



May 2020

.....

MSCI YEAR IN REVIEW



by **Michael Samsky** (photographer)

The MSCI Board of Directors

(backrow: Chris Kuhlman, Doug Bevier, John Rutherford, Charlie Rinehart,

front row: Adam Blaylock, Kirstin Carolin, Heather McKaig, Ruth Kay)



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by **Charlie Rinehart**

Dear valued members of MSCI,

For many of you this May comes with some sense of disappointment. The loss of the 2020 MSCI Spring Conference due to the coronavirus and its effects weigh heavy on us all. This has been an unfair time for all our students but maybe most of all, for our seniors. But, our seniors, like all of us, are resilient and this horrible epidemic will not last forever. Speech activities in the state of Michigan will outlast and continue beyond the current public health pandemic.

Saying this, MSCI continues to be a professional organization dedicated to supporting speech activities in the state of Michigan through a myriad of factions. This yearly copy of the *MSCI Year in Review* will highlight some of what we continue to do.

I believe in the transformative power of this activity and am lit up inside when I think of all of you and your dedication to this art. The opportunities that this community provides in our collective search for truth can and will leave lasting impressions on all of us. I am continuously encouraged by the empathy, sincerity and authenticity that Michigan Speech has to offer and I thank you for that.

As members of this professional organization, we share an ethos regarding the importance of speech activities and understand MSCI's service to our community. During this time of great uncertainty, you may trust that we will continue to strive to honor the mission, vision and expectation that has always been promoted by the Michigan Speech Coaches.

Thank you all for the trust you have placed in us. I hope you stay safe and healthy through it all.

Sincerely,

Charlie Rinehart

MSCI President

BENEFITS FOR MSCI MEMBERS

by **Heather McKaig**

MSCI is proud to

PROVIDE

- A community and network of qualified coaches that are available for support, direction, encouragement and suggestions every step of the way
- An opportunity for members to bring students they are currently coaching to participate in speech competitions
- Professional recognition of coaches and educators who dedicate themselves to speech education

HOST

- An annual conference at the historic Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island with opportunities to interact and network with speech coaches from across the state
- The MSCCI Spring IE tournament
- Professional development opportunities with workshops for coaches and directors to build and improve speech and theatre programs



by **Doug Bevier**

MSCI's IE forensic tabulation program 4n6tab.com continues to expand its usership throughout Michigan. Before the pandemic, Portage Central and Portage Northern both planned to use the program for the 2020 season. Next year, 4n6tab.com will continue its march westward adding the Grand Rapids Christian tournament. 4n6tab.com is just one more way MSCI serves its members and the Michigan speech community as a whole. If you are interested in using 4n6tab.com at your IE tournament please reach out to the members of the MSCI Executive Board for information, tutorials, and tech support.

MSCI Grants

by **Ruth Kay**

Every year the MSCI awards grants and scholarships to high school and college students to further our mission of supporting speech activities in the state of Michigan. Last year the MSCI awarded \$4,500 in grants and scholarships. Our grant recipients included: MIFA \$1,000 for a middle school theatre competition, along with the Detroit Urban Debate League, \$500 to support programs and trophies. Scholarships included: four \$500 scholarships for students from Groves High School to continue their education in speech activities by attending summer debate camps, and Katarina Moore, \$1000, to further her college education toward becoming a teacher and coach of speech activities.

A NOTE FROM KATARINA MOORE

During the 2019 Mackinac Conference, I received a grant from MSCI that was put toward my summer classes, bringing me closer to my goal of becoming a Michigan Speech and Debate coach. I have been pursuing a Secondary Education Teaching Certification with a major in English and minor in Speech, and I am happy to announce that I am over half-way finished with my programs, holding a 3.98 GPA through the Honors Program at the University of Michigan-Dearborn! Because of MSCI's generous support of my collegiate education during the summer, I have been able to take more degree-specific classes during the regular school year, helping me to stay on track to graduate in four years or less. I continue to work with the Michigan Speech and Debate community by taking on various roles at both middle and high school tournaments. In the fall, I hope to begin the process of creating a Speech and Debate organization at UM-D in order to foster teams in metro-Detroit public schools that do not otherwise have the resources to start teams. Thank you for your loving guidance and assistance!

