

THE REAL 1-100

Newsletter of the Minnesota Speech Coaches Association (MSCA)

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This is the official newsletter of the Minnesota Speech Coaches Association.

Please consider sharing this with other coaches who may benefit from it, but might now have received it through the MSCA listserv.

If you would like to contribute in the future or have ideas for the newsletter, please contact MSCA President Jason Olson at jason.olson@isd423.org

Featured In This Issue

- **MSHSL Updates**
- **All-State Team and MSCA Distinguished Service Award**
- **Spotlight on Great Speeches with help from Sandra Wieser-Matthews and Dr. Sam Boerboom.**
- **Tips on avoiding burnout**



A Focus on Outreach

At the 2015 MSCA Business Meeting, outreach was identified as a major goal by Jason Olson, MSCA President. Thankfully, many coaches agreed to help him with this and through email, several ideas were considered. Some were accepted, such as developing a membership recruitment brochure, a newsletter, creating an All-State Team, and reviving the MSCA Distinguished Service Award.

Information about MSCA Benefits is included on the last page along with how to join.



Category Spotlight: Great Speech

The Importance of the Argument



**Sam Boerboom,
U of Montana-
Billings**

The Great Speeches thesis statement is arguably the most

important sentence in a student's speech. The thesis statement signals to the judge and audience that the student is presenting an argument, a contestable proposition, for consideration. A strong thesis statement separates tepid claims (Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech is celebrated for its eloquence) from stronger, more compelling claims (Hillary Clinton's "Women's Rights are Human Rights" is great because it illustrates that gender equality is and should be a nonpartisan issue). The best Great Speeches performances feature a student enacting the roles of historian, debater, and orator. The Great Speeches thesis statement empowers the student to be able to perform the aforementioned roles memorably and effectively. When I teach students how to write a memorable and effective thesis statement, I borrow from one of my graduate school mentors, Professor Edward Schiappa, former Chair of the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Minnesota and now Head of the Comparative Media Studies and Writing Program at MIT.

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Sharing Some Great Secrets

Sandra Wieser-Matthews, Perham



Great Speeches is Original Oratory on steroids. At least that is how I like to view the category. Great Speeches offers students the ability to persuade, interpret, analyze, write, and perform. Every category has secrets and each coach tries to uncover those secrets. When it comes to the category of Great Speeches here are my top 9 secrets:

1. Social Justice. If the topic does not speak to both the competitor and to today's causes, we don't do it.
2. Once you have found the right speech, it needs to be analyzed. Dissect it. What type of persuasion are you looking at: policy, value, fact?
3. What is the structure of the speech? What is the thesis? What was the intent? What happened because of the speech? What is still happening?
4. I do feel you need to use a rhetorical device, as it helps focus the student.
5. Over the years, we have put together a document with rhetorical models we have found and used. We provide the model and then break it down for competitors to better understand. The competitor selects the model that would best work to analyze. If they don't find the right model from our long list, then the competitor and coach start researching devices based on the language and the structure of the Great Speech.
6. We still look at the structure of the language; we add it to the speech only if adds to the analysis.
7. Interview the Speaker or interview someone connected to the Speaker. Primary research is essential in each category.
8. The speaker must get into the mind and soul of the Great Speaker. They need to feel the time period, see the original audience, and understand the need for the change the speaker spoke toward.
9. The speaker needs to be as persuasive in their own words as the Great Speaker.

Category Spotlight: Great Speeches

Prof. Schiappa argues that writers should use a three-step process for crafting theses about persuasive language. First, students should identify the key persuasive/rhetorical feature of the speech, i.e. tone, language, timing. Second, students need to explain how the key feature of speech functions strategically for that particular audience, i.e. what effect did the use of chiasmus have on the audience watching the speech? Finally, students need to explain the larger consequence of the speech. This is the “so what?” statement. The best thesis statements account for how the historical speech is relevant to today. I always ask the students I coach: What does this speech teach us about some important topic today? An example of the above model for crafting Great Speeches thesis statements: Lincoln’s use of passive voice and minimal self-references (step 1) encourages his audience to avoid assigning blame for the civil war (step 2) and provides a model rhetoric of reconciliation (step 3).

Some Possible Great Speech Anthologies

Ripples of Hope: Edited by Josh Gottheimer

Megaphones to Microphones: Edited by Sandra J. Sarkela and Susan Ross

In Our Own Words: Edited by Senator Robert Torricelli and Andrew Carroll

Great Speeches From a Historical Perspective



Jason Olson, Hutchinson

Historian John Arnold in *History: A Very Short Introduction* asserted that “History is above all an argument.” I think that is so true of Great Speeches as well.

