



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring 2017

Welcome to the Spring 2017 Climb Newsletter.

The Newsletter offers a glimpse into what we are doing and highlights the stories of students, coaches, and Climb staff that are reaching for the highest levels of excellence in speech and debate. A big thanks to Kate Hall who put the initial draft of the newsletter together and to all the participants that shared their experiences.

Enjoy and please feel free to contact me, Jim Hanson at jim@climbthemountain.us with ideas, edits, omissions, thoughts, etc.

Click on individual stories to read about Climb the Mountain!

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Asking the right questions: Climb hosts Big Questions tournaments

Debate encourages students at all levels to consider life's most central questions, from issues of morality and justice to concerns regarding communication, politics and science.

With this in mind and the National Speech and Debate Association (formerly the "NFL") providing support, Climb set out to host a

tournament offering high school students an opportunity to practice these skills in public speaking and critical thinking: the Big Questions Tournament. The idea is to have debates that address great questions about life.

Coaches at regional high schools found the tournament provided the perfect place for students to experiment in new styles of debate and deliver deep argumentation.

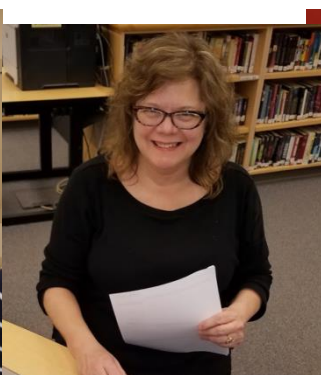
Lisa Weber, the coach at Interlake High School in Bellevue, Wash., said the tournament showed her students' strengths and developed a fun environment for the students.



"The students from my debate team that participated in the [Big Questions] tournament were all frosh policy debaters," Lisa said. "This gave me a chance to witness their adaptability at debating a different form of debate. I was so proud of them. One of them even won the top speaker award. This form of debate gave them more freedom to give an analysis of each of their contentions and refutations. I'm hoping that they learned that word economy is as important spreading, and sometimes you can actually say more with fewer words.

Jim noted "I have nothing but the kindest words and admiration for the work Lisa at Interlake and Sadie and Raylene did for these tournaments. They, along with David Jung from BC, brought in multiple students to participate getting them to think and communicate on a challenging topic, "Science leaves no room for free will."

Curious about hosting a tournament at your school or want to attend the next Climb tournament? Visit <https://www.climbthemountain.us/tournaments> for more information.



Digital debate: Climb hosts online tournaments



Many debaters fondly remember sleepless nights and long days spent at tournaments with teammates, yet left behind are students who struggle to pay costs incurred from travel and lodging or depend on income from jobs they can't leave behind for a long weekend. Climb is hoping to change this: we envision a community that is inclusionary rather than exclusionary. We have expanded our tournament offerings to include online tournaments providing students with accessibility long lacking from tournament schedules. Additionally, the accessibility and affordability of this format for schools and debaters allows for greater participation of novice debaters and gave varsity debaters an opportunity to hone their skills.

"The tournaments were great at introducing novice debaters to the activity," said David Airne, Director of Forensics at the University of Montana. "It added new tournaments to the season where we could try different types of debate and debate strategies. We are looking forward to doing more of them next year." The true test of this innovative format, though, was the response from non-traditional students who faced consistent challenges accessing traditional tournaments.

Cameo Curnutt, the debate team secretary at Idaho University, shared with Climb:

"As a non-traditional student, I have responsibilities that most college students don't. For instance, I'm a single-mom to a beautiful baby boy and I work three--sometimes four--jobs to make that work with school. To be able to go to a debate tournament, financially, I need to save for about three months to cover the loss we will incur. Ultimately though, I'm sacrificing debating experience. When I heard that we were participating in online tournaments, I was elated! Instead of leaving for four or five days, I can be unavailable one day! I can still participate without leaving my baby behind or taking time off of work. I hope for more tournaments and more colleges to debate against."