Congratulations to Adam Blaylock



by **John Rutherford**

MSCI is thrilled to welcome our newest speech competitor, Delilah Grace Blaylock. Delilah was born on May 5, 2020 at 3:31 p.m. She weighed in at 8 pounds, 5 ounces and is 22 inches long. Mom, dad and baby Delilah are all doing well. Welcome to the world!

2020 Hall of Fame Inductees

by **Heather McKaig**

MSCI is tremendously excited to honor the newest inductees to the Hall of Fame. These three coaches are important not only to this organization, but to all students in the State of Michigan who take part in speech activities. We look forward to celebrating these great coaches at Mackinac 2021.

In 21 years of Forensic coaching - 18 as the head coach - at Walled Lake Western High School, **Doug Bevier** (pictured here with MIFA Executive Director, Jon Becker) has led his students to tremendous success. Not only has WLW won the MSCI Mackinac Tournament four of the last five years, but the team has also placed in the top ten at MIFA States for over ten years. All told, Doug has coached 12 State Champions and more than 50 State Finalists. Teams are welcomed each year to one of the largest and longest continually running invitational tournaments, hosted at Walled Lake Western.



While thanking Walled Lake Schools for continually supporting his efforts to build the program and make a positive impact on students' lives, Doug says that “speech activities are a passion, and I’ve committed my professional life to building not only my program at WLW, but speech activities throughout the state of Michigan.” Twice elected as President of this organization, Doug has also sat on MIFA Council and chaired the IE Committee, which are just the most visible ways that he has been able to do just that. Doug also commented that “speech activities change lives for the better. They create citizens who are able to think critically and give them a voice to make change. Now, more than ever, speech activities are needed in classrooms throughout Michigan and the country to help us find solutions and build connections with people who think and see the world differently.”



A former student who took part in speech activities in high school, **Danielle Tier** (pictured here with Assistant Coach Mary Davis) sums up the need for these activities when she says “as a student, it helped me gain confidence and poise. As a teacher and coach, I have seen students find their voices and become articulate, engaging, empathetic young adults. The forensics team is a home or special place for so many young people, rounding out their high school experience.”

In 15 years at Andover High School/Bloomfield Hills High School, Danielle has certainly made that home for many students. She began her work as an unofficial coach at Dexter High School from 1999-2005 and then began her head coach position at Andover. In her career so far, she has coached 9 State

Championship Teams and over 20 State Champions.



Ken Weinstein began his life in speech activities in Oregon, where he competed in Cross Examination (Policy) Debate, Impromptu, and Humorous Interpretation. With experiences as both a student and now a coach, Ken knows well the value of speech activities and says that “forensics is important to help build a young person’s confidence. I am amazed at the extent to which students come out of their shell and are willing to try new things after participating in Forensics for a short time.”

Although he expressed shock at having found out about his induction into the Hall of Fame, the honor is not a surprise when you consider his 16-year career at Leslie Public Schools, where he has fought to keep the program running in a small school district, where competition with sports and other activities is fierce. Ken serves the speech community as a MIFA Council, IE Committee, and Middle Level Committee member and sees success every day in watching individual students improve and reach personal bests.

Theatre: All the World’s A Stage

by **John W. Rutherford**

This year several of the MSCI schools competed at theatre events across Michigan including the Michigan Educational Theatre Association’s State Thespian festival (Detroit) and MIFA One Act theatre competition (Avondale). Through individual theatre events, one act competitions, workshops and scholarships the theatre community of Michigan is strong. This chart shows the placement of some of your member schools at the MIFA One Act Theatre Competition 2020.

