

NEWS RELEASE



Media Contact:
Valerie Merritt
Newark Public Schools
vmerritt@nps.k12.nj.us
Phone: 973-733-7360



Newark Teacher Named 2010 New Jersey Debate Coach of the Year; Newark Schools Win 22 Awards at State Final Tournament

MARCH 22, 2010, NEWARK, NJ – On March 6, Jonathan Alston was honored as 2010 Coach of the Year by over 600 contestants, coaches and judges gathered at Ridge High School in Basking Ridge, N. J., for the state final tournament of the New Jersey Forensic League (NJFL). Alston will also be honored with a Governor's Award at the May celebration of excellence in arts education hosted by the NJ State Department of Education.

Also, at the conclusion of the two day statewide competition in speech and debate, Newark high schools garnered 22 awards including State Championships in Varsity Policy debate, Junior Varsity Policy debate and Novice Policy debate as well as the top novice competitor in Dramatic Interpretation. There was a total of 492 entries from 33 schools.

The winning schools include East Side, with State Champion in JV Policy debate, and Technology High School's with one award; American History, Barringer High and University High School's with two awards; Central High School with three awards; Malcolm X Shabazz High School with 5 awards and Science Park High School with 6 awards, including the State Champions in Varsity and Novice Policy debate.

Alston has taught English and coached the Science Park Lincoln Douglas debate team for 16 years. As a student at Science High School, Alston was NJ State Champion in Lincoln Douglas debate in both his junior and senior years. He has led Science's Lincoln Douglas team to national prominence and is a highly respected instructor of debate at the summer institutes held by Stanford University and the University of North Texas. Alston was also inducted two years ago into the Key Coach Society of The Barkley Forum at Emory University, a national honor society of debate and speech coaches.

In tribute to Alston, Brent Farrand, District Coordinator for Newark Speech and Debate, characterized Alston as a "happy warrior" for students. "Mr. Alston graduated from Yale University with honors. The network and respect he built at Yale was so strong that he could have been anything he wanted to be; anywhere in the world he wanted to go. He chose to be a teacher in Newark. I hope many of the students gathered at the tournament, representing the best and brightest of New Jersey, choose to follow Mr. Alston's footsteps and choose to be a teacher," added Farrand.

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The Newark Public Schools:

The Newark Public Schools is the largest and one of the oldest school systems in New Jersey. The district serves approximately 40,000 students in 75 schools ranging from Pre-K to 12th grade; and employs approximately 7,500 staff within the schools and central office.

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