The use of online debating worked well but wasn't without problems. In a few cases, teams and judges could not log into the online debates; also, a few debaters had a hard time finding their debates. In a few cases, the internet cut out for a short time making it hard to keep the debate going. To deal with these issues, Jim had an extensive meeting with the coders of the program Climb is using and many upgrades and improvements are in the works for a great experience this fall. As Jim noted,

"This is ready to take off. From my perspective, by the end of the 2017-18 year, we will have established online debating and speaking tournaments as a viable alternative to in-person debating. If it does, I believe it will pave the way for tournament schedules where students compete online at some tournaments and in person at other tournaments. The in person tournaments will give participants that social connection and proximity that cannot be replaced. The online tournaments will enhance those in person experiences while saving coaches and debaters money and travel time and difficulties."



Stay tuned for announcements regarding our 2017-2018 tournament schedule at <https://www.climbthemountain.us/tournaments>

Climb college tournaments create constructive atmosphere



In speech and debate, with each word a student takes a risk: the wrong one could lead to failure, while the right one could lead to success.

The pressure to deliver developed, thoughtful argumentation can be a bit much for some students. Harsh judging with little constructive feedback decreases student morale and participation in debate.

Climb hosted the Northwest Parliamentary Debate Championship April 22-23 to both add to the local tournament offerings and develop an environment designed to support debaters with the mentorship and

feedback key to success in future tournaments.

Coach Tony Penders brought students from Bellevue College Speech and Debate to Climb tournaments and said they offered a unique opportunity to spark significant growth in a single tournament.

“The Climb tournaments that Bellevue attended this season were more beneficial to the students than the invitational we attended,” Tony said. “Why? Because of immediate, constructive, caring feedback in the absence of the tournament atmosphere. Four debates with compassionate and knowledgeable judges? Amazing. These short events were responsible for helping students who had attended as few as two other tournaments manage to improve and learn as much as students who had travelled all season. I could not recommend more, and am thrilled that they will be offered next season.” Tony has plenty to be proud of, his young debaters who participated at the climb tournaments advanced to elimination rounds at the national novice tournament!



Other schools joined in for a solid round of competition and the Climb tournaments are already being setup for the 2017-18 year.

Join teams like Bellevue College Speech and Debate at the next

Climb college tournament. **Want to learn more? Check out**

<https://www.climbthemountain.us/tournaments>



First time's the charm: Climb prepares teams and coaches for first tournaments

Roosevelt

Being a first-year debater is scary, but being a first-year coach might just be scarier.

Climb staff connected with three schools this year to provide training to new students and coaches as they navigated their first year in the debate community.

At Roosevelt High School, Climb hosted a clinic before the debaters' first tournament to help students develop their case, an experience coach Maddy Hoffman described as "fantastic."

Maddy continued, "Before the clinic, everyone was feeling a bit overwhelmed. At the time, we were getting



ready for our first tournament, and we weren't sure how to prepare. It was on a broad topic (should we increase

military spending) and people were a little lost. Climb the Mountain helped us get credible sources, organize evidence in an efficient way and gave students confidence. By the end of the clinic we had most of our case completed, advice we could put into practice and a plan as to how to finish the case. I had several students come up to me afterwards saying they had a greater understanding of case writing after the clinic! Personally, I loved learning about the VERS format for the summary speech. By having an acronym to follow, I was able to create really effective summary speeches during the tournament!"

Climb staff were joined at this clinic by long-time debate scholar and coach Michael Bartanen, who helped watch debates and provided training. Jim noted: "Mike has been so helpful to Climb—coming to multiple locations to help kids learn—giving great, positive feedback to students."

Jim, along with Tiffany Wilhelm also worked to reboot programs at Bethel high school and Kent Meridian high school. Head to the next page.

The Missing Pizza!

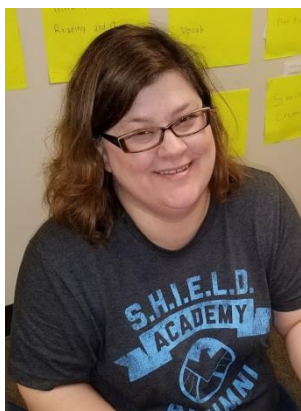
Jim was all set to head to a Pizza Hut for the Roosevelt Clinic and so followed his GPS.

No store. Jim frantically looked around and discovered that the area was condemned and ready for a huge new development project!