To me, the most critical part of a Great Speech is a clear explanation of why the speech was chosen or how it enlightens our view of today. For example, if a student chose to do the Inaugural Address of John F. Kennedy, how could we view it from the standpoint of 2017? With public engagement in our democracy being a key concern, there is a natural parallel. Often, I think this part is forgotten, because as Sandra Wieser-Matthews stated, this category is “Original Oratory on Steroids.”

With my students, the process of choosing a speech starts with brain storming current news events or trends happening in the world. We then take it further and analyze how these events have already seen parallels in history. For example, when the news hit concerning the controversy surrounding warrantless wiretapping, my student and I went back to see if any politicians sounded the alarm of such a possibility when the Patriot Act was first passed. Thankfully, we found a speech by Senator Russ Feingold that literally helped us strike fine gold. Sorry, couldn’t resist. Still, in my own personal view, this is the single most important part of the process for me when I work with my students in what I think is a truly powerful category with an incredible academic mission.

Talent Shared From Around the State

We asked five successful coaches to share their best tips on how to avoid burnout and enjoy a long coaching career



I think avoiding burnout is impossible. We will all experience it. We will all want to just hang it up at some point. But, working through burnout and emerging better off on the other end is possible I think. To me, burn out came when I gave

everything to the activity but I didn't enjoy it. It wasn't fun and exciting, it was pressure-filled work. During burn out, it felt like work because speech seemed to control me. For many of my early years in coaching, I never said no to any competition opportunity, any practice opportunity, anything speech related, really. After a while, that mentality burned me out. Eventually, I think I learned (often the hard way) how unsustainable and unhealthy that was. I've tried to work through burn out (not always successfully) by recognizing that first, I love the activity enough that I want to do it for a long time. And second, if I want to do it for a long time, I need to learn to say "no" at times so the "yes" doesn't swallow me whole. I learned that saying "no" doesn't mean having low expectations. Speakers on our team can have a transformative speech experience – even if I say "no" from time to time. I learned that this activity will take everything from you if you let it. Luckily, I'm healthy enough now to realize that the sense of speech I need to have is very different than the one I had when I first started coaching. This has been a good thing for me, my team, and my family.

Rick Purrington - Marshall



I have been coaching and judging for over 30 years, and I am still not tired of it! For those who are dead tired right now from the rigors of managing a team in addition to coaching and judging, you might find that hard to believe. Admittedly, I do not have the responsibility of team management, so that enables me to put all my energy into coaching and judging. The secret for

continuing to do both can be summed up in one word – passion! I love the activity and find the rewards of coaching to be ongoing. As for judging, that, too, keeps me on my toes, and I never cease to learn something about this activity every time I judge.

Through the years, my perspective has changed thanks to being involved. I have become more open to changes – such as: all that movement in duo (wow!), the thought-provoking rhetorical models in Great Speeches, sound effects in humorous, the use of technology in informative, and, of course, the change from flowered dresses to suits in storytelling, to name a few. The learning continues and that keeps my brain working! I can thank the speech community for that!

-Carol Purrington, Marshall



My coaching philosophy centered on personal growth and life-long skills for students because these follow into adulthood long after awards are packed away. Students are positively impacted by participation even if they never make finals or medal. Staying fresh as a coach meant developing a network with coaches who mentored me until I could do

the same with others. However, those relationships continue as a circle not a line. My first venue was CMS

Talent Shared From Around the State

and DCA in Central Minnesota. Doing their Extemporaneous Reading cuttings and running draws was an opportunity to contribute to the activity while also helping students and coaches with draw procedures and rules. Hosting invitationals and becoming a certified judge kept me fresh by expanding my experiences and opportunities. Of particular importance was when my daughter began coaching. Her enthusiasm infused my own as she encouraged me to expand through CTAM. Sharing those times with her, meeting additional coaches, participating in her sessions, and offering some of my own kept me energized.

So what kept me fresh as a coach? Being active in organizations, contributing to speech beyond my school and team, and developing relationships throughout the state.

