

**NAUDL** 20 Years  
of Debate



2025 ANNUAL REPORT





# A MESSAGE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Welcome Letter

NAUDL Mission

The Debate Impact

20 Years of Debate

Debater of the Year

Coach of the Year

Our Donors

Financials

Leadership

Stay Connected



First and foremost, thank you. Whether you are new to the significance and opportunities of NAUDL's work -- or have been a champion of our efforts for years, your connection makes a difference in creating debate programs where they wouldn't otherwise exist.

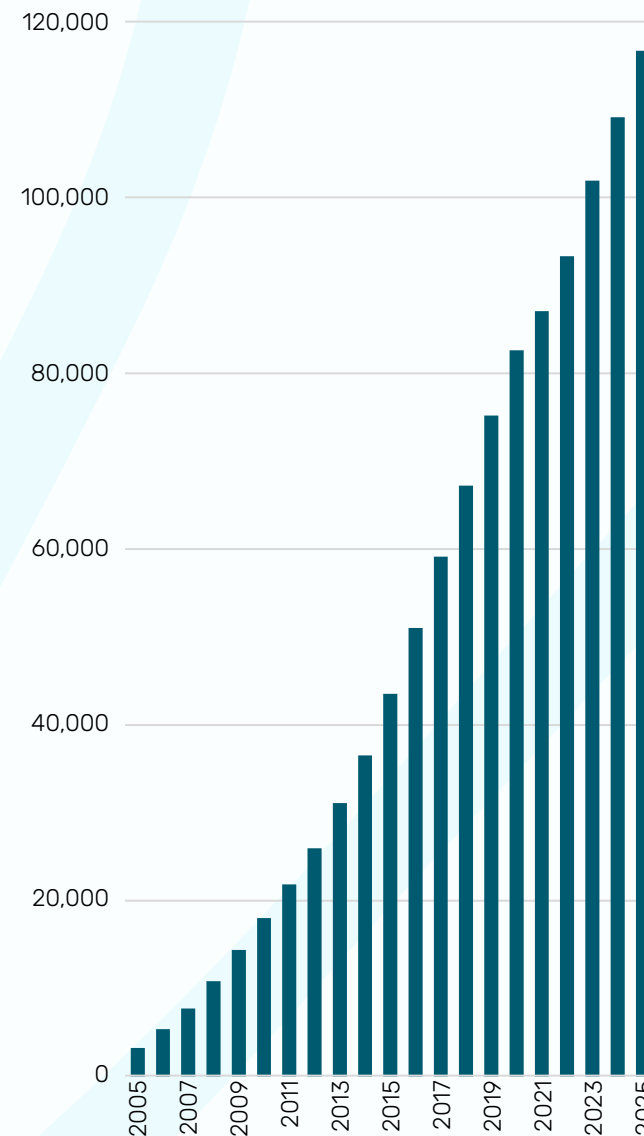
Over **20 years** of the Urban Debate Network, no debater has ever paid a tournament fee, nor a travel expense, and no league has ever paid membership or association dues. Our legacy is sustainable because so many have invested in the belief that *resources shouldn't determine access to the unparalleled benefits of debate.*

You make it possible for an increasing number of students to participate in an activity that sharpens their problem-solving skills, builds the confidence to shape their futures, and tackles a critical gap in American education: most K-12 students are never taught how to publicly communicate. When students debate, they learn how to command a room, speak their minds in a way that can persuade any audience, and walk into new spaces with purpose -- all of which translates into college and career readiness.

**For our next chapter, NAUDL is committed to continued evolution in meeting the needs of the next generation of leaders.** We enthusiastically support new avenues for practicing debate in more formats and languages, engaging students through topics that are most relevant to them and their communities, and transforming the everyday classroom experience into one that sparks their interest. We hope you take as much pride as we do in preparing young people to challenge assumptions with civil discourse, to achieve their own vision of success, and to forge new paths as powerful advocates for a stronger democracy.

Jennifer Northam Wade  
Chair, Board of Directors

### Cumulative Network Debaters Served





# NAUDL MISSION

Advancing debate education in public schools to amplify youth voices and to develop confidence for future success.

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# THE DEBATE IMPACT

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**NAUDL is the leader in commissioning peer-reviewed research on the impact of academic debate.**

These GPA and test scores are highlights of these studies and results are network debater outcomes as compared to their direct peers. More can be learned on our [research page](#).