Jim quickly got on his smart phone and looked up pizza places. Fortunately, there was a Paggiacci's somewhat

close by. Jim got some good pizza there and headed back to the clinic—although over 30 minutes late for lunch. "Late foodies is unacceptable" Jim was heard muttering while he munched on the pizza."



Bethel and Kent Meridian

Bethel coaches Sadie Frady and Raylene Fowler, both new to coaching speech and debate, turned to Climb for training and support at practices.



"Climb came in at a time where Raylene and I needed help the most," Sadie said. "We had become the speech and debate coaches this school year with no help or guidance from anyone and we were trying our best to do things right, but it was a struggle. Without Climb, I don't think we would have been successful in anyway and I don't think we'd have the tools we needed to be the



coaches again next year. We really appreciate everything Climb, and

specifically Jim and Tiffany, did for us!"

Jim was elated with how well Bethel did including finals in public forum debate and a novice LD debater who went 2-3 in an open division of competition at the Winterlake tournament held at Interlake high school.

Jim noted "Tiffany Wilhelm was a huge help at Bethel and at Kent Meridian high schools. She is an energetic and very engaging teacher and she is also a joy to work with."



Eastlake

Eastlake high school also held a clinic with Climb. Jim led up the charge helping students in a variety of events in debate and individual events. Steve Rowe, one of Jim's former students now Interlake head coach, joined with talented son Andrew, an Interlake policy cx debater, to teach students at the clinic.



"Steve has been a great supporter of Climb and he has brought so much success to the program at Interlake high

school. It is really neat to see his son involved in this activity and to carry on his dad's "Mad Dog Steve Rowe" skills."



How can Climb help your school prepare for the next competitive speech and debate season? Find out more at <https://www.climbthemountain.us>

Climb workshops bolster BC Academy performance



The diverse applications for skills developed in speech and debate have no limits, and Climb's work with students has no borders.

Climb coaching and administrative staff continued their work this Spring with BC Academy in British Columbia. We last shared student testimonials from BC Academy in our Spring 2016 newsletter and after another successful season connected with coach David Jung to learn how our partnership affected their association's performance at

international tournaments.

"The BC Forensic League Association is supporting all of the debate club members to improve their communication skills...therefore, our organization selected American debate styles such as public forum," David said. "It is beneficial to further develop their speaking and research skills. Jim Hanson supported their delivery [of speeches and



cases that were] effective and gave advice on developing efficient research skills for better accomplishments at tournaments."

Debaters at BC Academy, many of whom are from an Asian background, David said, faced and overcame an additional barrier: language.

"All of our debaters are not native English speakers," David said, "but they won at large, difficult tournaments such as Harvard, Stanford and Georgetown University. This is real evidence that Jim's support at the workshop led to success at the tournament and even in their school life."

Among those successes were 9 teams that advanced to elimination rounds at the Stanford tournament. Jim noted "David is hard working and so are his students. They push themselves to excel and it shows. Coaching and working with the BC and BL students is a real joy."

Learn how to host a workshop or clinic at your school on the Climb website at

<https://www.climbthemountain.us/clinics>



The Board

The Climb Board is five highly accomplished professionals who strongly believe in the value of speech and debate.



Jared Phillips

Mr. Phillips is the Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer of the Foundation, handling many of the business functions of Climb the Mountain. Mr. Phillips has been a nationally recognized All-American debater (placing thirty-third in the nation), coach of the 17th team in the nation, and placed in late elimination rounds at multiple Northwest debate tournaments. He is currently the Co-Founder and CEO of Minutes.City, a company focused on improving civic engagement of citizens with local government.



Jim Hanson

As the Executive Director, Mr. Hanson is responsible for the instructional creation and organization of the Foundation. Mr. Hanson has been a Professor of Rhetoric and Argument and speech and debate coach for more than thirty-three years. As coach, his speech and debate team won 5 squad NDPA national championships, first place CEDA team in the nation (Jessica Clarke and Adam Symonds), first place NDT speaker (Charles Olney), and first place NPDA speaker (Miranda Morton) as well as over 1000 debate awards and 500 individual speaking events awards.