Kathy Detloff - Swanville



My longevity as a speech coach can be attributed to two factors. First, I am deeply passionate about an activity centered on communication and the skills that students gain as speakers who, in the future of our country, will be better

able to advocate for themselves and others and/or share much needed stories to help the world understand the delicate human condition. Feeling passionate about the activity continually ignited my attitude of persistence as I continued to develop my own coaching strategies, even during my later years, with experiences such as the GAC Summer Speech Institute, for example. Second, the relationships with others became the icing on the cake as I continued to coach. I've been blessed to have worked with so many wonderful young people (and their supportive parents) who know that this activity takes diligence, dedication and determination, but it is well-worth the effort. I was fortunate to be a part of a program in my high school where there have been only three head coaches since 1980. I had an excellent mentor (Evy Robinson), and several valuable assistants who worked well together as a dedicated team. I was also privileged from the beginning to be a part of a larger

group of high-spirited coaches from our area who were helpful and collegial towards one another. Frankly, I looked forward to weekends when like-minded professionals gathered while their students competed in the best activity ever!

Cheryl Neidt - Springfield



For me speech has always been about the skills that speakers derive, and so I consciously and deliberately invest in children. No matter how tired the script is, or how tired I am, the world of speech is new to each speaker I believe that each speaker deserves my best because he or she will find a useful skill in the speech world

whether it is the confidence to present themselves well, or the discipline to keep on working when success seems a long way off, or earning friendship with members of the team growing those necessary social skills or the knowledge they are a part of something larger than themselves.

I always thought it ironic that as our speakers create community, so do coaches. As a young coach, I always knew that there was only one person like me in every building, and so I count myself fortunate to now be part of a large community where children are the focus of everything we do. The larger community of speech certainly has created longevity for me as well. I also believe that in order to continue on any life long course, it is necessary to change how and what I do, and while I might not be the first coach to embrace technology; I do love that there is always the potential for growth in the world of forensics whether it be in category changes or changes in expectations. In summary, I must be old now because I am writing about longevity; I attempt to not age quite so rapidly by continuing to invest in children, contributing to the larger community and embracing change.

Kathy Martin, Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton



The Real Down Low

MSCA President's Corner



Jason Olson
Hutchinson

Like many of you, our section is exceptionally competitive and I know for many of us that can get a bit distressing after a while.

I think back to a couple of days ago and I remember becoming frustrated and I'll say it, angry about one critique in particular. Admittedly, I felt it a criticism of my coaching.

After a day, I realized how misguided I was. My students had gone against some of the best students in the state and had truly learned. We went out to eat as a team that night and I saw they were still positive. I learned something from them and I am glad they provided me the reminder of why we do this activity. This activity is never for us, but for them.

As I have judged around the state, I would say I haven't seen many speeches as much as I have seen what would best be described as art. The other night I saw a Prose Final that truly moved me. I saw an Informative round that made me smile as I was continually amazed by fascinating topics. Again, this is why we do this activity. This is what unites us and it is what makes me confident in the future of our activity. Keep producing beautiful ART!

MSHSL Board Representative Report



Bonnie Spohn Schmaltz
Eden Valley-Watkins

During this time of the speech season, we often get caught up in who is advancing, who received medals, and who won the trophies. But as coaches,

we really know why we spend so many hours related to this activity. It's those unnoticed successes that really count. A student I'll call "M" showed up at the beginning of the year speech team meeting as an eighth grader. We have lots of junior high members, so that wasn't out of the ordinary. What made M so unique is that she was suspected of having selective mutism. It's a condition in which a person who is normally capable of speech does not speak in specific situations or to specific people. It takes shyness to a whole other level. This brave eighth grader took a tremendous leap by joining the team. There have been times when practicing or performing when M couldn't speak, comments regarding the need for increased volume appeared on every critique, and a request for increased expression was consistent. M is a senior this year who accomplished her goal of advancing to the section tournament. She is the most courageous competitor I've ever coached. It is never easy, or even easier, for M to speak, but she has found her voice. As coaches, we know how much more valuable that is than a medal.



The Awards Ceremony



MSCA All-State Team

At the annual CTAM conference in September, MSCA membership affirmed that the interest in the creation of an All-State team was positive.

A group of volunteers agreed to draft criteria for students who would be selected for such an honor. A few key values were identified:

- 1. The team be based on objective criteria, rather than selected by coaches. This came from the realization that the geography of our activity is such that it would be problematic to select from an applicant pool.**
- 2. The team had to be elite and a distinct honor, however the criteria shouldn't be such that it was near impossible.**

Currently, we have received several applications from students who meet the criteria and the hope is that many more will be received. The deadline for submission is Tuesday, April 18. Completed application should be sent to MSCA President-Elect Mike Worcester.

