



News Release
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Inaugural Regents' Cup Winners Announced

Phoenix, Ariz. – Arizona State University students Valielza O’Keefe and Joshua Pardhe took first place in the inaugural Regents’ Cup debate competition this weekend, each winning \$16,600 in a one-time scholarship to further their educational goals.

Second place was awarded to University of Arizona students Vincent Jasso and Finley Dutton-Reid. Taking third place were ASU students Jessica Carter and Logan Guthrie, and UArizona students Nyah Fyfe and Marnie Gyorffy.

Thirty-six students on two-student teams from Arizona’s public universities competed during the day-long event at UArizona on Saturday, a competition showcasing Arizona’s public universities commitment to freedom of expression. Subjects debated included how (if at all) social media sites should regulate speech, free speech on college campuses, and if the United States should have tougher libel, slander and defamation laws.

The second-place winning team received one-time scholarships totaling \$12,450 and third-place winners took home a \$6,225 scholarship. Each of the remaining student competitors was awarded a \$500 one-time scholarship.

“The inaugural Regents’ Cup was not only a pleasure to watch, but it was an honor to participate in by awarding scholarships and presenting the cup to the winning team,” said Regent Karrin Taylor Robson, who envisioned the event. “I am deeply proud of all of our students who presented compelling arguments and conducted themselves in an exemplary and professional manner, one that was characterized by civil discourse and respect.”

This inaugural competition featured reasoned debate during an era when free-speech issues on college campuses are part of the national conversation. Arizona’s public universities are recognized as exemplars in free speech; Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona are all recognized with a green light rating, the highest rating by the [Foundation for Individual Rights in Education](#).

During the all-day competition, student teams participated in rounds of civil dialogue, solutions debate, persuasive storytelling and Oxford-style debate.

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