



Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

1501 Saint Andrew St, Ste C200
La Crosse, WI 54603-2817

Building confidence since 1895
(920) 710-1895 | www.whsfa.org

Monday, April 25, 2022

State Speech Contest Announces School Awards

LA CROSSE, Wis. – Thirty Wisconsin schools received recognition for their overall performance at this month’s State Speech Festival. The event, hosted at UW-Madison since it was started 127 years ago, was held this year at DeForest Area High School as well as online.

This year, 2,474 students in 1,892 entries, representing 306 schools advanced to the State Festival. Schools had the opportunity for their students to participate in person or by submitting a video of their performance; 80% of schools had in-person entries and 36% had online entries. Overall, 17% of schools had entries in both divisions.

Adjudicators rated each student or performing group to determine a medal award, and the **top five percent of medal-earning schools** are recognized with *Excellence in Speech Awards*, with the school and coach each presented with a plaque. This year, 15 schools earned this honor (sorted by school, alphabetically):

| School (<i>city listed, if not in name of school</i>) | Coach(es) |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Barneveld High School | Duane Draper |
| Bay Port High School (Green Bay) | Krista Greene, Scott Pamperin |
| Burlington High School | Robbie Twohig, Matt Nie |
| Darlington High School | Clarey Schwartz |
| DeForest Area High School | Tom August |
| Fennimore High School | Alexa Chiefari |
| Menomonie High School | Andrea Smith |
| Mineral Point High School | Kristin Staver |
| Monroe High School | Carolyn Schultz |
| Platteville High School | Cheryl Schober |
| Prescott High School | Tanya Sponholz |
| Regis High School | Judine Brey |
| Shoreland Lutheran High School (Kenosha) | Alex Moore, Megan Rosenau |
| Waunakee High School | Walter Stenz |
| Westosha Central High School (Salem) | Brenda Bursek-Krekling |
| Wrightstown High School | David Winkler |

Additionally, the following schools earned the *Distinction in Speech Award, for medal achievement in the top six to ten percent*. Those schools and coaches earning plaques are (sorted by school, alphabetically):

-- MORE --

| School (<i>city listed, if not in name of school</i>) | Coach(es) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Badger High School (Lake Geneva) | Mark Zastrow |
| Cameron High School | Sheri Hagen-Salm |
| Chippewa Falls High School | Karen Koehler |
| Hudson High School | Jessica Flanagan |
| Iowa-Grant High School (Livingston) | Jacqueline Rolli |
| Ithaca High School (Richland Center) | Juli Thompson |
| Kaukauna High School | Holli Ferguson |
| Muskego High School | Joe Meinecke |
| Neenah High School | Andie Peterson-Longmore |
| Sauk Prairie High School (Prairie du Sac) | Ryan Mussack |
| Southern Door High School (Brussels) | JamieLynn Teska |
| St. Lawrence Seminary High School (Mount Calvary) | Martin Vu |
| Winnebago Lutheran Academy (Fond du Lac) | Scott Herrewig |
| Wisconsin Lutheran High School (Milwaukee) | Anne Holmes |

During the COVID-19 pandemic, WHSFA, like many state activities associations, sought alternative approaches to holding speech contests, working with such organizations as the National Speech & Debate Association and National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). As UW-Madison continued a suspension of multiple-day events using classroom space on campus, the WHSFA sought a nearby location, and DeForest High School’s Speech coach, Tom August volunteered.

“We are grateful to Tom August and the rest of DeForest Area High School’s staff, students, and administration for graciously hosting us at their newly-renovated campus,” said WHSFA Executive Director Adam Jacobi. “The amount of praise and appreciation expressed by coaches and students in attendance this year was overwhelmingly positive.”

Jacobi added: “It has been a challenging time for schools to participate in interscholastic academic sports like Speech. As an association affiliated with the NFHS, we have been told participation numbers among schools are lower across the country, and Wisconsin is no exception. As we emerge from the pandemic and recognize the dire need for social-emotional learning experiences to help address mental health needs of students, activities like interscholastic Speech are more important than ever. The coaches and students who continued participation despite the challenges facing them should be commended.”

About the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

Since 1895, the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association (WHSFA) has provided programming for middle and high school students in theatre, debate, and public speaking activities. Each year, our nonprofit organization serves about 10,000 Wisconsin students from 375 high schools, and 150 middle schools in the longest-running high school speech contests in the nation. Our aim is to empower students to enhance their skills in presentation through interscholastic assessment. For more information, visit www.whsfa.org.

###

CONTACT

Adam J. Jacobi, Wisconsin High School Forensic Association, adam@whsfa.org, (920) 355-1895