Rice Speech and Debate Wins 60 Awards in Houston

Twenty students from the George R. Brown Forensics Society, Rice University’s speech and debate team, competed this past weekend, February 23-25, in two places in Houston. Eight students competed at Kingwood College in the “Houston Area League of Forensics Parliamentary Debate Swing” while twelve students competed at the “University of Houston Speech and Debate Tournament.” Both tournaments were swings, meaning two tournaments were held over the weekend at both locations.

Overall, the squad brought home 60 awards last weekend.

At the Kingwood tournament, the Rice squad finished in First Place for the weekend overall, winning first in sweepstakes for both individual tournaments as well. Individually, Hillary Dowdy won Top Speaker for the overall weekend (both tournaments combined), and Jason Siegel won Second Place Individual Speaker for the overall weekend.

The squad won a total of 17 awards at Kingwood.

Rice “closed out” the first tournament at Kingwood in semifinals, meaning that no semifinal or final rounds were held because only Rice teams remained after the quarterfinals, having eliminated all other teams, creating a tie for first place among four teams: Hillary Dowdy/Adnan Poonawala, Everette Krieder/Kevin Spiro, Maram Salaheldin/Jason Siegel, and Cathy Yang/Aparna Bhaduri.

Rice lost only two debates in the first half, winning 25 debates.

Rice debaters also took top honors individually. The top seven speakers at the tournament were from Rice:

Hillary Dowdy: Top Speaker.
Jason Siegel: Second Place Individual Speaker.
Mram Salaheldin: Third Place Individual Speaker.
Aparna Bhaduri: Fourth Place Individual Speaker.
Cathy Yang: Fifth Place Individual Speaker.
Kevin Spiro: Sixth Place Individual Speaker.
Everette Krieder: Seventh Place Individual Speaker.

In the second tournament at Kingwood, the squad won 16 debates, winning first place in sweepstakes and won the following awards:

Kevin Spiro/Everette Krieder: Second Place, Parliamentary Debate.

Hillary Dowdy/Adnan Poonawala: Semifinalists, Parliamentary Debate.

Aparna Bhaduri: Fourth Place Individual Speaker.
At the University of Houston, the remaining 12 members of the squad combined to win 43 awards in a tournament that featured debate as well as individual speaking events and won First Place for the overall weekend.

In the first tournament, the team awards were as follows:

First Place Debate Sweepstakes
First Place Individual Event Sweepstakes
First Place Overall Sweepstakes

In debate, Rice also “closed out” the tournament in semifinals, resulting in a four-way all-Rice tie for First Place, as Rice had eliminated all other teams.

Three students won debate speaker awards:
Priscilla Parrett Top Debate Speaker
Ted Torous Second Place Debate Speaker
Hrishi Third Place Debate Speaker

The Rice Squad won 22 separate debates at the University of Houston.

Individual Speaking Event Awards are as follows:
Ted Torous: First Place Extemporaneous Speaking, Third Place Communication Analysis, Second Place After Dinner Speaking.
Hrishi Hari: First Place After Dinner Speaking.
Robert Crider: Third Place Extemporaneous Speaking, Fourth Place Persuasive Speaking.
Richard Flores: Fifth Place Extemporaneous Speaking, Fourth Place Impromptu Speaking.
Priscilla Parrett: Second Place Persuasive Speaking, Fourth place After Dinner Speaking.
Kirti Datla: First Place Communication Analysis, Third Place Impromptu Speaking.
Sara Franco: Second Place Communication Analysis.

In the second tournament at the University of Houston, the squad won 16 awards:

First Place Overall Sweepstakes (squad)
First Place Swing Sweepstakes (squad)

Hrishi Hari: First Place Extemporaneous Speaking, First Place After Dinner Speaking.
Priscilla Parrett: First Place Persuasive Speaking, Second Place Impromptu Speaking, Second Place After Dinner Speaking.
Robert Crider: Third Place Persuasive Speaking, Third Place Extemporaneous Speaking.
Kirti Datla: First Place Communication Analysis, First Place Impromptu Speaking.
Richard Flores: Fourth Place Extemporaneous Speaking, Third Place Informative Speaking.
Ted Torous: Second Place Extemporaneous Speaking, Second Place Communication Analysis, Third Place After Dinner Speaking.

Among the teams defeated last weekend were Texas A & M University, Texas Southern University, Texas State University, Texas Tech University, University of Houston, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, Northwood College, Central Texas College, and Kingwood College.

The team is coached by Director of Forensics David Worth and Assistant Director of Forensics Professor Jeremy Grace.

The team will be competing next in the American Forensics Association District III tournament hosted by the University of Oklahoma in Norman, OK, March 2-3, 2007.