

October 26, 2007

On behalf of the James Madison Center and JMU Debate we are pleased and excited to invite you to compete for the Madison Cup at the sixth annual “James Madison Commemorative Debate and Citizens Forum” on **Thursday March 13, 2008**.

The James Madison Commemorative Debate and Citizens Forum is a unique inter-collegiate debate competition, which combines the excitement and challenge of tournament competition with the relevance and empowerment of a public audience and audience participation. It is also one of the showcase events of our university’s James Madison Day Celebration.

**2008 Topic:** Resolved: “that the United States should chart a new course towards peace in the Middle East.”

**Other cool and unique features:**

- \*\$15,000.00 in prize money
- \*Debating and competing in front of public audiences
- \*No entry fees
- \*Continental breakfast, snacks and lunch provided
- \*Video web-cast
- \*Great PR for your debate program

**More cool stuff:** This year’s “Madison Cup Debates” are part of a year long, campus wide project designed to encourage discussions of factions and unity in an ever changing world. These events were kicked off with Desmond Tutu’s address at the Ghandi Center and will conclude with the 30th Annual Communication Studies Conference entitled, “30 years of Communication Criticism: Culture, Continuity and Change.”

The tournament details are enclosed with this letter. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to hosting you in March!

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**Background:** Timed to coincide with the centennial of James Madison University in mid-March, “The James Madison Commemorative Debate and Citizen Forum” centers on an important question facing American democracy. Last year debaters argued both sides of the topic; Resolved "That this nation needs affirmative action now more than ever."

The James Madison Center at James Madison University sponsors the event in the spirit of James Madison's ideal that a republican democracy is healthy only when informed and civil debate thrives. The final round will be broadcast live on the World Wide Web. Last year's debate featured teams from Brown University, College of William and Mary, Cornell University, George Mason University, James Madison University, Johns Hopkins University, Liberty University, Kansas City Kansas Community College, Towson University, University of Mary Washington, University of Richmond, University of Virginia, Wake Forest University, and Yale University.

**Eligible Participants:** Each school may enter one two-person team. The debate is open to undergraduate students who are in good standing at their respective institutions. Second teams will be considered on a case-by-case basis, if space permits.

**Competition Format:** The debate uses a “long table” format. **This is a public debate.** Last year there was an audience of around 500 people for the final round, preliminary rounds were smaller (audiences of 20-30 people). The “long table” format features three (two person) teams on each side of the question. Speeches start with the affirmative and alternate between the affirmative and negative throughout the debate. Teams are randomly assigned to sides and speaker positions. In other words, if a team is selected to be the first affirmative, they will give the first two affirmative speeches in the debate. The first and last speeches on each side of the question are uninterruptible. Any member of the opposing team may interrupt the speeches in the middle of the debate in order to ask the speaker to yield to a question. Speakers are not required to answer these questions (although not answering questions may cause the audience to think that the speaker is “dodgy”). Please see the example format below for more information. You can view last year's final round at: <http://www.jmu.edu/orgs/debate/madisonCup/index.html>

**Jury Adjudication Procedure:** A three to seven member panel, or jury, will adjudicate the debate. Juries will be comprised of local residents, students, professors, distinguished JMU alumni, and special invited guests. At the completion of the debate, the panel will adjourn to discuss, deliberate and decide upon the winners as a group. The jury votes for (2-person) teams, not sides of the question. In other words, first place could go to an affirmative team, while second place could be awarded to a negative team. **This year we will institutionalize jury feedback for the participants.**

## **Tournament Procedures:**

\*Number of rounds: This year we will offer **three preliminary rounds of debate and one final round.**

\*Switch side debate: Each team will debate at least once on the affirmative and once on the negative.

\*Side & position: Sides (affirmative or negative), and positions (first affirmative team, first negative team, second affirmative team, etc) for the preliminary debates will be determined by random drawing.

\*Judging: Judges will rank teams 1-6 in each preliminary debate, and assign each team quality points based on a thirty-point scale (1-30).