Char Main

Ms. Main serves as Vice President of the Foundation and provides organizational goals and objectives advice. She is a litigation attorney with a nationwide practice, and she oversees the work of litigators across the country. She is formerly a nationally competitive speaker and debater (placing fifth in the nation at CEDA Nationals and second in the nation at Pi Kappa Delta Nationals), an "All American" debater, and placed first and was awarded first speaker at many Northwest debate contests. In law school, Ms. Main was a finalist and coach in national moot court competitions. She has coached at both high school and college levels, leading multiple teams to elimination debates.



Rowland Hobbs

Mr. Hobbs serves as a board member, providing expertise in promotion and development. He is a nationally recognized, award-winning, product designer, marketer, and advisor to leaders of global organizations. He is currently managing director at Teneo, a global CEO advisory firm. Previously, he was product design director at Accenture, board member at Firelight Foundation, founder and board member at Post+Beam, and was a nationally competitive debater advancing to elimination rounds at CEDA Nationals and the NFL National championship, placing ninth at the Heart of America, and earning first speaker in Washington State.



David Perry

Mr. Perry serves as Secretary recording meeting minutes and compiling Foundation documents. He is an award winning legal counsel for a business, a nationally competitive speaker and debater in both parliamentary and policy debate including elimination debates at national championship tournaments (placing fifth at the DSR National Championship).

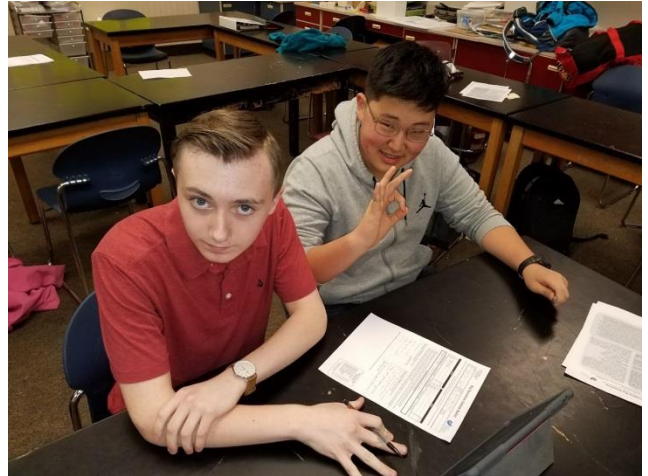
January through July 2017 in Review . . .

As we reflect upon the first half of the year of Climb and its successes, we want to highlight key happenings:

- o working with bc academy and bl education, helping 24 debaters prepare for harvard and stanford
- o working with rainier prep to continue their new debate program
- o working with 4 students from the bellevue seattle arealeading up to their participating in the middle school league tournament
- o holding a clinic at roosevelt high school to startup their program before they went to their first tournament!
- o working with bethel high school where they are starting up a program. i want to thank Matt Fraser and Matt Taylor in particular for this one. Tiffany Wilhelm is helping out with IEs and is a god send.
- o completed the end of the year accounting and taxes for Climb
- o helped with ie tab at the UPS hs tournament
- o judged at federal way, kamiak, and snohomish tournamentstotal joy watching very talented policy and public forum teams! (plus seeing hs favorite coaches!)
- o completed the nearly final template for the new climb web pages (which hopefully should appear next week)
- o confirmed plans for the 2017 high school camp at plu (now with housing!) and middle school camp at explorer west.
- o completed the new climb web pages including with a number of updates (more updates coming)
- o held a small but successful online college tournament—we are following up with another one plus a high school one in april
- o instruction in debate at rainier prep middle school
- o a lot of work for the national parliamentary tournament of excellence including multiple board conversations, nppte insurance, nppte accounting
- o provided feedback to debaters during multiple online practice sessions
- o helped coach bc academy/bl educational to elims for 9! teams including two semi-finalists at the Stanford national circuit tournament
- o worked with kent meridian to jump start their newly revived program
- o worked with bethel high school to jump start their newly revived program—they had a team in finals at the winterlake tournament
- o worked with middle school and high school students in Bellevue
- o worked with high school students in the auburn-kent area
- o setup northwest parli champs for college debaters
- o judged at the worlds style debate regional championship at plu
- o ran debate tab at the winterlake tournament
- o met with and am reviewing work for a seattle area company wanting to provide online instruction and training in speech and debate
- o judged at the nsda qualification tournament at federal way high school
- o judged at the state debate championship tournament
- o began registrations for our high school and middle school camps
- o scheduled in a short camp with Bellevue college for college debaters
- o promoted the women's debate institute kind donation effort to over 6,000 people
- o started our fundraising program; we are hoping to provide students with financial need the opportunity to attend our summer camps without finances being an obstacle
- o Quarterly accounting complete including switchover to monthly payroll tax system
- o Completed a journal article on outreach to schools for beginning programs (status for publication: in progress)
- o More updates to the climb web pages
- o Worked with bethel high school—they are ready to go as a program—very proud of this one



