



May 2021

.....

MSCI YEAR IN REVIEW



The MSCI Board of Directors

(John Rutherford, Heather McKaig, Ruth Kay, Chris Kuhlman, Kirstin Carolin,
Charlie Rinehart, Doug Bevier, Adam Blaylock)



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by **Charlie Rinehart**

Dear MSCI Members,

On behalf of the Executive Board, I would like to welcome you to the 2021 MSCI Professional Development Conference. This year's conference will be unique. The rationale behind its construction was an attempt to bring some sense of normalcy into our lives but we know this will not fully do that. After a year where speech, theatre and debate competitions were held virtually, we all know normalcy is still out there in the distance. But let us attempt to find moments of joy this weekend. Joy in seeing each other in a place that we hold in our hearts. Joy in sharing conversations about what was learned this year and how that can help our activities grow into the future. Joy in celebrating the coaching that helps keep our students competing in these trying times. It has been a joy serving as your president through this adversity and watching our community step up to the challenge.

As members of this professional organization, we share an ethos regarding the importance of speech activities and understand MSCI's service to our community. MSCI continues to be a professional organization dedicated to supporting speech activities in the state of Michigan through a myriad of factions. I am continuously encouraged by the empathy, sincerity, and authenticity that Michigan Speech has to offer and I applaud you for that.

Thank you all for the trust you have placed in us and the time you have and continue to give to the importance of these activities. I hope you enjoy yourself this weekend.

Sincerely,

Charlie Rinehart
MSCI President

MSCI State Novice

By **John Rutherford**

The MSCI State Novice tournament was able to take place this year through the wonders of the NSDA Campus and Tabroom.com. As we transitioned to the virtual competition format we were able to provide the students of our member schools with the experience of competing at the Novice State Champion competition on Saturday, April 24. Congratulations to all of the champions!

BR: Mary Bustamante (Divine Child)	DI: Elina Palapattu (Greenhills)
EX: Charly Ying (Seaholm)	DU: Morisi and Annear (Seaholm)
IM: Michael Mychaliska (Skyline)	MU: Ali & Fleming & Singh (Greenhills)
IN: Navya Ashok (Greenhills)	PO: Liana Kakos (International Academy East)
OR: Manjari Bhat (Walled Lake Western)	PR: Fiona Lin (Greenhills)
SA: Erika Yee (Seaholm)	ST: Lanie Burkmyre (Walled Lake Western)

BENEFITS FOR MSCI MEMBERS

by **Heather McKaig**

Our mission is to develop, elevate, and encourage speech education in the State of Michigan in the areas of speech, debate, individual events, and theatre for coaches, teachers, educational institutions, and the students that benefit from their instruction and guidance.

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 MSCI Spring IE tournament
- Professional development opportunities with workshops for coaches and directors to build and improve speech and theatre programs

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 \$5,875 in grants and scholarships. Our grant recipients included: MIFA \$3,000, along with the Detroit Urban Debate League, \$500 to support programs and trophies. Scholarships included a \$375 scholarship for a student 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. In addition, \$1000 of support was given to the Henry Ford II Theatre Department.



A NOTE FROM HENRY FORD II

To whom it may concern,

My name is Fernanda Hernandez. I am a senior at Henry Ford II High School. Recently, our theatre director, Kirstin Carolin, told us about your gracious grant to help out our theatre department. I wanted to personally thank everyone at this organization for being so kind.

As a senior who has participated in MIFA and MSCI activities since I was a freshman, I can't even begin to describe how thankful I was to hear about your donation. Your grant has helped our theatre department immensely. It helped pay our MIFA theatre dues, and it also helped pay for components of our production of *Peter and the StarCatcher*. Last school year, we lost our spring musical during tech week, and it was really crushing. The spring musical is usually our money-maker, so from the bottom of our hearts, we sincerely appreciate your kindness.

Thank you for continuing to support the arts who really need it. It's an inspiration for all of us. Thank you for your contributions!

