



# NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2, No.1, Fall 2016

## Welcome to the Fall 2016 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](mailto:jim@climbthemountain.us) with ideas, edits, omissions, thoughts, etc.

Click on individual stories to read about Climb the Mountain!

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Consider programs from Climb sponsor Education Unlimited.



## A new generation of coaches and debaters connect with Climb using alternative media

In today's electronic age, we're constantly connected to our mobile devices. They're our encyclopedias, our calculators, and our link to family, friends and coworkers.

For Climb the Mountain and the diverse schools we work with, it turns out the addiction to our phones and computers is a good thing: Executive Director Jim Hanson who some say only exists as an email : ), uses email and Facebook messenger as key tools in connecting with coaches across the United States, including Mark Little from Oregon Episcopal School in Portland, Oregon.

Mark and Jim met in the late 1980's when Mark was debating at the high school level, and they continued to work together as Mark transitioned into college debate. When Mark returned to the debate community 20 years later as a volunteer coach, he reached out to Jim for advice on developing his program to bring debate to a new generation.

We reached out to Mark for comment on how connecting with Jim as a debater and again over email as a coach has help developed his skills in both positions. Mark told us:

Jim Hanson judged and mentored me as a debater in high school and college in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Jim provided exceptional advice that helped me excel. When I returned to debate 20 years later as a volunteer coach of a brand new program at Oregon Episcopal School (OES) in Portland, Jim was on the top of my list of people to ask for help.

Now, as a parent of a debater, I enjoy sharing stories of my time in debate. A surprising number of stories involve Jim. For example, Jim introduced me to nanotechnology in 1987 when there was only one book on the subject (and no Internet). We were probably one of the first high school teams in the country to run a nanotech disadvantage at the time.

I recall Jim's constant advice to try to win every ballot in an elimination round with a mix of experienced and community judges. This advice is contrary to most debaters' behavior. Debaters tend to "go for" the "flow" judges and ignore the community judge. Jim's advice paid huge dividends for me personally and does for our team now. It is timeless advice.

Jim helped bridge the gap in my knowledge so that I didn't coach like it was 1990. He provided guidance on every important area as a coach: managing debate partnerships, using technology, writing effective responses, and researching more esoteric areas of argumentation. His insights helped Oregon Episcopal School win a State Championship in Policy Debate, two 3rd place State awards, and many regional and national awards in its first three years.

The breadth and depth of Jim's knowledge about debate are exceeded only by his warmth and openness to helping students achieve their objectives, however modest or ambitious.

Jim noted that "Mark is a very gifted, engaging, and highly intelligent person. His son is an outstanding debater and Mark has built up a fantastically successful program. I am really happy to see Mark return to the community to help young students experience the benefits and fun of speech and debate.

*Are you the coach of a local, national or international debate program? Contact Jim at [jim@climbthemountain.us](mailto:jim@climbthemountain.us) or visit <http://www.climbthemountain.us/coaches.htm> for coaching resources.*

## Climb travels over the Mountain for Cascade High School clinic

The number of students in speech and debate programs in Washington continues to grow, and we joined Cascade High School debaters in Leavenworth, Wash. to climb toward success in oratory and debate events. Leavenworth is about 2 hours from Seattle, nestled in the Cascade Mountains, in absolutely beautiful scenery.

After attending Climb's Bellevue Clinic, Cascade debate coach Mandi Wickline sought out Climb the Mountain to help prepare her students for various speech and debate events, combining her strengths with Jim's knowledge of oratory and Public Forum.



My background in drama has been essential to helping students succeed in scripted IES, but I need some extra support when it comes to oratory and the debate events," Mandi said. "Jim's insight and experience really helped the kids learn the ins and outs of Public Forum, as well as providing them with the writing tools they need for oratory. As a drama coach, it helps to have a different perspective on how pieces should be played, and Jim thinks like a director. I want to always learn more, and Jim is a patient and creative teacher.

Cascade's program excels at interpretation pieces, and

Mandi's love for forensics and supporting her students is evident.

"I love the passion Mandi has for speech and debate," Jim said. "It is obvious she cares about her students and she loves the feel and aesthetic of excellent interpretation pieces. It was a lot of fun working with her and her students—she brings so much energy and enthusiasm to coaching. She is an exemplar of taking her students to communication excellence."

