



**Debate.
Grow.
Transform.
Lead.**

Governing Board

Amanda Amert
Kesner Bienvenu
Daniel Clary
Rachel Haig
John Hammond
Tony Howard
Eli Kay-Oliphant
Femi Masha

David Nadig
Johnni Rodgers
Cindy Stuyvesant
Onur Surgit
Aneesh Sohoni
Chris Wheat
Tania White

Dr. Toinette Gunn
Executive Director

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Contact: Jennifer Jones
312-300-3441 jjones@chicagodebates.org

**SUPPORTING CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS:
CHICAGO DEBATES HOSTS 4TH ANNUAL DEBATE NIGHT**

The Associate Board of Chicago Debates held its fourth annual Debate Night Friday, March 6, 2020 at the NYCH Gallery in Pilsen, in an effort to support Chicago Public Schools' debate programs. The Associate Board, a group of young professionals, many who are former debaters who remain passionate about the activity and its impact, raised about \$15,000 to support debate programming.

Dr. Toinette Gunn, Chicago Debates' Executive Director, spoke briefly to the crowd Friday night highlighting the importance of the organization's work in bridging the opportunity gap and cultivating the academic, career, and leadership skills for Chicago Public School students through debate. The mission of Chicago Debates is to advance the educational achievement, community contributions, and life success of Chicago's youth through the transformative power of academic debate. They envision a world in which Chicago students are empowered to find their voice, excel in college and career, and become community leaders.

Chicago Debates is bridging the opportunity gap for Chicago Public School students by providing them with an after-school program that supports their academic, career, and leadership success through competitive policy debate. While debate has long been available to schools in wealthier suburban districts, Chicago Debates is creating access to this transformative activity for some of Chicago's most marginalized students. Debate has been found to promote students' school, civic, and social engagement, lead to significant gains in GPA over every semester participating in debate, improves scores on all four ACT subject tests, and debaters are three times less likely to drop out of high school and 80% more likely to graduate college.

Chicago Debates was one of the first urban debate leagues established in a national movement that has seen debate expand to 21 other cities across the country. Since partnering with Chicago Public Schools in 1997, Chicago Debates has grown from five schools to over 90 middle and high schools - making them the largest urban policy debate league in the country.

The Chicago Debates Associate Board will host additional events throughout the year to raise money and awareness about the organization. Visit ChicagoDebates.org for more information.