



HARVARD-WESTLAKE

This month, HW's nationally ranked debate program hosted the annual Harvard-Westlake Debates on the upper school campus. Led by two full-time coaches, almost 100 HW debate team members participate in more than 25 tournaments each year. The national Tournament of Champions, the culminating tournament for national-circuit debaters, recognizes the HW Debates tournament as one of the most prestigious in the country—and this year, our tournament was the largest it's ever been.

Cheers, [Ed Hu](#) | Head of External Relations

Up for Debate

Over Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend, Harvard-Westlake hosted the **HW Debates**, the largest in-person Lincoln-Douglas-only debate tournament hosted by a high school this season.





Nearly 350 competitors competed in five events, including a round-robin Lincoln-Douglas debate (a type of one-on-one debating), a qualifier event for the Tournament of Champions, a World Schools debate competition (small-team, conversational-style debates), a novice debate tournament (for new Lincoln-Douglas debaters), and a middle school debate tournament.



This year, after eight rounds with 16 of the nation's top competitors debating about the U.S. military presence in West Asia and North Africa, William Liu '25 took second place in the [Lincoln-Douglas Round Robin](#), behind Ansh Sheth of Harker School in San Jose.



Ansh and his teammate Sofia Shah closed out the final round of the [Varsity Lincoln-Douglas](#) Tournament of Champions qualifier. Grace Yang '28 finished as a semifinalist in [Novice Lincoln-Douglas](#), and two HW teams (Maya Karsh '25, Nathan Wang '25, Arielle Trakhtenberg '25, and Luke Madden '24, along with Nilufer Mistry Sheasby '24, Nate Verny '25, and Olivia Kriger '25) were semifinalists in [World Schools](#) debate. Finally, two of Harvard-Westlake's [Middle School](#) public debate teams finished in the top 20.



“As much as I travel around the country to debate the top high schoolers in Lincoln-Douglas, it was thrilling to see many of those same people here at HW in LA. I got into debate as a seventh grader interested in talking about politics and current events, and I am so glad to have gotten to know so many great people, coaches, friends, and peers on the national circuit.”

William Liu '25

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