No clinic is without its "climbing moments," though, as Jim experienced firsthand.

"I was headed home—happy with how the clinic at Cascade High School had gone," Jim said. "I got a call from Rowland Hobbs, Climb the Mountain Board Member, and we had a good chat until the line disconnected as I started to go up Blewett Pass. That and the accumulating snow should have told me things weren't going to go right. When I got to Cle Elum—they had just closed Interstate 90. So, even though I was only an hour from my house, I had to turn around. I headed back through Leavenworth, over Stephens Pass (which was packed with snow—thank goodness for the all-weather tires I had put on), and around the mountains to my home for a 1am arrival, 5 hours after I finished the clinic. I had to chuckle even though I was tired—doing this clinic was worth every moment."

*Late breaking update from Mandi!  
Congratulations to our Speech and Debate Team for their amazing performance at Regionals this year! In the 3A State Qualifier, Sarah Burshek took 6th in Expository and Nathan Hagan took 3rd in Original Oratory. Zane Priebe and Nathan Hagan took 2nd in Dual Interpretation and Kelsea Turner and Tagen Mathews took 1st. Kelsea Turner took first place in every round, also taking first in Dramatic*



*Want to learn more about how your high school can host a clinic? Visit <http://www.climbthemountain.us/clinics.htm> for information on cost, dates and how to request a clinic.  
(Washington State DOT photo)*

## Mount Si expands program to include individual events



In our spring newsletter, we wrote about the blossoming Mount Si team, where Chelsea King has led her debate program to grow from 12 students to more than 60. This fall, Climb the Mountain joined the team again for a debate clinic as well as an individual events clinic to help the team continue to grow in their knowledge of speech and debate.

Jim has additionally joined the team each Monday, helping support students on an individual basis to prepare for IEs at speech and debate competitions.

club off the ground,” coach Chelsea King said. “Through a series of camps both this year and last year, Climb has helped expose our



“Jim and Climb have been influential in getting our speech students to the different styles of individual events available to them. The staff was amazing and the kids learned a lot and had loads of fun. Thanks to Climb and Jim’s after school help in coaching, we have been able to earn a NIETOC and State Bid in Speech for the first time in Mount Si’s history.”



Kingston High School Speech & Debate coach and Climb instructor Lasica Crane also joined Mount Si for the individual events clinic.

“It was a great pleasure to work with the students at Mount Si,” Lasica said. “The students I worked with demonstrated the ability to think independently and had exciting original thoughts. It is wonderful to see them developing those skills and winning awards.

Climb is proud to help existing programs expand so they provide more opportunities to their students.

*We wish the best of luck to this growing team. Need support for individual events or debate at your school? Email Jim at [jim@climbthemountain.us](mailto:jim@climbthemountain.us) for more information.*

## Climb the Mountain camps create community

Climb the Mountain Speech and Debate Foundation, Pacific Lutheran University's T.O.H. Karl Forensics Forum and members of the local speech and debate community teamed up to teach middle and high school students at Climb's summer camps in late July and early August 2016.



Jim and Justin Eckstein, PLU Director of Forensics, established the high school camp at PLU to promote and support forensics in the Pacific Northwest, and this past summer expanded Climb's programs to include a middle school camp hosted at Explorer West Middle School.

The camps uniquely offers an opportunity for current and former college debaters and coaches to provide individualized instruction to students starting out in speech and debate, connecting generations of debaters. The new middle school

camp was an exciting addition to our programs, allowing students to attend Climb camps even earlier in their careers.

"The debate camp at Explorer West Middle School helped our team grow in both interest and capacity," Coach David Kelly said. "Simple instruction paired with experienced coaches made all the difference for our team preparation."

Nives Dolsak's son Alexander participated in the Lincoln Douglas portion of the high school debate camp after meeting Jim in spring 2016 at a Climb sponsored UW Bothell tournament. Nives told us that the experience at camp as well as with peers in the fall has been transformative:



In the fall, he joined a debate team at Ingraham, a public high school closest to his high school. They welcomed him warmly. I think their coach, Zach Maghirang, may have been a coach or a judge at the Climb the Mountain camp, as he remembered Alexander. Alexander has been practicing with them and competing for Ingraham team.



