



## November 2015 News-at-a-glance:

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## Giving Thanks



### Letter from the Stoa Board of Directors



Autumn greetings to our Stoa membership! Crisp air, changing colors, and bonfires usher many of us into November. For Stoa members, it's a time of gearing up in our tournament season!

We've had a strong kick-off with seven Stoa tournaments on the calendar for October and seventeen for November! Thank you to our Stoa tournament calendar coordinators that ensure these tournaments are on the calendar for membership to easily find. We now have some fun websites to alert you when new Stoa tournaments are posted to the calendar! Check the details out below. It's always exciting to see our Stoa membership throughout the country involved and serving by hosting tournaments in their local communities. Did you realize that thirteen states are represented by the October and November tournaments? Thanks to each tournament host for blessing students with the opportunity to compete and develop their skills.

With Thanksgiving on the horizon this month, we are reminded of the many blessings that God provides us through Stoa - development of critical thinking skills, support and coaching in speaking and debating skills, friendships, community, growth in God's Word, service opportunities - all as a gift from our Lord that each one of us might live up to our mission to "Speak boldly. Change the world for Christ." This Thanksgiving season take time to express your thankfulness to those who serve you and faithfully give without asking for anything in return. Whether that is your coach, your parents, your grandparents, your pastor, your tournament director, your tournament staff - take time to specifically bless them with your words. We hope that you will join with us & others in your Stoa family to praise our LORD and know that He is the great provider. **For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.** Romans 11:36 (NASB®)

Forever grateful!

Your Stoa Board of Directors - Mark Russell, Angela Childress, Craig Smith, MelRae Ambs, Robert Kwong, John Eyth, Dave McKinley

## New ways to connect –



You can know what is going on with Stoa tournaments the moment they are posted! How?

StoaAlert <http://stoalert.cryolite.co/>

*Created by one of our own Stoa alumnus, this handy reminder program will send you an alert when new Stoa tournaments are posted to the Stoa USA calendar.*

Also - keep up to date with your friends with:

Shutterfly <https://stoausa.shutterfly.com/pictures>

Pictures from previous NITOCs and tournaments are stored here. Take a walk down memory lane!

## GOAL SETTING TIME IS NOW!

Last year was the first NITOC where the Founders Award was presented. The Founders Award is given to those students who receive an invitation to our National Invitational Tournament of Champions (NITOC) in at least one platform event, interpretive event, limited prep event, wildcard event, and one form of debate.

This is an amazing accomplishment to receive an invitation in five distinct categories and last year, we saw thirteen students achieve it. This year, that could be YOU! Begin to plan now as you prepare your events for competition and you may be one of those on the stage at NITOC 2016!

## Board Member Prayer



### Give thanks with a grateful heart!

This month of November is full of hopes, plans, pressures... and stresses. During a potentially hectic month, these verses come to mind for Stoa: "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Col 3:17

While Stoa students are working, thinking and preparing, it can be very easy to become focused on self, personal needs, and task lists. Be watchful, Stoa! "For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened." Rom 1:21

I pray for Stoa that we would all "continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving." Col 4:2

MelRae Ambs, Stoa Board of Directors



## **NITOC News & Nuggets**

We all know what it means to persevere. Perseverance can be defined as doing something persistently in spite of hardship, discouragement, or delay in achieving success. Whether you're a debater who is looking for the perfect piece of evidence to support a harm, or a speaker who is reworking the conclusion of an original speech, your work behind the scene takes dedication and perseverance. There's no easy way to achieve success.

What are you persevering through this month? While you're persevering, what are your goals? Why are you persevering?

**James 1:2-4** says this: **“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (NIV)**

The world of debate and speech gives us the perfect setting to practice the character trait of perseverance. No one sees the hours of work you put into your debate cases or speeches, but you know. No one sees the countless times you've been piranha packed or practiced your speeches in front of the mirror, but you know. No one sees the challenges you've had to overcome in order to reach the next level of excellence, but you know. You persevere, so you may be lacking in nothing, so that your work is complete.

Tournament season is underway. All of our competitors, parents, club leaders, and tournament directors across the country are persevering, working hard to make it a great season of training and competition.

I pray for a great start to a great new season of competition for you, and as you face trials of many kinds, consider it joy as you persevere and speak boldly for Christ.

In His Service,  
Joanne Quan  
NITOC 2016 Tournament Director



**WE NEED YOU!!**

Teams are actively being built for NITOC and an opportunity awaits you to help long before this celebratory weekend. We are building a team that will engage the recruitment of Scholarships, Sponsors, Vendors and College recruiters to participate in NITOC 2016.

The purpose of this team will be to find and recruit a stable of organizations and individuals who will provide four things.

1. Income for NITOC to help offset expenses
2. Scholarships for students who participate in NITOC 2016
3. Community Judges – we all know how important they are
4. College recruiters for the students and families to talk with and learn from during the week

If you have administrative abilities, we'll need someone to help us keep all the details straight, or if you love to call people and talk with them about Stoa we could use your help. The more who help, hopefully will provide a deeper pool from which our students can benefit.

Please contact John McGee, Vendor/Sponsor/Scout Liaison Director at [mcgeejc6@gmail.com](mailto:mcgeejc6@gmail.com) or 913.709.7279 if you are interested in helping out.

Colleges and Universities are already lining up to attend NITOC 2016 and asking to participate. Do you have a favorite school you would like to see offer a Scholarship and/or send a scout to NITOC 2016? We would love to have them participate. If you could send contact info to John McGee, Vendor/Sponsor/Scout Liaison Director at [mcgeejc6@gmail.com](mailto:mcgeejc6@gmail.com) we will be happy to reach out to them in the coming weeks and make them aware of the opportunity that exists through NITOC.

## **Important Stoabyte subscription news**

The StoaByte is sent to our current members. To continue receiving the Stoabyte and keeping up to date with Stoa news and NITOC updates, register today. If you have not registered with Stoa for the 2015-2016 season, you will no longer receive the newsletter. <https://stoa2015-2016.homeschooldebate.net/>