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Des Moines to Host the 2025 National Speech & Debate Tournament
Celebrating 100 Years of Speech and Debate!

West Des Moines, IA (February 17, 2025) — The National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) has selected the Greater Des Moines area to host the 2025 National Speech & Debate Tournament.

The NSDA, which is headquartered in West Des Moines, hosted the 2024 National Tournament in Des Moines and will host the largest academic competition in the country again this summer.

“This year, we are celebrating 100 years of providing competitive speech and debate opportunities for youth,” said J. Scott Wunn, Executive Director of the National Speech & Debate Association. “We are extremely proud to be hosting some of the brightest minds and future leaders in our home state while celebrating this milestone.”

The annual event is expected to attract more than 10,000 visitors to the community. Last year, Catch Des Moines estimated an economic impact of more than \$22 million. Along with drawing visitors to local businesses, restaurants, and hotels, the event will also utilize event spaces at the Iowa Events Center, Des Moines Public Schools, West Des Moines Schools, and Waukee Schools.

“Hosting an event of this magnitude and stature two years in a row is twice as nice,” said Catch Des Moines President and CEO Greg Edwards. “This is a huge deal for our entire region, and to host the centennial year right here in the association’s backyard makes it extra special.”

The National Speech & Debate Tournament is the pinnacle of public speaking. The journey to the National Tournament was recently featured in the documentary *SPEAK.*, which was executive produced by actor and NSDA alum Josh Gad. The film premiered at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival in January.

Other notable NSDA alumni include CBS journalist and tournament awards emcee David Begnaud, Supreme Court justices Ketanji Brown Jackson and Sonia Sotomayor, media visionaries Tom Llamas and Stephen Colbert, Academy Award winners Jordan Peele and Brad Pitt, Iowa native and co-founder of Pinterest Ben Silbermann, and more. The National Tournament is a moving reminder how the skills learned in speech and debate empower students to be changemakers, advocates, and future leaders of our world.

“Effective communication skills and knowledge of the issues around the world are essential for empowering young people to become engaged citizens, skilled professionals, and honorable leaders,” said Wunn. “We encourage everyone to experience the power of these student voices at the National Tournament in June.”

The 2025 National Tournament will be held June 15-20. For more information on the National Speech & Debate Tournament, visit www.speechanddebate.org/nationals.

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About the National Speech & Debate Association

The National Speech & Debate Association is the authority on public speaking and debate in the United States. The Association builds the infrastructure for speech and debate competitions around the world by providing topics, educational resources, and training for students and coaches. For 100 years, the National Speech & Debate Association has built a platform for youth voices that culminates in the National Tournament, the largest academic competition in the world. For more information, visit www.speechanddebate.org.