I think Alexander still sometimes emails one of LD coaches from the Climb the Mountain camp for advice. He attended two or three novice LD tournaments this fall and won two of them, so he lost the novice status. Today, he is competing in Auburn for the first time in the open LD.

He is thrilled about LD debates. When he came home from the 2016 Becky Galentine Memorial tournament at UW last week, he told us that he finally "found his people." He feels at home with

other young people reading and debating about current issues.

More than 65 students participated in our camps this past summer at a reasonable price. With a renowned coaching staff, our camps are designed to help students succeed.

*To find out more about our camps and other programs offered by Climb the Mountain Speech and Debate Foundation, visit [www.climbthemountain.us](http://www.climbthemountain.us).*

## Climb coaches Canadian teams toward national success



speech and debate season.

Climb's work with young debaters isn't limited by international borders. This fall, Jim led several multi-day clinics, presenting in Langley and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Students from BC Academy in Langley and BL Education in Vancouver and even Toronto attended the clinics, preparing for national-circuit debate tournaments. This coaching opportunity not only offered Climb the Mountain the opportunity to grow the debate community, but supported the success of these teams throughout the



"Climb the Mountain is a very supportive group who helped me every month to get through debate tournaments with success, BC Academy student Hooney Oh wrote. "The coaches provide great, detailed feedback that helps me build my cases and fix my mistakes. Thanks to the team, I am motivated to continue my debate experiences and enter tournaments."

Though many students on these young teams were in their first years of debate, they won and placed at tournaments including one team's 4-3 win in open division at Princeton University, another team's Georgetown tournament win, and a third's place in semifinals at Pacific Lutheran University.



practices, clinics and competitive tournaments.

These teams have won dozens of speech and debate awards this fall, strengthening their skills through

A Toronto debater who flew into Vancouver for the clinic, shared with us:

Being given the opportunity to have experienced debate tournaments at Yale and Princeton has far surpassed my own expectations regarding debate itself, and has introduced to me another aspect of speaking that I would not have had without debate. I can most assuredly say that the experience itself would not have been as tremendously impactful without the assistance I received from Climb the Mountain.

The preparation they organized was cohesive and well-researched, while also being expansive in scope. Moreover, the debate exercises we conducted as a group were very thorough and explorative, increasing my confidence on the podium. At the end of the day, I feel much more well versed not only in debate, but in speaking as a whole.

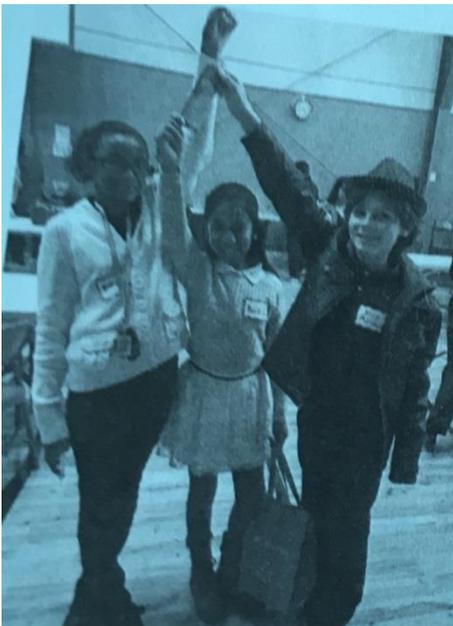
*The debating experience at BL has been extremely rewarding because of all the skills that I have acquired or polished and all the people that I have met. The coaches all have something unique to offer, whether it is debate-specific skills or general communication/research skills, and especially Jim, who uses his rich experience extraordinarily well to enhance the learning process. It would not have been possible for me to participate in U.S. national tournaments without the support of BL, and I'm especially grateful for the supportive community that I am part of because of debating at BL. (BL Education and BC Academy have partnered with Climb for debating training).*



Want to see how Climb can work to transform your program and increase students' confidence? Contact Jim at [jim@climbthemountain.us](mailto:jim@climbthemountain.us) with inquiries and to schedule a clinic at your school.

Climb the Mountain Speech and Debate Foundation [www.climbthemountain.us](http://www.climbthemountain.us)

## Coach and son pair up to develop Rainier Prep debate



As programs around Puget Sound continue to grow, new programs start to fill needs and bring speech and debate to more students than ever.

Rainier Prep is a great example—they began a new program, with help from Climb the Mountain, after coach Denise Vaughan’s son started out in debate over the summer at our camp.

