

Debate Team Starts 2023-24 Season with Wins



2023 ACU "Cardot Invitational" Junior Varsity Division Debate Champion Emma Jaramillo

The Mendoza Debate Society at Lee College has kicked off its 2023-24 season with two championships. They argued their way to dual wins for team and individual at the 2023 Joseph J. Cardot Invitational at Abilene Christian University on Oct. 19-22.

The ACU tournament featured a slate of top regional programs including the host university, Texas Tech University, Southern Methodist University and Texas Christian University, among others.

In the first tournament trip of the season for its full squad, Lee College debaters were named Overall Sweepstakes Community College Champions and finished in fourth place overall. Second-year debater Emma Jaramillo was named Junior Varsity Debate Champion. Lee College debaters excelled in every competitive division also winning team awards by finishing in second place Individual Debate Sweepstakes and third place in Team Debate Sweepstakes.

Lee College's JV division debaters advanced four of its five students to elimination round competition. Caris Gray finished as a JV semifinalist while Jovani Arellano and Carlos Reyes finished as JV octofinalists. Novice Debater Ruben Capetillo, in his first debate ever, advanced to medal rounds and finished as a novice debate octofinalist. Nathan Mustapha finished in second place in the Professional Division while team co-captain Rebecca Currie finished as a varsity debate semifinalist.

Co-Captain Priscilla Guerra took home second place in Varsity Debate Speaking, joined by Gray as the second-place junior varsity debate speaker and Mustapha as the third-place professional debate speaker. Arellano won his first-ever Junior Varsity Debate Speaking Award with a fourth-place finish. They were joined in competition by Adrian Alvarado, Rachel Currie, Madison Hall, Riyanna Kennedy, Jerry McCauley, Co-Captain Diego Moreno, Elias Perry and Kimberly Truong.

Lee College Debaters will return to competition Nov. 3-5 for the International Public Debate Association's "Red River Swing" at Louisiana State University at Shreveport. The Mendoza Debate Society is coached by Joe Ganakos, director of forensics, and Assistant Coaches Rigo Ruiz and Ethan Arbuckle.

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Top Photo: The debate team at Abilene Christian University

Front row, from left: Elias Perry, Carlos Reyes, Nathan Mustapha, Emma Jaramillo, Caris Gray, Riyanna Kennedy, and Priscilla Guerra. Back: Diego Moreno, Jovani Arellano, Rachel Currie, Madison Hall, Ruben Castillo, Adrian Alvarado, Kimberly Truong, Jerry McCauley, and Rebecca Currie.