



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4, 2018-2019

Welcome to the 2018-2019 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 Sarah Salame who put together the initial draft of this newsletter 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.

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Afterschool Debate



This past season the afternoon debate program took off to great success. Students love speaking and debating and have succeeded! Despite a very heavy snow season, our students put in hours of time and effort, both in person and on skype, to learn both the 3 on 3 middle parliamentary format and the public forum debate format. 3 on 3 parliamentary debate has topics announced 20 minutes before the start of the round and features teams of 3 students. Public forum debate has one topic known in advance of tournaments and

features teams of 2 students. Our students did well in both formats. We had bumps along the way, but by the end of the season, students were excelling during practices and tournaments. The Climbers did great—placing 3rd and 2nd as a squad at the Seattle University Tournaments hosted by Director Jim Hanson! These tournaments had 180+ participants.

Oreos!

Jim is quite happy with the program and is pleased with its growth. Still, one student, Sophie, had Jim perplexed and deeply troubled because of her advocacy for eating the inside of the Oreo first! Jim was heard telling students "This is an abomination of all that is right and true." Sophie's response was to eat more middles of Oreos.



Snow? Skype!

Toward the middle of the season, the Bellevue area experienced a terrible snow storm that went on day after day. Jim was stuck at his house in Snoqualmie for nearly 10 days because he could not get out of his driveway that had 2 feet of snow on it. Students and coaches also were unable to drive. In response, we continued



afterschool practices via Skype. The ensuing situation had some comical moments. A Skype call with 25 kids is definitely a chaotic and memorable time. We tried to have just one person's microphone on at a time, but sometimes that did not work out, and we would hear their siblings and parents in the background! The kids loved the chat functions, and some posted funny messages and memes during the sessions. Sometimes Jim would be talking

to the group and he would get 3 simultaneous questions—out loud! Despite all the distractions, the students pulled through and ended up giving very good speeches and were able to prep with their partners over Skype!

The 2018 Debate Camps



The Summer 2018 Bellevue camp was held at the International School in Bellevue WA. Climb also held smaller camps at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma WA and Explorer West in Seattle WA. We had about 85 participants in total, which was a new record for the climb camps! (The 2019 camps which just finished had over 90 participants! We'll report on that in next year's Newsletter.)

Jim's Email wasn't working so well . . .

The camp was a huge success all around, yet we did have one issue: Jim's wifi connection was not to his satisfaction! Now, if you know Jim, you know he needs his email (in fact, some people think the "real Jim" is "Jim's emails"). Well, the International School's internet was not ideal for Jim. "Grrr." "Ugh." "Oh come on!" were utterances heard from Jim as he tried to get his email program working on the International School wireless. His efforts failed so Jim tried to use his Verizon wireless internet access. Unbelievably, in the middle of Bellevue, a sizable and tech savvy city, Jim's coverage repeatedly disconnected. Jim was heard saying "I really like the International School but the internet situation is absolutely intolerable. I'm getting a lawyer and we'll be talking about the 8th Amendment to the Constitution."



Finally, Jim gave up and used the International School internet with email on the web. Jim was heard muttering "Blech. This is crap. I hate this." Jim managed to survive and at the end, he even begrudgingly noted that "well, I did get some things done but I'm not doing that again!" Well, he was back at it this summer 2019 although at Newport High School this summer, running our largest debate camp to date! :)

What have our staff been up to? Rocking Nationals!



As you may know, many of our Climb the Mountain coaches are debaters themselves including at Seattle University where Jim Hanson coaches! This past April, some of our coaches, including Hatcher Chapman, Parker Davidson, Alyssa Gaston, and Alex Lingden-Ruby went to Clemson University to compete at the United States Universities Debate Championship. These Climb staff members placed in the top half of all teams at the tournament. Alex and his partner, Lily Panetta, advanced to finals for first year students, placing in the top 4 in the country for first year students! We are so proud of them all!

