



October 2015 News-at-a-glance:

- Letter from the Stoa USA Board of Directors
- Speech Events
- NITOC News & Nuggets
- Board Member Prayer
- Questions? Contact Us

Letter from the Stoa USA Board of Directors

Greetings and Blessings to everyone in StoaLand! We are very excited to launch a **Happy New Year of Christian Home School Speech and Debate**. It's time to register for the new year!

It's easy, too. Just go to [Stoa Registration 2015-2016](#) and follow the simple directions. As our founding father, Scott York, said in one of the first StoaBytes in 2010; as a registered member, you will know the thrill of forensics competition, the intellectual stimulation of speech and debate, and the fellowship of great people. This, coupled with superb memories and the educational experience of a lifetime - how could you not [join?](#)

The Board of Directors are excited to be serving such a wonderful organization and have already been laying out the coming year regarding rules, judge orientation, event ballots, tournament site selections and awards; and the list could go on forever. A supreme list of individuals serve the organization this year. I am blessed to be serving with: MelRae Ambs (TX), Angela Childress (AR), Dave McKinley (CO), John Eyth (PA), Robert Kwong (CA), Craig Smith (CA), and myself, Mark Russell (MO). Also, Mary Winther (CA) and Debbie Snyder (VA) round out the board level as committee chairs of debate and speech respectively. Nothing like being coast to coast!

As you can see, STOA has become an organization that has representation and ideas from across the United States. We value the grass-roots philosophy and look for opportunities to involve folks from across the country.

Last, but certainly not least, our tournament director for the 2016 NITOC is Joanne Quan from Alabama. As a past board member, Joanne brings a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to next year's culminating tournament. I'm already excited for **May 2016 at Drury University in Springfield, Missouri. A true celebration of activities for competitors and families is being lined out.** Through the coming months, families will hear about the new, different and exciting things planned for NITOC.

It's amazing to see there are more than 50 events already on the STOA calendar for the coming year! I fully expect this number to double before we get to next year's NITOC. We know of several states that will be hosting their "first ever" Stoa event in 2016. To God be the Glory!

Many updates will happen through StoaBytes this year and we encourage you to get the news here first! (This email is being sent to all parents and students registered with Stoa for this and

last season. Consequently, you may be getting multiple emails.) Also, throughout the year, different board members will be contributing to StoaBytes, so, look forward to hearing from everyone on the board! Have fun and I look forward to meeting many of you this year!

Mark Russell, Stoa Board President

Following are some important things to note before the competition year starts from Debbie Snyder and Joanne Quan.

Speech Events

The Speech Committee would like to address questions about rule changes in Stoa. We understand that it is disappointing to find that event rules have changed over the summer, but it is not possible for the necessary reviews to be initiated until after NITOC. Stoa has always been committed to having the new season documents finalized by September 1st.

Rule changes are proposed by the Speech Committee and approved by the Board. The Board and Speech Committee do listen to ideas and suggestions from those who contact us. We evaluate all the input, concerns, and ideas and endeavor to make the best decisions possible considering all the information available. We encourage new ideas from the Stoa membership and often implement them.

We encourage students who have worked over the summer under the 2014/2015 rules of Duo to consider modifying and entering those pieces into Open Interpretation. We are convinced that our membership will continue to strive for excellence in all events.

We also have had a few questions about how to use internet publications. The answer is in the Script Submission Form. If the internet work does not have a copyright then it can only be used in Open Interpretation.

Screen Shots - Students who have secured their literary piece from an internet site must create a computer screen shot of the first page that includes words from their piece. The screen shot should include any sidebars, headings, etc., that are a part of the computer screen. The remaining screen shots only need to contain the portions of the text used. The screen shots will be compiled in exactly the same way the photocopied pages are to be compiled. Title and copyright information is still required.

Warmly, Debbie Snyder, Speech Committee Chair



NITOC News & Nuggets

Hello Stoa Land of Students, Parents, Coaches, Club Leaders, and Tournament Directors!!

It's the start of a new speech and debate season!!!! It's the start of a new beginning!!!! Isn't it exciting?!!

As we start the new school year and gear up for a new season of speech and debate, I want to share with you a Bible verse from 1 Timothy 4:8, the New Living Translation:

“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”

Whenever we're working towards any goal, we have to start from a foundation. That's where the training begins. Training in habits. Training in mindset. Training in attitude. Training in skills. There's no easy way to accomplish any task without building upon a strong and sturdy foundation.

And so it begins with this new year of speech and debate. Whether you are a multiple-year student or a new one, an active or supportive parent, an experienced or newbie coach/club leader, or a tournament director of a large or growing tournament... We are all training together across the country, equipping ourselves with strong, effective, and Christ-like communication skills, and preparing to “go” for God. With focused training and a strong foundation, we gain skills. As we gain skills, we start to run. As we run, let us remember to run the race for Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. We are His and we give our all to Him!!

I am humbled and excited to serve you and the Board this year. Every month, I will share a message with you. Every month, a member of the Board will share his or her prayer for you. Every month, we will have exciting updates and news about the planning of NITOC 2016.

Please pray with me that as we go through this new season of speech and debate, we will all remember to be “Training and Running for Christ” so that we are equipped to speak boldly and change the world for Christ.

In His Service, Joanne Quan, NITOC 2016 Tournament Director

Board Member Prayer

I am praying that as competitors plan speeches and write 1AC's, they would consider pursuing content of eternal value. After all, many speeches stay in a person's heart for a life time. I pray that club leaders, parents, coaches, and tournament directors would make every effort to encourage an eternal focus.

I Timothy 4:8-11 says that "for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity."

Warmly, *Debbie Snyder, Speech Committee Chair*



Questions? Contact us!

Did you know Stoa is active on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter? Follow us on your favorite social media for the latest news!

Website: <http://www.stoausa.org>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/stoausa>

Twitter: @Stoatweets

Instagram: Stoa USA (with an underscore between Stoa and USA)

Stoa Mobile App (for iPhones and Androids):

Visit <http://stoausa.mobapp.at/landing/Desktop> or the App Store for your device

Yahoo Groups: Subscribe to either or both of these groups by sending an email to the address below and telling us your name and the name and location of your club (or where you compete, if you are not affiliated with a club).

For Stoa Coaches: stoacoach-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

For Tournament Coordinators: stoate-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

These Yahoo Group forums are a fantastic repository of information about all things Stoa. These are not official "Stoa" sites, but many of Stoa's best coaches and tournament coordinators participate on the sites to offer counsel and advice.

Contact [MelRae Ambs](#) if you need help or have questions.

Your Stoa Board:

[Mark Russell](#), Angela Childress, John Eyth, MelRae Ambs, Robert Kwong, David McKinley, and Craig Smith

[Debbie Snyder](#) (Speech Chair)

[Mary Winther](#) (Debate Chair)

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. Romans 11:36 (NASB®)

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