\*Advancing to the final round: The six teams with the lowest total ranks will advance to the final round. Quality points will be used to break ties.

\*Sides and Speaking Positions in the final round: Sides and speaking positions in the final round will be based on seeding after the preliminary rounds. For example, the first seeded team will choose their “side and position,” then the second seed will choose “side and position,” and so on.

**Public Participation:** While the jury deliberates, the floor will be opened for audience comments and speeches. An award for the best floor speech will be presented. Local newspapers, politicians, and the general public are invited.

**Awards:** The first place team will leave with the Madison Cup—a very nice traveling trophy. Once again this year there is a \$15,000.00 purse of prize money. All participants in the final round will be recognized with awards.

Prize money will be awarded as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> place: \$5000.00 donation to your debate program

2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$3000.00 donation to your debate program

3<sup>rd</sup> place: \$2000.00 donation to your debate program

4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> place: \$1000.00 donation to your debate program

7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> place: \$500.00 donation to your debate program

**Entry:** There are no entry fees. We can accommodate a field of 36 teams. Entry is on a first come, first serve basis. The first 24 teams to enter are guaranteed a spot in the field, after that we will accept teams, if we can generate a field divisible by 4 or 6. **Deadline for entry is February 21<sup>st</sup>.** This is necessary so we can determine how many debates there will be in each round. Send school info, team info (first and last names of debaters) and requests for additional teams to: Dr. Mike Davis, <davismk@jmu.edu>

**Lodging:** We have reserved a block of hotel rooms at the newly renovated Best Western Inn of Harrisonburg (formerly the Guest House Inn). The Best Western Inn is located at exit 247A off of I-81. Go east on Highway 33—the hotel is on the right side of the road. The phone number for the Best Western is 540-433-6089. The rate for 1-4 people per room is \$51.00 + tax. **This special tournament rate will be available until March 3.** When calling the Best Western Inn please ask for Gini Boyers, and mention that you are attending the Madison Cup debates at JMU.

**Travel:** James Madison University is located in Harrisonburg, VA, which is two hours southwest of Washington, D.C. on I-81. If you plan to fly consider Dullas and Washington National/Reagan Airports in Washington DC (2 hours away), Richmond airport (2 hours away), Charlottesville airport (one hour away) and the Shenandoah Regional Airport (15 minutes away). We will arrange transport from Shenandoah and Charlottesville, we'll do our best to work with you from the others.

**Schedule:**

Thursday, March 13, 2008: James Madison Commemorative Debate and Citizens Forum

8:00 AM registration and Announcements

8:30 AM: Preliminary debate round 1

11:00 AM Preliminary debate round 2

1:00 PM Lunch

2:00PM: Preliminary debate round 3

5:00 PM: Final round (followed by the presentation of the Madison Cup)

**Example Debate Format:** The 2004 final round proceeded as follows.

1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative Speech (Wake Forest #1): (4 minutes) uninterrupted

1<sup>st</sup> Negative Speech (George Mason #1): (4 minutes) uninterrupted

2<sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Speech (Wake Forest #2): (5 minutes): The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

2<sup>nd</sup> Negative Speech (George Mason #2): (5 minutes): The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

3<sup>rd</sup> Affirmative Speech (Georgetown # 1): (5 minutes): The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

3<sup>rd</sup> Negative Speech (James Madison #1): (5 minutes): The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

4<sup>th</sup> Affirmative Speech (Georgetown #2): (5 minutes) The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

4<sup>th</sup> Negative Speech (James Madison #2): (5 minutes) The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

5<sup>th</sup> Affirmative Speech (Mary Washington #1): (5 minutes) The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

5<sup>th</sup> Negative Speech (Towson #1): The first and last minute of the speech are uninterruptible. In the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> minutes of the speech any opposition debater may ask the speaker to yield to a question. The speaker may accept, or decline the question.

6<sup>th</sup> Affirmative Speech (Mary Washington #2): (4 minutes) Uninterrupted

6<sup>th</sup> Negative Speech (Towson University #2): (4 minutes) Uninterrupted