After the long weekend of eight rounds of debate and outrounds, the team got a taste of Southern Barbeque! Hatcher Chapman, a seasoned Climb the Mountain coach noted that "Debate is really cool because besides getting to learn a lot just about debate, we get to travel to cool places I've never been to, try new foods, and hang out with my fellow coaches, debaters, and friends!" Parker Davidson, another one of our Climbers, took some time to reflect on his Climb work and how it has helped him in his own debate career. "By having a more external view of debating, actually watching and taking notes of a debate as a judge and coach, I'm able to better figure out what a speech should really look like," he says, reflecting on his own successes as a debater. We are very happy having Seattle University students coached by Jim Hanson helping with the Climb programs.



The Benefits of Speech and Debate

Speech and Debate provide important skills, not just for the sake of argumentation, but in our day to day lives as well. Students usually begin to write longer essays and give reports when they begin middle school, and some of the tools gained from debating and giving speeches are the exact same tools used to complete these tasks and to get the most out of their learning!



Climb instills confidence in students while they learn skills in research, speaking, listening, and well supported arguments. These skills help students settle disputes both with friends and family (even though they can sometimes also instigate the disputes!). They learn to listen to their parents and peers, as well as develop constructive arguments to express their opinion. Alex Lindgren-Ruby, a Climb Coach, has his own personal testimonies on real world debate application. "It's been a good way to practice and get better at writing, and that makes a lot of

assignments easier to do. Essays take way less time for me to do now just because I have practice coming up with ideas and putting them together in a structure that makes sense," he noted. Our Climb students are getting that same knowledge. They are becoming better speakers and writers. They are developing friendships based on their shared interests in communication. We are proud to be giving these students access to the benefits of speech and debate and we want to make it grow even more.



Climb goes to the Seattle U debate tournaments

Our Climb the Mountain students have been excelling at tournaments, especially at those hosted by Seattle University's debate team. These tournaments have 75 to 180+ students participating. At the early March tournament, our climbers were five out of the twelve top speakers. This is a



very impressive feat, considering the strength of the competition and the fact that they had just started learning a new debate format for them (public forum). This format is different than what our climbers worked on in the fall, but it is a research-intensive style that really teaches going in-depth on a topic. In the winter, our debaters really showed off in the 3 on 3 parliamentary debate style—taking 3rd place and then 2nd place for the whole program at the last two

tournaments using that format. We are excited for what's to come and be able to watch their skills grow!

Laszlo, Andrew, and Arya went 3-0 and each has won speaker awards. Alana joined mid-season and is ready to be a debate star!



Afterschool program for speech



The after-school speech program teaches skills that are wide ranging and applicable to any future field or academic pursuit. Often the activities students engage in are creatively challenging. A favorite activity that students completed had them design a business model for a new restaurant. The students had to decide the food they would serve and the price they would charge. That information had to be logical, so if they charge a high price for a burger, the ingredients must be top notch. This was an opportunity for them to practice persuasive speaking as they had to convince others of their pricing choices. The activity culminated in a fun but informative project where each group made a skit advertisement for their restaurant.

Students also did speeches using advanced PowerPoint techniques even if the topics sometimes were "delicious mashed potatoes" and "glitter slime." They also did speeches about an imagined place. The students were quite creative and invented worlds inside of video games, in distant high-tech planets, and even Candyland. It was a lot of fun and students learned valuable speaking skills.



Sarah Salame takes on the Climb Assistant Director Position

With Zach Maghirang's departure, Jim has turned to one of his debaters at Seattle University, Sarah Salame. Sarah has taken up the effort with flying colors. She's been hard at work with the national contact list and finishing this newsletter. Jim noted: "I am so grateful for Sarah's help. She's a tenacious worker and produces excellent work. Plus, students love her instruction!"

Fall 2018 Speech and Debate Clinic



The Climb the Mountain Speech and Debate Clinic held at Newport High School in Bellevue, Washington was a huge success! On October 6, 2018, we hosted training clinics for many different speech and debate events, such as Public Forum, Policy, LD, Middle School Public-Parli, and Congressional debate plus Interpretation, Extemporaneous and Platform speeches. We had about fifty students from all over the region sign up for training in various debate styles. We also had coach and judging workshops geared

specifically for parents and teachers looking to get more closely involved in their child's work in forensics. It was a very engaging day, as we saw the kids learn and grow from start to finish, as well as make new friends! They especially loved lunchtime, as we had pizza and dozens of snacks!

