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History Made at College National Debate Tournament

Towson University Women win the 2014 Cross Examination Debate Association National Tournament

The Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) issued the following statement today:

A few weeks ago, Towson University debaters Ameena Ruffin, a Junior, and Korey Johnson, a Sophomore, became the first team composed of two African-American women to win the prestigious Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) intercollegiate national championship. Towson defeated the University of Oklahoma team of Rashid Campbell, Junior, and George Lee Jr., Senior, in the final round. The debate centered on the Presidential War Powers topic; analogizing police brutality, structural poverty and the prison-industrial complex to an ongoing war against African-Americans.

Over 1800 college students debated over the past year on the Presidential War Powers topic. For some students, this was their first foray into college policy debate. For others, this represents the end of a long journey across high school and college debate. In general, these students easily spend between 10-40 hours a week researching, writing, debating and revising their work on the topic. It is not uncommon for coaches and faculty to compare a season's worth of debate research to the equivalent of a master student's thesis.

Towson and Oklahoma bested a total of 170 teams to reach the final round of the CEDA national debate tournament. The competition included the best and brightest from across the country. And unlike collegiate sports, there are no divisions. All participating schools compete against each other; whether a state school, community college or Ivy League.

The accomplishments of Towson and Oklahoma are remarkable. For many years, intercollegiate debate has produced alumni that have become leaders in academia, policy, law, and other fields. Our society will surely benefit in the future from the research, critical thinking, and advocacy skills developed by this year's debaters and champions.

About CEDA – Founded in 1971, the Cross-Examination Debate Association (CEDA) is the primary national association sanctioning and promoting intercollegiate academic policy debate. Throughout the school year, CEDA sanctions over 60 tournaments throughout the nation, including an annual National Championship Tournament that brings together over 165 individual debate teams from across the nation to compete for a national team championship.