**.66**

Higher GPA

**+52**

Math SAT Scores

**+57**

Reading SAT Scores

**96%**

of Urban Debate Network seniors plan to attend college and debaters are **1.3x** more likely to attend college than the national standard.

*College attendance rate is in comparison to students with similar population data, as per the National Student Clearinghouse.*



# 20 YEARS OF DEBATE: A TIMELINE

.... SCROLL ....>

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## 2004

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Atlanta Kansas City  
Baltimore\* Newark\*  
Chicago Rhode Island\*  
Detroit



## 2005

3,250 Debaters

### NAUDL Founded

NAUDL is founded as a national brand and voice for urban debate leagues, which at the time served approx. 2,000 students.

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Austin\* Minnesota  
Boston Seattle\*

## 2008

10,857 Debaters

### Urban Debate National Championship Established

The Urban Debate National Championship (UDNC) is the pinnacle of the season for

debaters across the network. Held on a renowned college campus, this annual competition offers students a memorable and eye-opening experience with the opportunity to engage and strengthen relationships with peers from other leagues.

**NAUDL Hosts First Annual Dinner**  
In support of UDNC activities, and as a national fundraiser for NAUDL programs and initiatives, NAUDL hosts its first Annual Dinner.

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Bay Area Los Angeles  
Dallas St. Louis\*  
Denver

## 2009

14,400 Debaters

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Houston Nashville  
Memphis

## 2010

18,038 Debaters

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Milwaukee\*

## 2012

25,955 Debaters

### Great Space Debate

Held at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, league teams debated expanding the space program as vital to America's economic future.

### NETWORK LEAGUES

New York City

## 2013

31,101 Debaters

### White House Visit

Eight network debaters traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with President Barack Obama in the Oval Office. During their two-day stay, students and their coaches also met with the Secretaries of Commerce, Treasury and Education as well as a Supreme Court Justice.



## 2014

36,519 Debaters

### Debater of the Year Award Established

The Debater of the Year (DOY) honor recognizes a debater who demonstrates commitment to debate, improvement in their academic performance and leadership in their school, urban debate league and community. The DOY and six DOY Finalists are all recognized and receive a scholarship award. The DOY also has the opportunity to speak at the Annual Dinner.

## 2015

43,536 Debaters

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Miami-Dade Silicon Valley  
Tulsa Washington, D.C.

## 2016

51,030 Debaters

### Presidential Scholars

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is a Department of Education program that recognizes the academic achievements of high school students. NAUDL is one of a select group of youth organizations invited to nominate Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors.



**Flip the Debate**  
Hosted by NAUDL, in partnership with A+ E Networks, Univision, the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Institute, the Flip the Debate tournament showcased debaters on the east and west coasts exploring topics from both political parties' side of the 2016 Presidential election in a public arena.

## 2017

59,128 Debaters

## 2018

67,205 Debaters

### Financial Literacy Debates

As part of a multi-year, \$1.7 million commitment in partnership with Citi Foundation's Pathway to Success program, the Financial Literacy Series was launched as a unique debate curriculum, leveraging traditional debate practices to introduce high school students to basic financial planning and decision making.

### NETWORK LEAGUES

Portland Sacramento

## 2019

75,178 Debaters

### Launch of Teach Debate

Available to all league partners, this online curriculum provides a "go-to" platform for new and experienced teachers with lesson plans, toolkits, training modules, network data and "community" sharing activities among members.



### Immersion Trip, Montgomery

Through a grant from an anonymous donor, NAUDL staff,

board members and network alumni traveled to Montgomery, AL, home of the Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum and Memorial. This unforgettable immersion trip centered around the critical role of advocacy for socially just policies and practices in America.



### Coach of the Year Award Established

The Coach of the Year award recognizes that teachers are essential to the Urban Debate Network meeting its core mission. The winner (nominated by their league) is honored and invited to speak at our Annual Dinner.

## 2020

82,609 Debaters

### NAUDL Fellows

Ultimately named the **White & Case NAUDL Fellows**, this longstanding summer mentor

and internship program -- in partnership with the global law firm White & Case LLP, engages college-enrolled network alumni around building essential workplace skills while encouraging them to build their own professional networks.



### I RESOLVE

The I RESOLVE Public Debate Series seeks to showcase the power of debate for a public audience while exploring some of the most pressing issues in our society. The 90-minute debates bring a conversational tone to student arguments and are followed by subsequent feedback and Q&A via a panel of distinguished civic, corporate and community leaders.

