

NEW HAVEN

URBAN DEBATE LEAGUE

UDL Annual Newsletter — Vol. 1 — May 2014
udl.sites.yale.edu — newhavenudl@gmail.com



Year at a Glance

- ◆ **New Haven UDL reaches more students than ever before.** There are new programs at Elm City Middle School, Engineering and Science University Magnet School, High School in the Community, and Metropolitan Business Academy. Outside of New Haven, we have programs at Waterbury High School and with Hills Academy, a home school group
- ◆ **UDL now has a dozen programs** in public schools, charter schools, and home schools and **serves over 100 students** across these programs
- ◆ In the 2013-4 school year, **UDL hosted 6 local tournaments**

Dear UDL Alumni, Students, and Friends,

What a year! In the 2013-2014 school year, UDL has expanded to reach more students and provide more opportunities than ever before. With weekly practices and many opportunities to compete, both our students and coaches have invested tremendous time and energy into learning and teaching all of the valuable skills that debate has to offer. Our students have excelled at local, state, and national tournaments, showing that hard work really does pay off!

This year, UDL hosted six tournaments. On Friday afternoons, students converge on Yale's campus for three rounds of debate, pizza, UDL-wide bonding, and lots of fun! This year, we decided to make several of the tournaments even more of a learning experience by offering workshops for students prior to the competition. For the first time ever, we hosted a New Haven District Championship, which included a final round open for all of the students to watch and learn from. In the finals, Jake Colavolpe and Zariah Altman from the Sound School faced off against Kevin Adu-Poku and Luigi Bernardo from Hillhouse High School. Sound won on a narrow decision, arguing that mandatory minimum sentences for convicted criminals should be abolished.

In addition to local competitions, our students have excelled at regional tournaments. At the Yale Invitational in September, Tanvi Patel and Maissane Taroua from Hill Regional Career High School reached the elimination rounds. In February, UDL teams travelled (for the first time!) to the University of Pennsylvania, where we had more teams reach elimination rounds in the parliamentary division than any other program in attendance. Finally, UDL triumphed at Osterweis, a statewide tournament hosted by the Yale Debate Association. In an unprecedented matchup, two UDL teams reached the final round. They debated the wisdom of the media's portrayal of Hillary Clinton as the presumptive 2016 presi-

(continued on page 2)

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Year at a Glance

- ◆ **UDL sent students to 3 state and national tournaments:** the Yale Invitational, the UPenn Liberty Bell Classic, and the Osterweis State tournament at Yale
- ◆ New Haven students have performed brilliantly at regional tournaments. At Yale's Osterweis Tournament, Jake Colavolpe (Sound) won top speaker, while at the UPenn Liberty Bell Class, Tanvi Patel (Career) took top honors
- ◆ For the second year in a row, **UDL is now offering an intensive summer program in August**, which will be expanded to include **2** two-day sessions

(continued from page 1)

dential nominee. In a 4-1 decision, Tanvi Patel and Maissane Taroua from Hill Regional Career High School defeated Jake Colavolpe and Zariah Altman from the Sound School.

Although the school year is dying down, the excitement continues! In August, UDL will be hosting its second annual intensive debate summer camp, a 4-day program that welcomes students of all levels to hone their debate skills through drills, training, games, and practice rounds. Additionally, UDL will be working in collaboration with the gifted and talented program in Bridgeport public high schools to provide debate opportunities for the students attending their summer program. Finally, one of our students will be traveling across the country for debate this summer. As the top non-senior debater at Osterweis, Zariah Altman (Sound) received a scholarship to the Stanford National Forensics Institute. She will be attending in August.



Thanks so much for your interest in UDL! As always, you can find out more on our website or email us at newhavenudl@gmail.com.

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Sincerely,

Becca Steinberg
President, New Haven UDL



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Selected Profiles of UDL's Graduating Seniors



Harrison Davis has been a part of the Hill Regional High School debate team since his Freshmen year, competing in numerous tournaments including the UPenn and Osterweis tournaments. Besides being one of the most experienced debaters on the team, Harrison spends much of his time out of the classroom doing anything that challenges his creative spheres, whether that be reading, writing poetry, or just sitting in a quiet spot and thinking. He has been recognized by some as a rad dude who plays guitar listens to 'good rock' such as the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Harrison is excited to be going to Princeton next year where he hopes to stay involved in music of all forms and as many new activities and pursuits as he can manage.



Jake Colavolpe is a senior at the Sound School, where he has been on the debate team for 3 years. Somehow he managed to trudge through the good cop/bad cop dichotomy of his coaches (and when one left for thesis-ing, simply bad cop), and enjoy his time as a UDL debater. Jake and his partner Zariah Altman have had several successful tournaments such as: New Haven District champions (2014), Osterweis 2nd Place team (2014), UPenn Liberty Bell Classic quarterfinalists (2014), and top novice team at Osterweis (2012). Jake has also had success as an individual speaker, earning top speaker at both Osterweis and the New Haven District Championship. He is interested in education and health policy. He is thrilled to be attending Yale in the fall.

