

Teaching Adolescents to Argue?

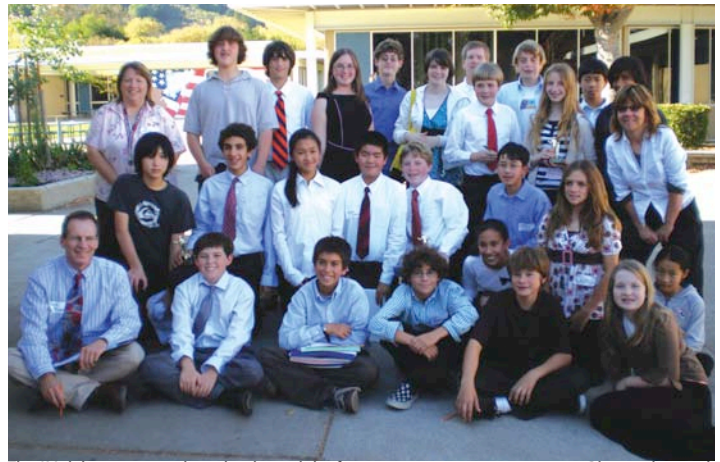
By Lee Borrowman, with Mojgan Vijeh

Argue? Any parent of a 13-year old will tell you, "They already know how to do that!" But there's more to the art of debate. According to the national Middle School Public Debate Program, debate helps students develop speaking, thinking, and even listening skills. Students who debate become more engaged in the world around them and develop sophisticated knowledge about a wide range of current events and complex ideas. The East Bay Debate League, founded in 2006 by a group of local middle school teachers, kicked off its second season at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School on November 3.

Students from Joaquin Moraga, Orinda Intermediate and Stanley Middle School went head to head against each other and students from as far away as San Jose and Sacramento, arguing one side or the other of such topics as: Medical testing on animals does more harm than good; The U.S. should have a draft for military service; On balance, video games do more harm than good; and California should raise the driving age to 18.

Each speaker was given twenty minutes to prepare and five minutes to present the pro or con side of the subject. JM teacher Don Read, who helped establish the East Bay Debate League, says, "One of the things that I love about the Debate League is how excited the kids get when they find out the topic they will be debating and whether they will be speaking for the proposition or the opposition. They all become so very busy writing down notes and planning their strategies. I admire them for the courage it takes for students to speak in front of people and defend their position on very challenging topics."

At the end of the day, OIS went home with first place for total school wins, JM took the overall win (based on number of participants), and a debater from North Creek Academy, a private school in Walnut Creek, won first place for an individual speaker. Most of the students found the event extremely challenging, but said they will do it again.



The JM debate team and coaches hosted the first event

Photo submitted

Some of the JM parents whose children are on the debate team expressed a concern that Campolindo High School does not offer a Public Speaking/Debate option, and they would like to see one created so that the middle school students who are getting this early exposure to debate can continue to pursue their interest while in high school. But Campo Principal Carol Kitchens explains, "Our students participate in the extra curricular programs of Model UN, Academic Decathlon and Mock Trial, which afford them the opportunity for public speaking and debate."

For more information about the Middle School Public Debate Program go to <http://www.middleschooldebate.com/leagues/ebdl.htm>

Upcoming middle school debate tournaments:

December 8, 2007 at Orinda Intermediate School, Orinda

February 9, 2008 at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, Moraga

Date TBA spring 2008 at Stanley Middle School, Lafayette

sewnow!
fashion studio

Thanksgiving Sewing Camps

Learn new skills and have fun! Monday-Wednesday

Morning: Holiday Gift Camp - novices welcome!

Afternoon: Holiday Formal Skirt Camp

Full-Day Camp: Embroidery 101 Camp - Holiday Gifts



For more information drop-in, call, or visit: www.sewnow.com

+ Open Studio Time + Brother sewing machines + Custom embroidered gifts + Girl Scout meetings + Birthday parties
sewnow! 960 Moraga Rd., Lafayette [1 block S of Mt. Diablo] (925) 283-7396 info@sewnow.com

Your child's probably ready to go to UC Berkeley.

Your children are precious, aren't they? And one of their most precious gifts is their eyes. That's why we encourage you to have your children's eyes examined first at nine months of age, again at three years, and regularly after that.

Who are we? We're the University of California Eye Center in Berkeley, a key part of UC's top-rated School of Optometry. And we can offer you a great deal of expertise with youngsters' eyes.

In fact, here at UC we've developed ways to test kids' eyes while they play, and to diagnose and treat any vision problems even before they can read an eye chart.



UC BERKELEY
OPTOMETRY

We take most vision insurance plans, and accept all major credit cards. So bring in the whole family for their eye exams. (You'll absolutely love our Eye Wear Center, with its incredible selection of designer frames!) We'll look for you!

Open to the Public 7 Days a week www.caleyecare.com
Free parking next to Cal Memorial Stadium with appointments. 510.642.2020

ENRICH YOUR LIFE.
SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY.
TEACH AND LEAD.



Saint Mary's College of California can prepare you for a rewarding "second career" as a classroom teacher. Put your life experience to work where it can make a bigger impact than you ever imagined: **a classroom.**

- Teaching Credentials/Masters:
Multiple/Single Subject, Special Ed
- Other Masters in Counseling, Reading,
Early Childhood/Montessori
- Tier I/Masters & Doctorate in Ed
Leadership

**NOW ACCEPTING
APPLICATIONS**

TO LEARN MORE:

call 925 631 4700 or
email soereq@stmarys-ca.edu



**SAINT
MARY'S
COLLEGE OF
CALIFORNIA**