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Matadors win big in Fort Lauderdale

By Brendan McFeely



Back row, from left: Kristen Plant, Kelly Zheng, Elizabeth Eddy, Janet Lee, Keely Fuller, Sandra Maguire; front row: Matthew Gill, Asim Khan, Taisuke Fox, and David Deng. Photo Kelly Zheng

Miramonte High School was one of the top 10 teams in the nation this year, returning from the June 18-22 National Speech and Debate Association's tournament in Fort Lauderdale as a "Team of Outstanding Distinction." Head coach and teacher Kristen Plant led 10 students to victory with the help of retired coach Sandra Maguire, where, for the first time in the team's history, every student returned home with a trophy for their preliminary event.

In Congressional Debate, where students model the legislative process and speak on pieces of legislation, graduating senior Elizabeth Eddy placed 16th and rising senior Brendan McFeely placed 11th.

In public forum debate, rising seniors David Deng and Matt Gill advanced to elimination rounds and graduated seniors Asim Khan and Taisuke Fox set a new record for Miramonte by placing 13th in their debates on the North American Free Trade Agreement. Graduating senior Anna Miskelly, as part of a district-wide team with students from Monte Vista in Danville and Dougherty Valley in San Ramon, placed in the top 16 teams in World Schools Debate.

In speech events, Miramonte students excelled as well. In Original Oratory, graduating senior Keely Fuller advanced to the top 60 of over 200 competitors with her speech about "Why Don't We Do What We Know Is Good for Us?" For her third time visiting the National Tournament, graduating senior Kelly Zheng placed in the top 30 in International Extemporaneous Speaking, in addition to being the San Francisco Bay Area District Student of the Year. Graduating senior Janet Lee placed fifth in Impromptu Speaking with her speech on the John F. Kennedy Space Center.

Even the coaches received awards. Kristen Plant and Sandra Maguire earned their second and seventh diamond awards, respectively, given after successes of students coached. Overall, the most important aspect to those attending wasn't the trophies won, but the memories made.

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[back](#)

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