

Dear TOC At Large Committee,

The story of our debate season has been a strenuous one for a variety of reasons.

We didn't know we were debating together until a couple weeks before the CSU Fullerton tournament precluding our ability to register for certain tournaments such as Greenhill and Meadows. We had to adjust our travel schedule to the availability of parents to chaperone us, who also had to fulfill work commitments.

Our competitive opportunities were limited by a lack of institutional support, both monetary and administrative. Every tournament we attended came at the cost of our parents' budgets and lengthy administrative negotiations. We are grateful for Christina Tallungan's patience and understanding regarding our situation at the Notre Dame tournament, for our entry was dropped and had to be re-added twice. We couldn't attend the Alta tournament because the Utah High School Activities Association does not permit individual entries, and our school administration did not permit Andrew to join the class, which is a pre-requisite to joining the debate team, until past the registration deadline. We could not attend the Barkley Forum hosted by Emory University because our school is not a member of the Barkley Forum and independent entries are not permissible. Andrew then became ill for a week and a half necessitating a last minute drop from the Golden Desert tournament. We can't attend the National Debate Coaches Association tournament because our school is not a member of the NDCA and one can only earn points representing the school they attend nullifying the points we would have earned participating at Fullerton and ASU.

Our competitive success has been limited by a lack of coaching, we are forever grateful for the help we've received from friends and community members, however the lack of coaching and team support has substantially hindered our ability to perform well competitively. We couldn't do practice debates because there's no institutionally supported policy debate practice and the Utah High Schools Activities Association forbids practice rounds to occur between people who attend different schools. We don't enjoy the privilege of having a squad to split the research burden, or coaches to provide guidance with arguments and speeches. We bear other burdens that coaches typically handle as well such as registration for tournaments, travel and lodging arrangements.

Despite these significant limitations we still managed to clear at every tournament we attended, lost two bid rounds on controversial 2-1 decisions and a third one on a unanimous decision. We've picked up ballots in against competitive teams with extensive coaching support such as Rowland Hall RW, Damien MR and Harker KM. Andrew has also consistently been ranked among the top speakers at major national tournaments.

We are extremely grateful for the support we've received this year from our parents, friends and members of the debate community; our current achievements wouldn't have been possible without it. We would be honored if the Committee supported our participation at the Tournament of Champions as our last opportunity to debate together in high school.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Hayes and Kristof Weakley