Division	School/Director	Title	Placement
1-Main	Novi/Heather McKaig	<i>Mother Hicks</i>	1st
1-Studio	Avondale/Michael Sheldon	<i>The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee</i>	1st
2-Studio	John Glen/Jeannie Gilbert	<i>Urinetown</i>	1st
2-Main	St. John’s/Jackie & Nate Charneski	<i>The Book of Everything</i>	2nd
1-Studio	W.E. Groves/John W. Rutherford	<i>The Very UnMerry Adventures of Robin Hood</i>	2nd

State qualifiers competing at the MIFA One Act Festival also included Heritage High School (Lori Duncan) *Men in Boats*, John Glenn High School (Jeannie Gilbert) *Shakespeare in Love*, and Henry Ford II (Kirstin Carolin) *Pookie Goes Geranding*.



The company of *Mother Hicks* - Novi High School

Debate: Combat of the Intellect

by **Chris Kuhlman**

This year, debate in the state of Michigan saw numbers increase across many forms of debate. Coaches of new programs at both the middle and high school levels continue to recruit, encourage competition, and grow their teams. The 2019-2020 debate season also saw an abundance of tournaments and competitive opportunities for students during the months of September through November. More and more programs are also continuing to expand their horizons by competing in the NSDA circuit, national qualifiers and attending national competitions in various states. Debate in the state of Michigan continues to evolve to mirror guidelines and expectations set forth by the NSDA to bring our state closer in line to the procedures and approaches implemented throughout the nation.

The 2019-2020 debate season culminated with the MIFA Debate State Finals held at Wayne State University on December 13 & 14, 2019. Competition was held in Public Forum, Policy, and Legislative debate with numbers at this year's state tournament being up across the board. At a time when national discourse and debate is fervent in our society, it is inspiring to see the growth in participation by many of the debate programs out there. We are also starting to see more programs grow in their participation in multiple forms of debate versus solely focusing on one.

At the tournament, the highest levels of success were achieved by multiple teams. Congratulations to the following coaches who each coached a State Champion team and/or speaker: John Lawson, Groves High School (Varsity Policy speaker & Novice Policy team), Amy Bushey, HH Dow High School (Varsity Policy team & Novice Policy speaker), Deborah Marsh, Dexter High School (Varsity Public Forum team & Middle Level Public Forum team), Shelly Venema, Saline High School (Novice Public Forum team & speaker),

Courtney Bassett, Birmingham Covington School (Middle Level Public Forum speaker), Chris Kuhlman, Utica Academy for International Studies (Varsity Legislative speaker), and Andrea Brown, Wayland High School (Novice Legislative speaker). These are only a few of the myriad of coaches who went out of their way to make this yet another highly fruitful season for student debaters.

At the MIFA state tournament this year, special recognition was given to Birmingham Groves coach Ryan Nierman who received this year's Elise Howard award. This award is given yearly at the tournament to recognize the contribution and dedication of a coach who goes above and beyond for their team and the debate community at large. Ryan has worked with the Groves debate program for numerous years, helps to facilitate debate tournaments throughout the season, and is an acting member of the MIFA Debate Committee.

MIFA Minute

by **Jon Becker**

MIFA and MSCI have been sister organizations for decades. In that time we have collaborated on several innovative projects that create new opportunities for youth to participate in speech activities. One highlight of the past two years has been the Middle Level Theatre Festival which MSCI helped foster through a grant, awarded in May 2018, to help underwrite expenses of the event like judging and awards. This grant has allowed us to keep fees to a minimum, thereby lowering the barrier to participate and opening the door to new schools. In just the second year offering the event, participation doubled from four to eight shows.

One of the values of starting with younger students is the long-term growth the activity will see as they move into high school and continue to improve their acting and stagecraft. "Middle school theatre provides the unique opportunity for drama students to experience the magic of a one-act festival. Getting to see other shows, travel as a team, demonstrate their craft for other theatre students are experiences that solidify theatre participation" explains White Pine Middle School Director, Lori Duncan. MSCI's continued support for this event has made it so hundreds of students can benefit from this educational experience. Thanks MSCI!