## 2021

87,068 Debaters

## 2022

93,313 Debaters

## 2023

101,902 Debaters



**Newsweek "Mightier" Partnership Launched**  
The Newsweek x Mightier platform supports the next generation of American leaders as they try to find common ground in our fractious, sometimes toxic, national conversation. Mightier promotes high school debate and the debaters, schools, coaches and mentors who are working to keep our Civil Discourse civil for the future.



### Immersion Trip: Career, Culture & Capital

Building upon the memorable experience of the Montgomery immersion trip, NAUDL organized a summer trip to the nation's capital for an all-access experience to international

business, legal and political executives and leaders, culminating in an audience with the U.S. Attorney General.

## 2024

109,134 Debaters

## 2025

116,677 Debaters to date

### Debate en Español

NAUDL added a new division for the first time to its national championship. Five leagues participated in Debate en Español, a curriculum and competition created for, and by, Spanish-speaking debaters, coaches and judges.



### Sports Debate

NAUDL launched its Sports Debate pilot in June 2025. By exploring sports policy topics, new and prospective debaters can engage in the activity in both a relatable and relevant context. The program also deepens civic connections and creates awareness around career paths in sports and sports media.

\*Retired league



# NETWORK VOICES

## 2025 DEBATER OF THE YEAR

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For me, debate is so much more than just a game. It is a vehicle for change. It is my community. My home.

### Chloe Truong

Independence High School (2025)  
Silicon Valley Urban Debate League

This is what debate has taught me, and this is what I have to say: Our community has the power to be both a competitive space and a force for social progress. Through debate I have not only discovered my authentic voice, but I have also developed the courage to use it in service of something larger than myself.

I plan on majoring in either political science or economics. I am drawn to this field because of the opportunity it provides to engage with diverse communities and environments, as well as its potential to shape the future of the legal industry.





# NETWORK VOICES

## 2025 COACH OF THE YEAR

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Charles has gone above and beyond in cultivating debate in Chicago. The guy is a one-man show. I cannot imagine somebody else more deserving of this honor.

### Charles Rosentel

**Pritzker College Prep**, A Noble Charter School  
**Chicago Debates**

Charles grows debate in his school and network, taking teachers under his wing and helping to cultivate the rare resource that is a dedicated coach. He has also made a conference within a conference -- organizing a tournament before the City Debate Championship. Impressively, he has accomplished all of this with no high school debate background himself.

A classroom of 20 novices is Charles' average afternoon. He is a much-loved teacher at Pritzker College Prep and is admired by his colleagues for his insightful feedback and coaching. He also serves on our Coaches' Council and brings a culture of inclusivity and experience-worn wisdom to that team of adults. Charles is uniquely warm-hearted and driven by mission. He is an excellent school leader and knows how to champion his values.

*As told by Sonny Patel, Chicago Debates nominator*





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# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS DONORS AT \$500 OR ABOVE FROM JUNE 30, 2024-JULY 1, 2025

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Our utmost gratitude to our **Donor Hall of Fame** for your unparalleled investment in the founding, growth and vision of the Urban Debate Network

**Leonard A. Gail & Robin Steans**

**Mark and Karen Koulogeorge**

**Jennifer Northam Wade**

Special Thanks to our Signature Program and Scholarship Partners



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# STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION JUNE 30, 2024 AND 2023

	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$ 1,013,864	\$ 1,135,780
Investments	142,352	141,106
Promises to give - current	626,559	155,374
Other receivables	8,029	10
Prepaid expenses	14,975	12,649
Total Current Assets	1,805,779	1,444,919
<b>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT - NET</b>	6,139	4,244
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>		
Promises to give - long-term - net	1,323,848	11,542
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 3,135,766</b>	<b>\$ 1,460,705</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 61,421	\$ 32,319
Accrued expenses	47,072	90,792
Total Current Liabilities	108,493	123,111
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions		
General operating	494,205	401,718
Board designated	474,693	584,808
Total without donor restrictions	968,898	986,526
With donor restrictions	2,058,375	351,068
Total Net Assets	3,027,273	1,337,594
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 3,135,766</b>	<b>\$ 1,460,705</b>



# 2025 NAUDL LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

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# Supporting the next generation of compelling voices fueled by reason, anchored in confidence

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Click here to bring our mission to life

