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## Interest in Debate, History Earn Cross-Border Prize

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# Interest in debate, history earn cross-border prize

When Morgan St. Jean '09 checked her email one day in January, she expected the usual spam and Facebook updates.

But instead, a message from Jackson Miller, her forensics advisor, caught her eye.

It was a notice to his students about a competition, "Crossing Borders: Issues and Resolutions" hosted by the Consulate General of Canada. The event paired American and Canadian college students to argue their countries' positions on international political issues.

St. Jean, a communication arts and history double major and an avid debater, thought this fit her interests exactly. She was right, and ultimately won Best Speaker at the conference along with a \$1,000 prize.

"I was really interested in the topics, and I liked the idea of working with someone from Canada and getting their perspective of the issue," said St. Jean, one of only eight American students selected to participate.

She will use the prize money to attend a three-week debate institute, hosted by the International Debate Education Association, in Turkey this summer.

She and her partner, Thomas Kearns, a University of Alberta student, debated the topic of United Nations and multilateral diplomacy. Through research over the next month, the two studied the differences and similarities of opinions between the United States and Canada about the U.N., especially post-Sept. 11.

"I learned that the Canadians have always been much more committed to the U.N. and use it as a mediator between countries," St. Jean said. "Whereas the United States has always seen the U.N. as one option of foreign policy, yet they will use others if it is more to their advantage."

Through their research, St. Jean and Kearns proposed the solution of United Nations reform.

"The U.N. needs to come into the 21st century," St. Jean said. "It is very much based on country-to-country conflict. Warfare has changed to terrorist organizations within countries, and the U.N. is not equipped to handle that."

St. Jean and Kearns presented the American and Canadian sides, along with their joint solution, to a panel of three judges and four moderators who were then allowed to ask questions.

Learning about different government systems spurred St. Jean's latest goal of studying abroad. In January, she will travel to Brussels, Limerick and Luxembourg to study the European Union, and she also hopes to study abroad after graduation, perhaps in Canada.

"I realized through this experience that Canada has a much different culture than we do," said St. Jean. "They are not a mirror of the United States."

A natural leader, St. Jean has mentored new members of the Linfield forensics team, served as assistant coach for the McMinnville High School forensics team and will serve as the student coordinator of the Linfield Speaking Center next year. She is curious and hard working and has a keen sense of intellectual inquiry, according to Brenda DeVore Marshall, professor of theatre arts.

"One of the goals of a liberal arts institution is to guide students to become good citizens of the world," said Marshall, "and Morgan is one who will make a difference."

— Kasey Richter '09

Morgan St. Jean '09 talks with Jeff Primozych '09 in the Linfield Speaking Center. She earned the top speaker award in a competition, "Crossing Borders: Issues and Resolutions," hosted by the Consulate General of Canada.