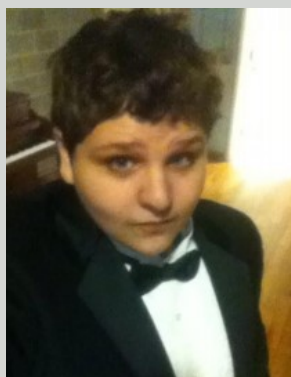


Kevin Adu-Poku Where should I begin? I guess I'll start out with my first introduction to debate. It was a sunny, no rainy day, actually I can't recall the day that I joined the debate team at James Hillhouse High School. The memories that I've gained from experiencing debate feels as if I have been a part of debate for years. The New Haven Urban Debate League wasn't just another extracurricular activity for me; it became another way for me to express myself and learn how to communicate effectively. Stepping out of my comfort zone by joining debate has helped change me into a sociable and critical individual. I plan to attend Adelphi University and major in Computer Science.

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Luigi Bernardo is graduating from James Hillhouse High School, where he is the president of the debate team, as well as president of the student body. He has been an active debater for two years and has won several awards alongside his partner Kevin Adu-Poku, including reaching the finals of the New Haven District Championship in 2014. He has competed at many tournaments such as the UPenn Liberty Bell Classic, the Yale Osterweis Tournament, and UDL tournaments. Luigi is also an avid fan of the New Orleans Saints. Next year, Luigi will be attending the University of New Haven.



Madeleine Feddern is a senior at Hill Regional Career High School where she has been debating for 4 years and leads as one of the captains. She's competed in many tournaments including the Yale Invitational, UPenn Liberty Bell Tournament, Yale Osterweis tournament, and various competitions with UDL. In her free time she can be found reading, playing with her three dogs, hanging out with friends, and watching addictive television shows. She is excited to be going to St. Bonaventure University in the fall as a biology major.



Maissane Taroua is a senior at Hill Regional Career High School where she is one of the captains of the Career debate team. She has been very successful with her partner Tanvi Patel, placing 3rd in the UPenn tournament and 1st in the Yale Osterweis tournament. Besides convincing a crowd, Maissane runs on the varsity track and field team as a middle distance runner. She also enjoys being part of the annual Yale Model UN conference and student government. Maissane is excited for the upcoming year where she will be attending the University of Connecticut and studying biomedical engineering.

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Rachel Nolan is a third-year debate team member at Coop High School. Her UDL debate achievements include two Top Team wins, along with several second- and third-place wins, all in her senior year. Among these are also a few Speaker awards. Outside of UDL, Rachel co-coaches her school's Slam Poetry team and recently was a semifinalist at the Marshall-Brennan Moot Court competition in Washington, DC. After high school, she plans on attending Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts for a degree involving poetry and political science.



Ray Charles Capanzana is graduating from Hill Regional Career High School. He was on the debate team for two years and competed during his senior year at Osterweis. With his partner Madeline Feddern, he earned 4th place in the New Haven District Championship. Known for his first name, he grew out of his shell from freshman to senior and has been noted as one of the most improved students in his class and on the debate team itself. He participated in more than 10 clubs as well as doing good works in community services while consistently improving throughout his school years. He looks forward to continue his accomplishments at Southern Connecticut State University in the fall.



Tanvi Patel is a senior at Hill Regional Career High School, and she has been on the debate team since her sophomore year. Some of her accomplishments in debate have been winning best speaker at the Penn tournament and placing 3rd as a team. She and her partner Maissane Taroua also placed first at this year's Osterweis tournament. When she isn't debating she enjoys eating, reading, and watching football. Tanvi also plays tennis, dances, and competes in model UN. In the fall, Tanvi will be attending the University of Pennsylvania and looks forwards to hosting debate tournaments.

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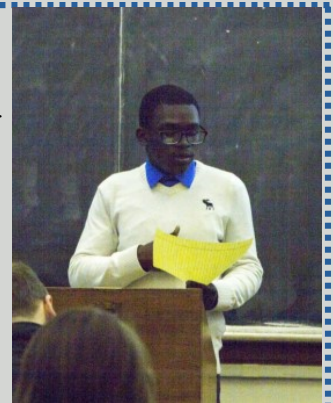
Yingxian Guo is a graduating senior at West Haven High School, where she was on the debate team for three years since its formation her sophomore year. Yingxian's achievements on the team, of which she was Captain for two years, include 10th place team at Osterweis, Regional Top Speaker, and 1st place team. Through the Urban Debate League, Yingxian was able to meet other incredible debaters in the region and engage in interesting and exciting debates and for that, she is very grateful. Yingxian is proud to attend Harvard University this fall.

To the Friends of UDL:

I hope that this letter finds you in good health and bright spirits. Right now, UDL is bigger and more successful than ever before. It's an exciting time for debate in New Haven Public Schools, and we could never do it without the unyielding generosity and support of parents, teachers, advisers, and donors. UDL receives partial funding from Dwight Hall, Yale's umbrella group for service organizations. However, these funds do not cover all of our expenses, which include transportation to and from tournaments, lodging and food for students competing at regional tournaments like UPenn's, and awards for UDL tournament winners. To honor the hard work of our students and coaches, please consider supporting UDL with a donation. You can reach us by email or find us on our website. The mission of UDL—to give New Haven students the chance to think and create arguments in a non-classroom setting—remains as important as ever.

Warm regards,

Trevor Williams
Director of Development, New Haven UDL



**GIVE STUDENTS A VOICE
SUPPORT UDL TODAY**