



RICHMOND FORUM
SPEECH & DEBATE
INITIATIVE



MEDIA KIT

2026 NATIONAL SPEECH & DEBATE TOURNAMENT

6600 Westown Parkway Suite 270 | West Des Moines, IA 50266

(920) 748-6206 • www.speechanddebate.org/media



<https://youtu.be/qMoppXt3wdg>



WHO WE ARE

- ▶ The National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) is the national authority on public speaking and debate.
- ▶ The NSDA is the largest interscholastic speech and debate organization serving middle school and high school students in the United States.
- ▶ The NSDA provides competitive speech and debate activities, high-quality resources, comprehensive training, scholarship opportunities, and advanced recognition to more than 100,000 students and coaches every year.
- ▶ The NSDA creates a platform for youth voices to be heard and celebrated, which culminates with an annual National Tournament, the pinnacle of public speaking.

MISSION

The NSDA connects, supports, and inspires a diverse community committed to empowering students through speech and debate.

VISION

The NSDA envisions a world in which every school provides speech and debate programs to foster each student's communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative skills.

MEMBERSHIP DATA

www.speechanddebate.org/membership-database

100,000+ STUDENTS	4,000 COACHES	3,500 SCHOOLS
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NOTABLE ALUMNI

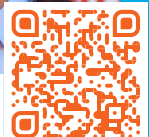
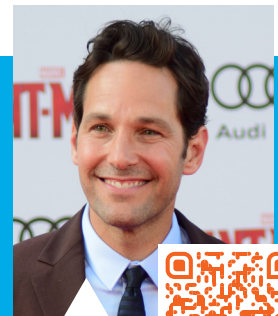
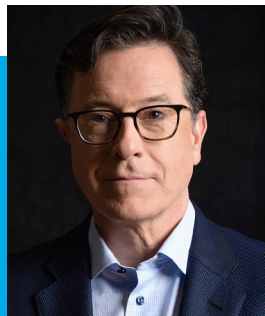
Many NSDA members have risen to the pinnacle of their respective fields, including Supreme Court justices Ketanji Brown Jackson and Sonia Sotomayor, media visionaries Tom Llamas and Stephen Colbert, Academy Award winners Jordan Peele and Brad Pitt, and more.



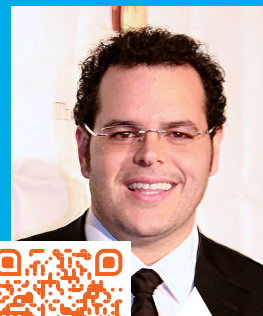
[www.speechanddebate.org/
notable-alumni](http://www.speechanddebate.org/notable-alumni)



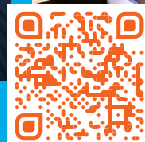
The Richmond Forum's program featuring NSDA alum John Lithgow: tinyurl.com/yqyof7ns



Watch Paul Rudd's final round performance: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExkTjC0SQck



Elizabeth Warren's NSDE Day message: tinyurl.com/bpa9uybp



Josh Gad's final round: tinyurl.com/2ybb4uu4



Ketanji Brown Jackson's final round: tinyurl.com/4zmcdwm5



RICHMOND FORUM
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DEBATE** &
INITIATIVE

NATIONAL SPEECH & DEBATE TOURNAMENT

2026 NATIONAL TOURNAMENT • June 14-19 – Richmond, Virginia

www.speechanddebate.org/national-tournament-2026

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SPEECH & DEBATE TOURNAMENT

The National Speech & Debate Tournament marks the capstone of speech and debate activities for more than 100,000 members across the country. The student competitors represent the best and brightest young people across the United States and the globe. The tournament is a moving reminder of how the skills students learn in speech and debate empower them to be changemakers, advocates, and future leaders of our world.

TOURNAMENT STATISTICS

7,000+
STUDENTS

1,500+
SCHOOLS

4,000+
JUDGES



▲ 2025 Circle of Champions



Watch notable final
round performances:

[tinyurl.com/
mrptfyzv](https://tinyurl.com/mrptfyzv)



Glimpse the Nationals
experience:

[tinyurl.com/
4a596nc7](https://tinyurl.com/4a596nc7)



STUDENT IMPACT

Speech and debate improves academic performance and school environments.

IMPACT OF DEBATE PARTICIPATION

Debaters have:



Higher
GPAs



Higher
MATH
SAT SCORES



Higher
READING AND
WRITING
SAT SCORES



Greater Likelihood of
MEETING COLLEGE
READINESS
BENCHMARKS

Source: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1302954v>



DEBATE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



Increase in
ANALYTICAL
SKILLS



Increase in
REGULAR
ATTENDANCE



Higher
SELF-ESTEEM

Source: Snider, A. C. & Lawrence, E. W. (2011). DEBATE: Important for Everyone. Retrieved from <https://debate.uvm.edu/dcpdf/DEBATE-%20Important%20for%20Everyone.pdf>.



CONTACT US

Questions? Want to schedule an interview?

Email Shelby at communications@speechanddebate.org

or call (515) 272-5141.



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ABOUT THE RICHMOND FORUM

The Richmond Forum Speech & Debate Initiative (RFSDI) is turning one region's students into the nation's next generation of communicators, and the results are already on the national stage.

Launched in 2018 by The Richmond Forum, America's largest nonprofit speakers series, RFSDI was built on the conviction that every student deserves the opportunity to find their voice. What began with 10 high school teams has since grown into a region-wide movement, with 43 schools across Richmond and the surrounding counties now maintaining active speech and debate teams.

Richmond has a long history as a place where American ideas have been tested and debated. RFSDI is extending that tradition into the next generation, working to make the region a national model for competitive speech and debate and the civil discourse it cultivates

To do that, RFSDI provides the structural support schools need to build and sustain competitive programs: startup funding for new teams, a local tournament circuit, judge recruitment and training, and ongoing professional development for coaches.

WHAT THEY DO

- ▶ Cover tournament entry fees, travel expenses, and meals, ensuring equitable access to competitive speech and debate for all students and teams.
- ▶ Train coaches and judges to support successful, well-run programs and competitions.
- ▶ Level the playing field by providing professional attire, inclusion advocacy, and other essential resources.
- ▶ Organize local invitational tournaments that give students consistent opportunities to compete and sharpen their skills.
- ▶ Provide access to National Speech & Debate Association membership benefits and sponsor participation in its honor society.
- ▶ Award grants for students to attend speech and debate camps and workshops, supporting continued skill development.

PROGRAM WEBSITE

www.richmondforum.org

