



Asbury High School Debate Team Takes 2nd Place in New York City

The Asbury Park High School Debate team of E'nyiah Preston and Christlie Lavarlin took a 2nd place team award after going 3-0 at an Urban Debate League tournament held at Stuyvesant High School in New York City on Saturday, October 21, 2017. Five Asbury teams of two students competed at the tournament this weekend. Three Asbury debaters also took a top ten speaking award including Christlie Lavarlin (6th place), E'nyiah Preston (7th place), and Deicie Vasquez (8th place).

The Asbury Park High School Debate Team was launched eight years ago as part of a continuing debate mentoring program with Monmouth University, made possible by a grant from the TD Bank Foundation and actively supported by the Asbury Park school district. The team is co-coached by Asbury Park English teacher Ms. Christine DeMarsico and Monmouth University Associate Professor of Political Science Dr. Joseph Patten. The students debated from both the affirmative and negative perspectives on the following resolution: Resolved: *The United States Federal Government Should substantially increase funding and/or regulation to primary and secondary schools.* The Asbury team argued for the need to desegregate New Jersey schools.

Monmouth University debaters Chris Diolosa and Michael Scognomillo helped coach the Asbury teams at this NY Urban Debate League tournament. The National Urban Debate League has a rich tradition and is credited with helping to catapult many urban students into successful careers, none more inspiring than Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. When she was nominated to the nation's highest bench, she credited her mother and her high school involvement with New York's urban debate league as the two most important reasons for her success.

Each two person team is required to compete in three rounds of debate with each debate round lasting approximately two hours. Asbury had five teams competing at the tournament including: 1) Mahyana Murphy and Icelyn Griffith (varsity division); 2) E'nyiah Preston and Christlie Lavarlin; 3) Kayla Byrd and Tatiana Lavrove; 4) Carlie Herrera and Deicie Vasquez; and 5) Meliza Garcia and Thaiz Duran. The Asbury team will next compete on the weekend of November 18th at Clinton High School in the Bronx, New York.