

Bylaws Of The Justice Debate League

Article 1

Name

The legal name of the Non-Profit Organization shall be known as the Justice Debate League, and shall herein be referred to as the "League".

Article 2

Purpose

The general purpose for which the League has been established is to form debate teams behind bars in order to welcome incarcerated individuals into the broader debate community.

As far as we are concerned, any facility with incarcerated persons is eligible to have a League team. Federal, state, local, juvenile, adult, female, male, maximum security, minimum security, ICE and any other classification of prison, jail, or detention center is a potential location for a League team.

Article 3

League Vision and Values

Vision:

That imprisoned persons will enter the debate community and have access to the same resources, teaching, and opportunities as their non-incarcerated peers.

Values:

Equal Value of Every Voice – We firmly believe in the equal value of every person. There is no element of any individual, what they have done, or where they currently reside that makes their voice less worthy of being heard.

Holistic Growth – The League seeks to not only develop students as debaters, but also seeks to help team members grow in any way possible according to the skills of our coaches and needs of our participants.

Debate for the future – We recognize that the greatest benefit of debate for some students will come from the opportunities that they experience as a part of the League. However, many will reap the benefits of these skills for a lifetime. We seek to prepare our students not only to succeed competitively now, but also to be able to advocate for themselves in the future.

Whenever possible, we seek to connect them to opportunities for higher education, and to equip them for a future where they can realize their full potential.

Respect of Privacy – We embrace the importance of the right to privacy for our debaters. We will never require our debaters to share about any part of their life story, and we will expect that our competitors show the same respect.

Article 4

Commitment to Incarcerated Teams and Their Coaches

The League seeks to build a community of incarcerated debate teams. Primarily, we envision this happening through partnering with experienced debate coaches who desire to start new teams in prisons.

For new teams, we seek to provide the following assistance:

- Pre-entry Training
- Connection with a prison
- Help in establishing a relationship with the prison employee who will oversee the team
- Support and advice as the team is developing
- Provision of a variety of instructional and research-oriented resources
- Assistance with achieving membership status in your chosen organization (i.e. NSDA)
- Support in working with the prison to facilitate the team's participation in the broader debate community
- Facilitation of the team's participation in their surrounding debate community, specifically within a team's given state

Any person who coaches a pre-existing incarcerated debate team is also welcome to apply to join the League. Depending on the development of the given team, the League will provide teams and their coaches with any or all of the aforementioned assistance as necessary.

Additionally, every league coach will receive the following support from the League:

- Monthly check-ins via telephone, skype or other means of verbal communication with the director of the league (This is a minimum. Coaches will receive as much support as is helpful or necessary.)
- Support and advocacy when coaches come up against obstacles
- Access to the supportive community of League coaches nationwide

In some circumstances, we are also willing to work with people who have no debate experience. For example, if a person is already involved in a prison where the inmates have asked for debate training, and we cannot connect that person with an experienced debate coach in their area, we will work with that person to train them as a debate coach.

Article 5

Executive Officers

Director

The Director is the ultimate authority in day-to-day operations of the League. In practice, this means that anything that is not accomplished elsewhere must be completed by the Director. Ultimate authority equates to ultimate responsibility. Additionally, the Director is subject to the Bylaws of the League as well as the Board of Directors.

Typically, the role of the Director will include the following:

- Interviewing and approval of League coaches
- Training new coaches
- Coordinating with, mentoring and supporting League coaches
- Facilitating the distribution of resources between free debate teams and incarcerated ones
- Administrative and financial responsibilities

Assistant Director

The Assistant Director assists the Director in accomplishing the day-to-day operations of the League. Their official responsibilities are as follows:

- Assisting in the facilitation and distribution of resources between free debate teams and incarcerated ones
- Assisting in building relationships between incarcerated teams and the debate community surrounding them

Article 6

Board of Directors

Role of the Board

It shall be the duty of the board to provide long term vision for the League as well as establish and, if necessary, alter and enforce the Bylaws of the League.