After lunch, we conducted actual debates which the students had prepped cases for. Hatcher Chapman, a junior at Seattle University, noted:

It was such an exciting and fun time to watch the kids run their debates and to judge them. They all had really cool things to say and I loved using my personal experience as a college level debater to offer them advice on how to grow as they navigate their budding debate careers!



Hatcher's students debated about whether or not to change the voting age to 16 years old, and they all did an amazing job. The team on the side for 16 year old voting discussed how sixteen year olds can drive and handle high level reasons, whilst the opposing side discussed brain development, life experience, and teen ability to reason at a high level. These very good points on both sides led to engaged debate and discussion in which everyone came out more informed and more effective in their communication.

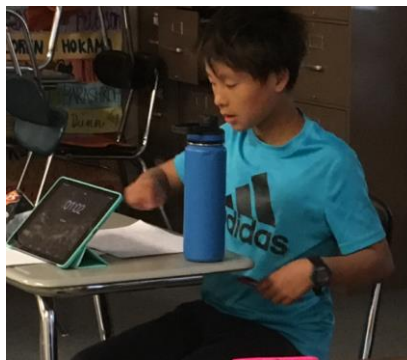
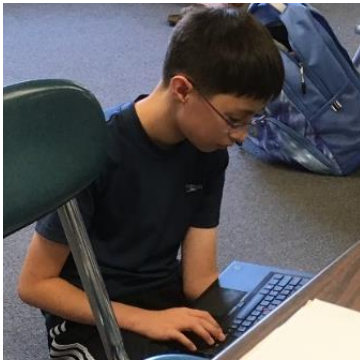
To wrap up the clinic, Dr. Jim Hanson compiled has trademark slideshow that featured tons of photos throughout the day, including photos from the workshops, our awesome pizza party, and our staff that helped us put the whole event together throughout the day!



(Note, this story and the one on Sarah Salame was in a previous edition. It has been placed into this Newsletter and removed from the previous one to fit in with our new yearly publication schedule.)

Climb Highlights July 2018 to June 2019 . . .

- Ran a debate program for elementary students at Microsoft in Redmond, providing instruction and practice debates over a 2 month period including with a new format—to great success.
- Worked with BC Academy providing instruction in public forum debate leading to multiple winning awards at Stanford and Harvard.
- Instructed 45 students in debate and speaking in our afterschool program.
- Held five online tournaments for college students.
- Helped a new Seattle middle school debate program.
- Provided feedback and insight for future development of the online debating platform.
- Held our biggest speech and debate camps with 85 participants.
- Did updates to the Climb web pages.
- Referred multiple students to Climb tutors.
- Jared Phillips, our Chief Executive Officer, ably handled accounting for all of our activities.
- Tutored two students from BC Academy.
- Separately, Jim hosted 5 middle school debate tournaments at Seattle University with Climbers attending.
- Answered dozens of emails asking questions about speech and debate.
- Assisted coaches in finding judges for tournaments.
- Updated the national speech and debate contact list.
- Assisted coaches in getting assistant coaches for their programs.
- Hosted our largest fall speech and debate clinic yet.
- Assisted a nationally recognized diversity in technology speaker with a presentation.
- Developed templates for middle school 3 on 3 parliamentary debate.



To get the latest news, be sure to check our Facebook page:

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

We are climbing 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. 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 July 2018 to June 2019). *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. :)*

- **Char Main Chris Dunlap**
- **David and Shari Barsky**
- **Jim Hanson**
- **Megan Salzman Medica (The Salzman-Medica Family Fund)**
- **Michael Bartanen**

Thank you to these great Climbers who volunteered help at our clinics and camps:

- **Mike Bartanen**
- **Ronna Liggett**
- **Tiffany Wilhelm**
- **And to all of the people that have helped our community grow!**

- **With thanks to Matt Fraser and Education Unlimited for purchasing advertising on our 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.**

[Click here to donate and make a difference](https://www.climbthemountain.us/support-us)

We are climbing the mountain!