YETIE

by **Courtney Bassett and John Rutherford**



MIFA planned, organized and ran a very successful e-tournament that worked within the current limitations while providing students an opportunity to showcase their hard work, get valuable feedback and close out the forensic season. The event was known as the 2020 Year End Tournament for Individual Events, "YETIE" for short. MIFA used a mashup of tabroom.com's online balloting & critique features and YouTube for videos of student performances. Much of this was familiar to those who have participated in the OLIE and the few tweaks made it something students could do from home with minimal coach involvement. What a great way to try and make lemonade from the lemons we are working with at this time. In the end these are the numbers involved in the event: 44 Schools, 317 Entries, 123 Judges=440 total people



Thank You from DUDL

by **John Lawson**

Thanks to the Executive Board and Membership of the Michigan Speech Coaches, Inc. (MSCI), the MSCI has generously contributed at least \$500 per year to the Detroit Urban Debate League to sponsor awards and trophies for our many tournaments. The DUDL sponsors a minimum of six tournaments per year for which awards are needed. This academic year (2019-2020), we sponsored eight events, including a kickoff event at the downtown Detroit law firm of Dykema Gossett, and the Junior Varsity State tournament at Al Furqan Academy in west Detroit. The DUDL sponsors competition in varsity or open, junior varsity and novice policy debate. It also holds monthly tournaments for middle school public forum debate

The League also administers a weeklong summer institute in August, which culminates in a mini tournament for policy and public forum debaters.

All these events are facilitated by the motivational impact of trophies subsidized by the MSCI.

John Lawson

Executive Director, Detroit Urban Debate League

2019 Coaches of the Year

by **John Rutherford**

Last year MSCI honored four of our members with Coach of the Year honors. Each of the four individuals, Amy Janz, Nate Ritsema, Ken Weinstein, and Kirstin Carolin were selected for their contributions to speech activities in the State of Michigan for 2018-2019 school year.



Theatre Coach of the Year

Kirstin Carolin, Henry Ford II High School

“I am thrilled to be a part of speech and theatre activities in this state and honored to be considered worthy of this award by my peers ,” said Carolin. Theatre and speech activities are very important to the students of Michigan, as Carolin said, “Forensic and speech education let students explore the idea that problems can have multiple solutions and teaches them to shift goals within a process, see the world aesthetically, and perceive relationships between other disciplines. Participation in theatre, forensic, and debate served as the most important element of my education and I love being able to offer these opportunities to my students.”



Forensic Coach of the Year

Amy Janz , Grass Lake High School

“Since high school, forensic has played a huge part of my life and is definitely a passion. About three years after graduating high school, my former coach asked me to judge for her. I will never forget judging that first round. About five words into this student's performance I had this amazing feeling of "I'm back!" Forensic has a feeling, an energy that captures a person and just doesn't let go. So many of my past students who competed have expressed this same idea "forensic was the best part of high school." By coaching forensic, I get to be a part of so many students' "best part of high school,” and for that I will always be thankful. To be recognized for contributing to that is both surreal and gratifying.



Assistant Coach of the Year

Nate Ritsema, Grand Rapids City High School

Nate loves speech activities in Michigan and was thrilled to be recognized for his work. As a former competitor turned judge and coach he appreciates all sides of the speech competition. He said, "It's exciting to be recognized as the Assistant Coach of the Year. Living in such a fast-paced time, it's encouraging to see our students embrace critical thinking and constructive discourse. Throughout the past 10 years, it has been fun helping facilitate this aspect of their learning even in the smallest ways: From comments on a critique sheet, to after-school practice sessions, and even during conversations in the early Saturday morning hours on the way to a tournament."



Middle Level Coach of the Year

Ken Weinstein, Leslie High School

"I am honored to be named the Middle School Coach of the Year. Leslie Middle School had a great year which included a champion at the Spring tournament. The success of the team, though, couldn't have been reached without assistant coach, Shane Cortis. He worked tirelessly to make sure our students were ready. I am also proud of the work we did as a Middle Level Committee, working hard to ensure we put on a quality program for our competitors. Forensic is a great program which helps to build confidence and character. I am looking forward to many more years working with the Michigan Speech community."

Interested in MSCI Swag? [CLICK HERE TO ORDER](#)

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



CORPORATE ADDRESS
30941 Cedar Creek Drive | Farmington Hills, MI 48336