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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**HOUSTON URBAN DEBATE LEAGUE ANNOUNCES FIRST TOURNAMENT WINNERS**

The Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL) today announced the winners of its 2014 HUDL Heroes Tournament held at Lee High School on September 20.

The 2014 HUDL Heroes Tournament marks the first debate tournament of the 2014-2015 season, and it's the first tournament to offer the Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debate format in addition to World Schools, Cross Examination and Public Forum. LD is a one-on-one debate format that places heavy emphasis on philosophy, logic and ethics, and it's one of the oldest formats dating back to the debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas.

Over 450 students from across the Houston Independent School District competed through five rounds of debates in order to be crowned the winner at one of the largest debate tournaments on record.

"We want to congratulate our students on their phenomenal performances," said Zenobia Harris Bivens, Executive Director for HUDL. "We hope that by offering Lincoln-Douglas this year, we're able to reach out to more students who are then able to enjoy the benefits of academic debate."

The winning teams for the 2014 HUDL Heroes Tournament are:

**Lincoln Douglas Varsity**

- 1) Akshaya Annapragada – DeBakey
- 2) Kevin Chen – DeBakey
- 3) Jaliyyah Hodge – Westbury

**Cross Examination Varsity**

- 1) Emma McHone and Javier Lopez – HAIS
- 2) Paul Flores and Paul Niziol – HAIS
- 3) Cristian Vences and Zachary Duhon – HAIS

**Cross Examination Junior Varsity**

- 1) Angela Nguyen and Veeann Chen – DeBakey
- 2) Muhammad Uzair and Deangelo Val – Sharpstown
- 3) Ariel Miranda and LaTavia Brandyberg – HAIS

**World Schools Varsity**

- 1) Jacia Ali, Paola Macias and Nicholas Abraham – Westside
- 2) Lawrence Bennett, Elissa Palmer and Doris Hernandez – HAIS
- 3) Christin Li, Eleanor Gilbert and Praneeth Kambhampati – DeBakey

**World Schools Junior Varsity**

- 1) Joshua Davis, Malik Wheeler and Hammad Muhammad – Young Men's
- 2) Diego Lemus, Daisy Diaz and Caitlin Tram-Anh Vu – Challenge
- 3) Annette Mata, Jose Dolores and Daniela Franco – Challenge

**Public Forum Varsity**

- 1) Samira Traore and Shannan Stafford – DeBakey
- 2) Andrea Francis and Mourad Berrached – DeBakey
- 3) Anushka Madhuvarshi and Sasha Raman – DeBakey

**Public Forum Junior Varsity**

- 1) Javian Bennett and Andrew Felder – HAIS
- 2) Zach Green and Tivis Hall – HAIS
- 3) Melissa Montanez and Seanna Rodriguez – Sharpstown International



*The Houston Urban Debate League is a non-profit 501(C)(3) dedicated to re-introducing academic debate to underserved and at-risk students in Houston area high schools. HUDL serves more than 1070 students in 30 HISD high schools and 12 middle schools. HUDL has enjoyed increasing competitive success in local, state and even national tournaments with teams placed among the top in the nation. Through the generosity of its supporters, HUDL is able to offer students the life-changing benefits of debate.*

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