



June 19, 2016

A Look Back at NITOC 2016

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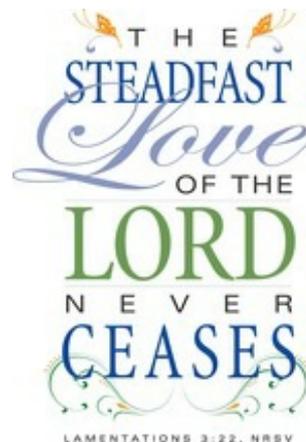


Hi {FIRST_NAME|Valued Customer},

MAKING MEMORIES

What do you call a gathering of 575 speech and debate students, plus their families, from 31 states? Some might call it NITOC 2016 in Springfield, Missouri, and they'd be right. But you would also be right to call it a fun, festive, and Christ-centered celebration! It was exciting to see the campus at Drury University filled with like-minded families and their students.

The competition was keen, but so was the fellowship. All who attended were blessed by the



STOA-WIDE SURVEY

experience and are looking forward to the next one! The Stoa Board would again like to thank Joanne Quan for her stellar service as our Tournament Director, as well as expressing our gratitude to all who volunteered to help staff the hundreds of supporting positions.

If you didn't attend and would like to get a glimpse, or if you were among the participants and would like to see some souvenir shots, go to [Stoa USA Facebook Photos](#) or [Shutterfly](#) to check out the memories! And you've probably already checked out the results on one of our favorite websites, [speechranks.com](#), but if not, take a look at the final rankings at the largest and final tournament of the year.

LESSONS LEARNED, PART I

During the NITOC 2016 Awards ceremony, Austin & Jeffery Pistor shared their testimony of what God had taught them during the competition. In the



Team Policy Semi-finals round, Jeffery continued speaking beyond the time that was allowed for one of his speeches. Since this gave them an unfair advantage, they chose to forfeit the round.

Although this was an incredible disappointment, after reflection they wanted to share what God had taught both of them regarding how He uses every experience, both disappointments & blessings, to prepare each of us. Through disappointment, we can learn humility, perseverance, & patience. As Jeffery concluded:

"We stand resolved that we will praise God regardless of the outcome in every situation."

LESSONS LEARNED, PART II

There's a formula that's used for calculating a tournament champion, and speaker points is part of the mix. Or in the case at NITOC this year, a mix-up. An anomaly in the tab software negatively affected a round where there was a forfeit. The result was a glitch that drastically reduced a debater's speaker points.

Even if you weren't able to attend NITOC 2016, we'd love to hear some of your input regarding our National Invitational Tournament Of Champions. If you qualified, did you not attend because of cost or location? Are you setting a goal to attend NITOC 2017? And for those who attended this year's tournament in Springfield, what did you like and what might you change? Many of your suggestions from NITOC 2015, such as the total number of days of competition and a more friend-making/less record-breaking social, were implemented this year in Springfield. The NITOC 2016 Survey was sent your way last week! Please respond with your comments by June 25 so we can keep improving!

READY FOR YOUR BEST YEAR EVER?

Then attend the 2016 Stoa Academy! Don't miss out on all of the learning, laughing, and last friendships together at your St. Louis 'Gateway to Success' experience. It's not too late to register! You can do it now at:

[Stoa Academy Registration.](#)

There are many valuable workshops for newcomers and old-timers. Get a jump on the 2016-2017 resolutions and wildcard for your clubs and families. And just as valuable as the workshop learning is the sharing and encouragement you'll get from spending time with other coaches and parents from across the StoaSphere - without having to rush off and judge the next round!

Maybe your club can bless your coaches by subsidizing their trip. That's the type of blessing that boomerangs!

Registration closes July 5.

If the software hadn't misawarded these speaker points for Taryn Murphy, then Taryn would've been awarded 2nd Place Team Policy Speaker and the NITOC 2016 Tournament Champion. The Stoa Board apologizes for this mishap, and for the disappointment to Abigail Ford and the lack of acknowledgement for Taryn.

