the 2026 NSDA Assistant Coach of the Year!

The Assistant Coach of the Year award is presented annually to an assistant coach who exhibits outstanding leadership in their speech and debate program.

“An assistant coach plays a critical role in the success of a student, team, school, and community” said J. Scott Wunn, Executive Director of the National Speech & Debate Association. “They are fostering lifelong skills like critical thinking, effective communication, and leadership - skills that will benefit these students well beyond the classroom.”

Studies show that students who participate in speech and debate experience a number of academic benefits including communication skills, reading test scores, analytic thinking, and higher self-esteem. The skills learned through speech and debate will impact students years after graduation.

“Julie has become the heartbeat of our program’s relationship with the broader school community,” said Laura A. Hosfeldt, Vienna High School Speech & Debate Team Coach. “In a program still building its identity within a school community, this visibility is not a luxury. It is infrastructure.”

The NSDA Assistant Coach of the Year is selected from 112 NSDA districts. Each District Committee can nominate a District Assistant Coach of the Year. From those nominations, a national winner is selected. Nominees for the award must be a current assistant speech or debate coach at an NSDA member high school, adhere to the NSDA’s Code of Honor, foster

cooperation within the school, demonstrate leadership, and advocate for speech and debate activities within the school and the community.

Julie will be recognized at the 2026 National Speech & Debate Tournament in Richmond, Virginia, where more than 7,000 students will compete at the world's largest academic competition June 14-19, 2026. To learn more about the National Tournament, visit www.speechanddebate.org/nationals.

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About the National Speech & Debate Association

The National Speech & Debate Association is the authority on public speaking and debate in the United States. The Association builds the infrastructure for speech and debate competitions around the world by providing topics, educational resources, and training for students and coaches. For more than 100 years, the National Speech & Debate Association has built a platform for youth voices that culminates in the National Tournament, the largest academic competition in the world. The National Tournament brings together thousands of students from across the United States and world with different backgrounds and viewpoints to engage in civil discourse. For more information, visit www.speechanddebate.org.