“I’ve been going to Rainier Prep each week during the fall and it has been neat to watch a new program get started,” Jim said. “The students are learning how to organize their ideas, how to speak clearly, how to take notes, how to research their arguments.”

Alex, part of the inspiration for the new program, has been an integral part of helping the team grow and succeed.

“It is great to see Alex, son of my good friend and fellow

coach Denise Vaughan, as he has grown as a debater. He started this summer at our middle school camp, he has recruited for the team—it has doubled in size!—and he has won an honorable mention and top speaker of the school award. He is really an awesome kid.”

Debate brings communities together, and it brings families together, too. Through the Rainer Prep debate program, Denise and her son have been able to bond, building on a shared passion.

“I’m having a great time with the opportunity to work with my son and his schools debate team,” Denise said. “It’s great to be able to share my passion with him. These kids are just amazing at what they do. [They’re] natural-born arguers.”

Alex loves debate and responded to what debating does for him:

“I hardly ever lose arguments with my mom after I started debate.” – Denise may need to have a talk with her son. : )

Also, “debate is like curry. I love it but it burns me” -- Alex does not like losing : )

Need help starting a program at your child’s school? Learn how at <http://www.climbthemountain.us/index.htm>



## 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).

## June to December 2016 in Review . . .

As we reflect upon the past six month of Climb and its successes, we want to highlight key happenings:

### June, July August 2016

- We held the high school camp with students in policy-cx, public forum, LD, congress, interp, and speaking events plus coaches!
- We held the middle school camp with students engaging in middle school format debate.
- Completed rough draft of public forum debate instructional resources.
- We worked with the Bellevue College debate program providing instruction to students in debate.

### September 2016

- Worked with David Jung and over 25 students helping students from multiple schools in the Vancouver BC, Langley BC, and Toronto areas in an extensive clinic.
- Assisted in practice debates at Pacific Lutheran University.
- Provided instruction at Rainer Prep, a charter school just beginning its debate program.
- Connected a Climb staff member with a student in Olympia to help her speech and debate program continue after their coach left.
- Provided initial information for helping start a program a Roosevelt High School in Seattle. Our hope is to offer a clinic and coaching there in the spring to get them started.
- Began outreach to a Seattle school to help the school's new coach begin debate.
- Worked with students in IPDA debate at Bellevue College at a 3 day camp.
- Did the insurance renewal and accounting documentation for Climb (tax forms still to be done).
- Held an individual events clinic at Mt Si High School providing instruction in interp, extemp, expos, and oratory.
- Attended the Yale tournament with students from BC Academy and BL educational services providing feedback and help in public forum debate.
- Hosted the Northwest Parli warmup tournament providing competition for teams in NPTE-NPDA and IPDA debate.
- Updated the national college contact list—it now has information on nearly 300 schools and in a major update, now has all kinds of programs—individual events, BP-Worlds, NFA-LD, IPDA, as well as NPTE-NPDA and CEDA-NDT. High school students can view this information and contact college directors to be involved in college speech and debate.
- Put a volunteer in contact with a program in the Bellevue area so he could help that team with coaching.

### October 2016

- Held Mount Si speech clinic.
- Did Quarter 3 accounting.
- Reviewed student cases to help them compete at tournaments.
- Talked with a middle school coach providing help for starting a program at his school.
- Worked with rainier prep middle school students including attending their first tournament ever.
- Participated in PLU practice debates.
- Held a speech and debate clinic at Bellevue College offering instruction to students and coaches from throughout the Puget Sound area.
- Held Mount Si debate clinic.
- Judged a great policy round at bear creek school's tournament
- Worked with Mount Si individual event competitors.
- Held a debate tournament for young college debaters at Bellevue college.
- Worked with Central Kitsap students in public forum and extemporaneous speaking.
- Judged at the UPS college parliamentary tournament.
- Worked with a coach in Canada providing information on how public forum debate works for a new program.
- Provided debate theory articles to a policy debate team.
- Provided photos for an article about debate to the Bellevue college newspaper.
- Reviewed First Amendment/free speech arguments on a variety of topics with PLU coach.
- Talked with a former debater about starting a college program in New York city.