When the Board contacted Taryn and her family to explain the software miscalculation, Taryn responded with, "Titles and trophies are fleeting, and while it's wonderful to have one's efforts recognized, it isn't the most important thing. What matters are the bonds we form with those around us, how we treat others, and how we exhibit Christ's love in testing circumstances." In a gracious post by Abigail, she concludes with, "All in all... Yes, I'm incredibly disappointed. Might have even cried a little bit. But it's not the end of the world! :) I know it's all in God's hands." In their own words, Taryn and Abigail are stating the Stoa theme verse: "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen!" — Rom 11:36

Sincerely,
Stoa Board of
Directors



[NITOC Results](#)
[Stoa Board of Directors Apology](#)

ATTENTION: With the above change in Taryn Murphy's Team Policy Speaker place, Speechranks has been updated to reflect the correction. Please check your standings in the TP speaker ranking since it changed due to software error.

LESSONS LEARNED, PART III



The Stoa Board of Directors regrets to announce



THE STOA-SPHERE HAS SPOKEN



The results are in for the Spring Member 2016 Vote:

- Number of Wildcards
 - Stoa will continue to have two Wildcards per year
- New Speech Wildcard Event
 - Cold Reading
- Speech Event Option
 - Breakout Impromptu is no longer a NITOC event.
- Number of Lincoln Douglas Value Debate Resolutions
 - Stoa will run ONE LDV Resolution
- Lincoln Douglas Value Debate Resolutions
 - Resolved: The needs of the public ought to be valued above private property rights.
- Team Policy Debate Resolutions
 - Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reform its agriculture and/or food safety policy in the United States.
- New Board Members
 - Patricia Shaw
 - CJ Tam

that a tabulation error was made at the NITOC 2016 tournament. The parliamentary team of Austin Janik and Kai McAlister won their double octo-final debate round on a 3-0 decision. Unfortunately, it was recorded as a loss. We are very saddened by this mistake. We have contacted the families and students involved to apologize to them for our mistake and to ask for their forgiveness. We made a mistake. We are human and we will make mistakes. We have many processes in ballot check and tab to make sure mistakes don't happen, but unfortunately this error still occurred.

Stoa operates on the transparent tabulation system. Part of being transparent involves admitting when we err and asking for forgiveness. We will continue to work to improve our tabulation processes and investigate potential changes so that we can avoid mistakes like this in the future. We understand the importance of NITOC and the disappointment that this causes. We would like to congratulate both teams for an outstanding competition. We pray that these young men, their parents, and coach will forgive the tournament officials for our error.

Sincerely,
Stoa Board of Directors
[Stoa Board of Directors Apology](#)

NEW WEBSITE

It's finally here!!!!

You ASKED, we LISTENED!
The new Stoa website is rolling out THIS month! Final changes are in the process now.



The Stoa Board is working to create an innovated, membership-inspired, and people driven website. Anticipate the release soon!

NEW LIST

We are working to make it easier for potential club members and other coaches to find YOU! If you would like to include club contact information on the new website, please send it

- Updated Bylaws Proposal
 - Updated Bylaws Pass. Beginning with the 2016 Board members, the term increases from 3 years to 4 years.

FROM THE SPEECH COMMITTEE

Apologetics Changes

Hello Stoa!

Several people have asked if there will be changes to the Apologetics questions this year. There will be no significant changes in Apologetics this year. Any small changes will be posted some time after August 1st.

Mars Hill Update

The Speech Committee has partnered with a group of alumni to update the Mars Hill lists. Look for updates by August 1.



Debbie Lewis Snyder
Speech Committee Chair

STAY CONNECTED



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

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

Twitter: [@Stoatweets](#)

Instagram: [@Stoa_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: stoatc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

These Yahoo Group forums are a fantastic repository of information about all things Stoa.

to lesliejoymartin@stoausa.org.

NEW LOOK

Stoa has a new look. You can find our logo on the bottom of this newsletter.

NITOC 2017

The Stoa Board of Directors is pleased to announce that NITOC 2017 will be held on the lovely campus of [Union University in Jackson, Tennessee](#), May 28-June 3. Tournament co-directors will be MelRae Ambs and Angela Childress.



NITOC 2017 is already in the planning stages so now is the time to volunteer to serve! We love to have a great mingling of various states all working together & learning from each other. Please email MelRae Ambs (melrae@ambschem.com) OR Angela Childress (tchild@childress.net) to express your interest.

Watch for updates here: [NITOC 2017](#)

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, [Email the Board](#)
Debbie Snyder (Speech Chair) [Email the Speech Committee](#)

Mary Winther (Debate Chair) [Email the Debate Committee](#)

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



Website: Stoausa.org
Contact: apps@stousa.org

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