

# Speech & Debate Wins in Alabama

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Kenzie Prendergast, Reporter  
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The weekend of January 6th, EHS Speech and Debate juniors and seniors got the opportunity to go to the University of Alabama, EHS's first out of state tournament, and even brought home a few awards. A far way to travel for a tournament that would last only a two days at most, but the trip was well spent according to several members and coach Ashley McCulloch.

"This trip was important for our team because it provided an opportunity for some of our upperclassmen to step outside of their competitive experience, which had so far been limited to competing in Colorado." McCulloch said.

Many saw that the trip was more than just going into a new environment it was also being able to pick up insight into how to perform several events.

Mikayla Algeo said, "I was able to learn so much especially with blocking and piece choices."

The team was able to experience every Speech and Debate event in a new light, but the main differences from Colorado could be seen in interpretation or competitive acting events.

Esther Varghese states that, "It was definitely a huge eye opening experience to see how different competitors interacted with their binders."

Competitors use binders to hold their script for few events in Colorado, but in the south it's prevalent to see in many different events. Since this is very rare in Colorado, and under-developed, it gave insight to the competitors on how to improve their own interpretation events.

Ben Hays furthered that by saying, "I was able to see the benefits of changing things up."

Hays and Varghese both broke in their events, meaning they moved on through elimination rounds.

Hays stated that, "Breaking at this tournament was actually my first, it helped show me what I could do."

Sarah Braun and Paris Grigsby also broke at the competition. This is a major accomplishment at any tournament but it means even more to the team because of the new competition, judges, and being on a college campus.

With all they've gained from the trip Algeo plans on helping to pass on everything she learned and even held a meeting the week after the team returned.

"I started working with every interper on the things I learned." she elaborated.

However, It wasn't all work and no play, the team got a lot of opportunities to bond and grow closer together as they are leaders of Speech and Debate.

"This trip definitely helped with the closeness of those who went." Hays explained.

Jade Felthoven and Varghese agree and add on that they believe it's definitely helped leadership, as well as upperclassman who had the chance to go.

Varghese says, "This was an experience where we wanted to pass it on to underclassmen in the future."



McColloch is looking forward to planning another trip in the following years.

“I plan on offering this opportunity to upperclassmen in the future so it can be something that keeps them active on the team and that can provide them with a new goal as they become more experienced in Speech and Debate.” She explained.

Felthoven saw that even while she won't get the opportunity again she wants the team to continue going back.

“I hope the trip continues to happen annually because exposure to new competition is an imperative part of growing as a competitor.” She said.

But this isn't all the team has been up to. On the weekend of January 20th at Mullen High School, the team racked up award after award. Rian Nelson won several awards along with 14 out of the 30 Raptors who went to the tournament.

Nelson believes these wins show that “It's a lot of work that has finally come to fruition.”

#### About the Writer

Kenzie Prendergast, Reporter