Sincerely,
Fernanda Hernandez and Henry Ford II Troupe 6785

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

With Fond Memory

by **John Lawson and Charlie Rinehart**

This past year MSCI lost three of our beloved colleagues. As we reflect back on this year we wanted to take a moment to shine a light on these three amazing speech coaches.

Diana Rose

Diana was a coach/director/mentor/teacher, who taught drama, debate and forensics at Brighton High School for more than three decades. She began her career in the mid-1960s and touched thousands upon thousands of lives. After retirement, Diana stayed active in MIFA, serving as a volunteer in the office for sixteen years and directing the IE Judge Certification program. She made such an impact statewide that the Michigan Interscholastic Forensics Association established "The Diana Rose Individual Events Award," given each year to an outstanding high school forensics coach who is recognized for his/her hard work and high professional commitment to the activity.

Diana was known for encouraging her students to participate in extracurricular activities, including debate and forensics. She was kind, caring and knowledgeable. She is missed in the community by former students, colleagues, and friends.

Andy Mollema (written by John Lawson)

Andy was a wonderful person and a superb educator. I coached debate and a bit of forensics with him in 1974-75 at AA Pioneer HS. His kids (team and classroom) loved him. He knew both content and technique in both activities but, more importantly, had great empathy, integrity and the ability to communicate with adults and students in a kind, caring manner which could diffuse difficult situations. I believe he served twice as MSCI President (then it was the MSCA-A for association) and also was elected several times to the MIFA Forensic Council. He coached debate and IE at CMU while getting his MA.

He ran one of the largest debate invitationals in the State, which I "inherited" when I coached at Pioneer. He told me not to worry, that he would handle all the logistics (rooms, invitations, food, etc.). All I had to do was some tabbing and announcements at the beginning and awards at the end. He was right.

About a year later, he remarried his wife Martha (Marti) who coached at Kalamazoo Central and moved to the west side of the state where he taught and coached at Three Rivers HS until his retirement. He and Marti moved Up North to Frankfort near Traverse City. The last time I saw him was about three summers ago at the 100th anniversary celebration for MIFA in Lansing.

A truly wonderful man who will be missed by his many friends and acquaintances throughout the State.

Guil Northrup

Guil was the heartbeat of Holt Debate and Forensics leading the programs for over 25 years. Guil was not only the coach of these programs he was also the head of transportation for his teams. Driving the minivan around for his team with a coffee in one hand and the newspaper in the other he always found a way to get his team to where they needed to be. Holt had threatened to cut these programs numerous times and he rescued them having his students use the skills they learned to present to the Board of Education and saved both programs.

Guil was known to all as curmudgeon with the heart of gold. While always having a bit of gruff to his voice, he would make sure that everyone around him was taken care of. I am sure wherever he is right now he has a cup of coffee in one hand and a newspaper in the other. Guil Northrup will be missed by all those who got to enjoy his company.

Debate: A year of firsts

by **Ruth Kay**

Debate was the first activity of this school year to experiment with the virtual platform. Our first attempt was quite a learning experience. But with the patience and help of all the coaches and competitors the virtual season ended as a success. For policy debaters and judges using the tabroom.com software was nothing new. But using the virtual Campus platform brought that experience to a whole new level. Public forum and legislative debaters had their first experience with tabroom.com and the Campus platform. It was amazing at how quickly debaters adapted to the new platforms. The students did a fantastic job of rolling with the punches. It is very rewarding, in this crazy Covid environment, to still be able to provide students with the experience of competing in speech activities.

Life Upon the Stage/Zoom in 2021

by **Kirstin Carolin**

Instead of trying to amend the lengthy one-act rules for a single year, the MIFA Theatre Committee chose to create a new event, independent of the MIFA State One-Act Festival. The committee determined early that an in-person event would be nearly impossible and that schools in January and February would likely be in various stages of reopening. We challenged ourselves to create a ballot that addressed that our participants may be working in full person-to-person models, fully remote models, or hybrid models. Because preparing for a play takes so long, we began the school year with our Online Theatre Festival Event Rules and ballot ready for directors. Instead of Serious and Mainstage - MIFA offered Division 1 and Division 2 in Serious and Humorous. While everyone wished they could have participated in an in-person event, the weekend was highly successful. The committee made a very intentional decision to award all schools who made it to the MIFA Online State Festival a trophy. The Committee hopes to create a new adjudicated video-submission based event next year, but look forward to seeing everyone in person next winter.