The committee is certainly not guaranteeing that the criteria is the absolute best criteria that could be established. Rather, the criteria is meant to be a starting point. In future years, other may propose changes and those changes may be accepted by the MSCA General Membership. Still, the belief is that this is a positive addition, in that it provides additional recognition for our leaders.



MSCA Distinguished Service Award

Since 1991, nineteen individuals have been honored by receiving the MSCA Distinguished Service Award.

Distinctly different from a Lifetime Achievement Award, this is instead a recognition of individuals who have gone above and beyond in serving their fellow coaches

If you are interested in nominating somebody please send a letter of nomination to MSCA President Jason Olson or MSCA Past President Scott Sieling. The letter should state clearly why the person is worthy of the award. Letters of nomination are due by May 15.

Once received, a 5 person committee will consider the nominations and if successful, the award will be given at the annual CTAM conference in September. To see a list of those who have won the award in the past, please visit <http://mcsaspeech.weebly.com/previous-recipients.html>

From the League

Chris Franson, MSHSL Assistant Director and State Speech Tournament Director



Section results have started coming in and I've just about finished hiring our judges, room managers, readers, tab staff, etc so we are ready for State Speech. Polly Reikowski, Bob Ihrig, and I went to our new site, Apple Valley H.S. for a tour a couple weeks ago and the staff is excited to be hosting us on April 21st and 22nd. Hosting the State Speech Tournament is quite an undertaking. To allow us to be in there both Friday and Saturday, they need to make sure their students have the day off, open 60 rooms for competition, tabbing, and lounges, arrange a couple dozen parent volunteers to help staff lounges, serve as proctors for draw events and coordinate food for the 130+ workers each day. 336 competitors each day will enter with mom, dad, grandma, grandpa and friends so our host site needs to accommodate 1000+ visitors, feed them, and point them where they need to go. A big thanks to Apple Valley and Luke Ostrander, Tzitel Voss, Pam Cady Wycoff, and the entire coaching staff, custodians and administration for letting us take over their building for 2 days.

You may have noticed that new section assignments were recently released on the MSHSL website. There was not much change this year as this was a rebalancing year. Every 6 years we "start from scratch" and create the tightest sections we can, but change is tough so in those off years, we just look to rebalance sections numerically as new programs, coops, or drops have occurred in the past two years. Two years ago was a start from scratch and there was quite a bit of change, but this year less than 10 of our almost 300 teams changed classes or sections this time around. I would expect two years from now to also have minor changes.

Lastly, this year we expanded our new sub-section and section cutting plan. Thanks to Mike Worcester, Rachel Schott and Bob Ihrig for their willingness to lead this effort and put in the extra work required to make it happen. Last year Mike and Rachel created Discussion task sets that differed based on the dates of the tournaments. This year we added Extemp. Speaking cutting sets so your tournament cuttings and tasks will be unique to your weekend or location.

I hope to see everyone on April 21st (AA) and 22nd (A) at Apple Valley H.S. for what should be another great showcase of the talented students across Minnesota.



Entering the Grace Period

Introducing MSCA Membership to Others

The Minnesota Speech Coaches Association could really use your help in recruiting new members. Much like the members of your team, you are the best recruiters for "our team."

Here are just a few of the basic benefits our organization provides to its members.

- 1. Award Program for Students**
- 2. Various Award Programs for Coaches**
- 3. Grants for Programs in Need**
- 4. Coaching Education Through a Vibrant Community of Coaches.**
- 5. Advocacy to the MSHSL**

Please consider promoting our organization at your Section tournament, meetings, and invitationals. Membership is \$20 per year. The membership form can be found online at <http://mscaspeech.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/1/0/22103376/mscamembershipform.pdf>.



Any questions can be directed to Zachary Prax at Eastview. His email address is Zachary.Prax@district196.org

Growing Speech in Minnesota

One benefit of membership in the MSCA is access to a grant program. Using the name, "Growing



Speech in Minnesota," the MSCA Executive Board has the ability to grant small amounts (in the past, up to \$200) of support for people with unique ideas or hoping to

utilize programs that represent the goals of this organization.

In past years, grants have been given to coaches to pursue coaching education programs. To apply for a grant, the application form is available under the resource tab on the MSCA website at <http://mscaspeech.weebly.com/>.

Once received, the MSCA Executive Board will make a decision and provide a timely response to the applicant. Decisions are based on the ability of the MSCA financially to support the request, whether the applicant has received previous support, and how well the application meets the mission of the MSCA. No guarantees are given that grants will be given out, but a guarantee is given that all requests will be given consideration. Any support we can give to the continue development of our craft will be happily extended.