## November 2016

- Continued work at Rainier Prep middle school. Their team is now 2x the size; thank you to Denise Vaughan for all her work at this school!
- Continued to help out at PLU watching practice rounds and assisted in travel and judging at the Linfield tournament for PLU. What a great group! Thank you Justin Eckstein.
- Continued to work with BC Academy and BL Educational; these kids are becoming public forum juggernauts. Thank you David Jung.
- Continued to work with Mount Si and their interp and impromptu competitors; some huge talent there. Thank you Chelsea King.
- Worked at 2 clinics with Cascade high school in beautiful Leavenworth providing debate and individual events instruction. This is a small but growing program and they are going places! Thank you Mandi Wickline.
- Provided instruction to Auburn Mountainview high school students; can't take huge credit but the kids from this new program all had winning records at their tournament afterwards. Thank you Riya Sunny.
- Completed another significant update to the national contact list.

## December 2016

- Went to the Princeton tournament with the BC Academy and BL Education teams. The team did great! Even though these students are mainly in their first year of competition—they held their own against national circuit senior division students—including a 3-4 result for two students at their second tournament ever and a 4-3 result for two students, one of whom was at his first tournament! Kudos to David Jung and Li Xie and Stephanie at BL Education on their great teams!
- A parent wrote that: “(Our son) has been practicing . . . And competing for Ingraham team. I think (he) still sometimes e-mails one of LD coaches from the Climb the Mountain camp for advice. He attended 2 or 3 novice LD tournaments this fall and won two of them, so he lost the novice status. Today, he is competing in Auburn for the first time in the open LD. I thought I would let you know how excited he is about building on the skills he learned in the camp.” A shout out to Zach Maghirang who works with this student, climb and the Ingraham Debate program and quite well i would add!
- Continued work with the Rainier Prep middle school debate program; two teams competed at the evergreen school tournament and won another honorable mention award. Denise Vaughan leads up this effort and she is awesome (and so is her son who is a star debater!)
- Held a climb college tournament offering another educational opportunity for students to debate; kudos to Tony Penders for helping to make this possible (not to mention the success that his Bellevue debaters have had).
- Worked with Mount Si high school individual events. Coach Chelsea King rocks.
- Judged policy-cx debate at the auburn riverside tournament—I am super impressed by the quality of the debating and happy at the small but significant resurgence of policy-cx in washington state. Thanks go to Steve Rowe for making this possible and kudos to him and Lisa R. Weber who run a great program.
- Worked with students to prepare for the Puget sound tournament
- Did a minor update to the national college contact list.
- Completed the fall NDT rankings.
- Working with Serena Fitzgerald and Dylan Thomas at a four day clinic with BC academy and BL education.
- Began work with 4 sixth graders who are uber talented who will participate in middle school tournaments in speech and debate.
- Completed a template for new climb the mountain web pages; hope to unveil them by the end of January (they went online in early February).
- Worked with eight students helping to edit their cases and rebuttals providing comments for improvement.
- Provided feedback to another nonprofit that promotes debate with scholarships.
- Offered advice for judging a debate event to a new judge.
- Continued work on our summer high school camp. We have now announced that we will be expanding to two weeks and providing residential options! Justin Eckstein is helping big time in this effort.

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

• We have 2 camps coming up this summer—including residential housing for the high school camp. We are working with two new schools to start programs. 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

<http://www.climbthemountain.us/donate.htm> to donate money or

<http://www.climbthemountain.us/how-you-can-help.htm> to read the different ways you can volunteer 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 up to March 7, 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](mailto:jim@climbthemountain.us) and tell him. : )*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Alicia Hunt</b></li> <li>• <b>Charles Olney</b></li> <li>• <b>Jared Phillips and Loan Lam</b></li> <li>• <b>Jessica Clarke</b></li> <li>• <b>Jessica Gates</b></li> <li>• <b>Joseph Terry</b></li> <li>• <b>Megan Salzman Medica and John Kevin Medica (The Salzman-Medica Family Fund)</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Michael Allen</b></li> <li>• <b>Michael Bartanen</b></li> <li>• <b>Microsoft</b></li> <li>• <b>Peter Campbell</b></li> <li>• <b>Rachel Safran</b></li> <li>• <b>Scott Clifthorne</b></li> <li>• <b>Steve and Sara Rowe</b></li> </ul> |
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[Click here to donate and make a difference](#)

## We are climbing the mountain!