- Worked with kent meridian high school—they are somewhat tenuous—the kids and the coaches just aren't stepping up; I'd say this is a maybe they'll get going this coming year
- Tutored middle school students in Bellevue
- Tutored students from bc academy
- Tutored students from the Carnation area
- Ran northwest parliamentary debate champs
- Ran our second online college debate tournament
- Began the bethel high school big question tournament with 30+ participants!
- More updates to the climb web pages
- completed work at bethel high school and kent meridian high school
- held big question tournaments at bethel and interlake high schools
- Tutored middle school students in Bellevue
- Tutored students from bc academy—who placed in semi-finals at their tournament in california
- Tutored students from the Carnation area
- Ran online ie and debate tournaments for high schoolers
- tutored Bellevue kids in interpretation, debate, and speaking events
- participated in the bc academy showcase event and received an award for coaching
- attended the middle school coaches meeting
- setup the middle school and high school camps including schedules, hiring, web page updates, notifications to participants, etc.
- met with justin Eckstein to talk about partnering climb tournaments with northwest worlds style debate scrimmages
- gave two presentations on debating for the Korean and japan nationals tournaments.
- did accounting including relevant taxes
- met with our chief officer jared Phillips to begin the transition to his taking over accounting for climb the mountain
- reviewed process for hiring our new positions running clinics and tournaments and engaging in outreach to schools to start programs
- e-met with online tournament software person to bring new and better service for debating online
- tutored students preparing for debate tournaments
- began our high school camp—ready for the middle school camp



In our next Newsletter, we will tell you about our latest support for speech and debate.

We have 2 camps this summer—including residential housing for the high school camp. We are planning a significant expansion to Climb with new outreach plans and more clinics and tournaments! We've totally revamped our web pages. News on all of this is coming . . . In the meantime, see our Facebook pages for the latest updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/258436737697090/>

We are climbing and we are ready to hit new peaks of engagement with your help and support!

Contribute to the Climb!

For anyone interested in helping us continue our mission, please visit

<https://www.climbthemountain.us/support-us> to donate a gift of money or your time.

Donors keep us Climbing!

We are incredibly grateful for the support of so many people even though we have just begun our official fundraising. People have donated money. People have donated their time. People have reached out to others to bring them into the world of speech and debate. We thank everyone for their efforts including these donors below (donations from December 2016 up to July 17, 2017). *Did we miss you? We are very sorry for the omission and we want to correct it! Please email Jim at jim@climbthemountain.us and tell him. :)*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alicia Hunt • Bob and Nancy Withycombe • Char Main Chris Dunlap • David and Shari Barsky • James Hovard • James Rydberg • Jared Phillips and Loan Lam • Jim Hanson • Leah Castella • Megan Salzman Medica and John Kevin Medica (The Salzman-Medica Family Fund) • Michael Bartanen • Rowland Hobbs and Angelo Boccia Cedeño • Steve and Sara Rowe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With thanks to the National Speech and Debate Association for providing grants for two big question tournaments where over 60 people participated! • With thanks to Matt Fraser and Education Unlimited for purchasing advertising on our new web pages which helps us fund our projects to grow speech and debate! • With thanks to the Voices Foundation for helping provide scholarships for students attending our high school camp. |
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[Click here to donate and make a difference](https://www.climbthemountain.us/support-us)

We are climbing the mountain!