IE Forensics: Virtually Perfect

by **Doug Bevier**

While the pandemic raged around us, closing schools, canceling sports, and turning our lives upside down the IE Forensics season quietly, and quite remarkably, just...happened. Thanks to the innovative thinking of the MIFA office and IE committee, led by Danielle Tier, hundreds of students were given the opportunity to compete online. Without the efforts of these smart, dedicated speech coaches, we would not have had a season. So on behalf of the entire IE community, allow me to say, "Thank You!"

Ruth Kay was this year's recipient of the prestigious Diana Rose Award for her contributions to the IE community. Ruth has dedicated her life to speech activities, serving on councils, boards, and committees in MIFA, MSCI, National Federation of State High School Associations, National Communication Association, and Central State Association. This year, Ruth was instrumental in adopting and implementing Tabroom and NSDA competition rooms. She became an invaluable resource to directors, coaches, judges, & students working countless hours to ensure the IE season could happen.

The 2020-2021 IE season culminated in a slightly modified state tournament April 30 - May 1. State championships went to Portage Central, Class A, coached by Tyler Baas, Grand Rapids Christian, Class B, coached by Brian Karsten, & Greenhills School, Class C/D, coached by Ben Bellamy. Congratulations to everyone who made the tournament possible.

While this season will be remembered as one of great challenges and difficulties, it was also one of innovation and creativity. Virtual competition brought exciting changes to rules, events, performance standards, and judging paradigms. As a community, we embraced technology and experimented and accepted new norms. And while none of the changes are exactly what we wanted, the knowledge that we are capable of such resiliency and adaptability is...perfect.

2020 Hall of Fame Inductees

by **Heather McKaig**

MSCI is tremendously excited to honor the newest inductees to the Hall of Fame! While named the 2020 Hall of Fame Inductees, they can be celebrated now - in 2021 - while we are all together. 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.

In 22 years of Forensic coaching - 19 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 six at MIFA States for the last eight years. All told, Doug has coached 14 State Champions and more than 50 State Finalists. Doug is also the tournament director of 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.

MIFA Minute

by **Jon Becker, Executive Director, MIFA**

What a strange and wonderful year it has been! After cancelling several of our largest events at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, I never would have predicted where we are today.

In August 2020, as we began planning for the coming year, it was apparent that 100% of our events would need to be held online and that we needed a crash course to help get everyone ready for what hoped to be a one of a kind season. Committee members worked tirelessly to rewrite rules for online versions of Policy, Public Forum and Congressional Debate, the One Act Play Festival as well as Individual Events at both the high school and middle level. Over the following months, we fielded phone calls, responded to emails and led Zoom meetings. Staff held training sessions for tournament directors and delivered countless workshops for coaches, contestants and judges.

In total, MIFA administered 27 tournaments and assisted with another 8. That's nearly every tournament that ran statewide over the course of the 2020-2021 school year & a substantial increase above the seven events we oversee in a typical year. Seven invitational debate & IE tournaments donated 100% of proceeds to the organization – our sincere gratitude to the directors and debate programs at Detroit Country Day School, West Bloomfield HS and Holt HS as well as the directors and IE programs at Grand Rapids Christian HS, Portage Northern HS, Loy Norrix HS and Portage Central HS. In addition, several tournaments sent contributions in acknowledgement of the support they received – our thanks to Spartan Speech @ MSU, Avondale HS and the Detroit Urban Debate League for their support. Others contributed in their own way, as dozens of alumni turned out to judge debate, theatre and IE tournaments on a volunteer basis.

All of that is to say, we are certainly feeling the love. We hope you know it is reciprocated. This is an amazingly talented, generous community! Our sincere thanks to all of you.

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



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