Chairperson

The chairperson shall be in charge of fulfilling or delegating the following responsibilities:

- Establishing the time and location for each board meeting
- Planning the agenda for each meeting, and notifying all board members in advance

- Taking the minutes
- Running the meeting
- Facilitating and tallying votes

Members

Members are committed to attending all board meetings and dedicating the necessary time and energy to being an informed voting member.

Size of the Board

The League's Board of Directors shall include at least three (3) members at any given time. New board members must be nominated by the standing members of the board and approved by a 2/3 majority.

Appointment of Members

The initial board was appointed by the founder of the League, but subsequently, any addition to or revocation from the board must be approved by the existing board.

Quorum

Any board meeting must have at least 2/3 of members present. However, no voting can officially take place if even one member of the board is absent. Note that being in audio and visual communication with all board members for the duration of a meeting qualifies as being present. Also note that missing two (2) consecutive board meetings is grounds for dismissal. In the event that a board member is absent for two consecutive board meetings, the Chairperson has authority to hold a vote about dismissing that person from the board without the presence of the member in question.

Frequency of Meetings

There must be an official board meeting at least once every month.

Article 7

Budgetary Guidelines

In the event of insufficient funds, expenses necessary for directly running our teams will always take priority, followed by compensation for our officers. League coaches will of course be alerted that there may be a period of time where they will coach on a volunteer basis. We recognize that many people who would make great coaches for the League do not have the financial flexibility to volunteer the time it takes to coach a League team, so we commit to sincerely attempting to bring in enough funds to pay all of our coaches as follows:

Wages for Coaches

Coaches will be paid for each hour spent with their League teams. This includes hours that are spent coaching the team weekly, as well as any additional time spent with team members for competition inside or outside of the facility. They will be paid at a rate of \$25 per hour.

Volunteers

Some coaches may be in position to donate the time they dedicate to their team. This would be extremely generous and the League would immediately recognize them for that donation of professional services. This distinction is made during the application process.

Changing Status Between Volunteers and Coaches

It shall be possible for coaches and volunteers to change their status given they have the sponsorship of at least one board member. When a board member brings this to the board, the change must be affirmed by a 2/3 vote of the board.

Team Expenses

Other anticipated expenses include team membership fees, tournament entry fees, costs of resources, books, or teaching tools brought into prison for the teams, and transportation costs of coaches and teams. Thus far, the broader debate community has generously donated these resources or waived these fees for our team to this point, and our goal is that they will continue doing so.

Salaries for Officers

Any officer who works full-time will receive a yearly salary based on their experience and what is agreed upon by a unanimous decision by the Board of Directors.

Any officer who works part-time will receive a yearly stipend that must also be agreed upon by a unanimous decision by the Board of Directors.

Any officer has the freedom to forfeit compensation at their discretion.

Unanticipated Expenses

If any expense should arise beyond all of the aforementioned costs, the League commits to using its funds only in ways that are entirely lawful and to maintain complete transparency of the use of its funds (see Article 8).

Dissolution Clause

Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

Article 8

Public Transparency

The League seeks to operate entirely above reproach. Our supporters, our coaches, the debate community, and anyone else who may be interested shall have access to all appropriate League documents. In line with this, our website shall always display the following documents:

- Financial statements
- Reports and minutes from board meetings
- Other corporate records

Article 9

Prison-to-School Pipeline

A supplementary element of what the League seeks to do is connect its participants to opportunities for higher education, both during incarceration and after release. As there is currently no streamlined process to achieve access to higher education for offenders, these efforts look different for each coach and each situation. The hope is that this access would become so common and widespread that a streamlined process – or at the very least - norms would develop for offenders to access post-secondary classes and degree programs. This is something that we encourage our coaches to put efforts towards, though we obviously prioritize teaching and development of debate skills and cannot guarantee our debaters access to college education.

Article 10

Commitment to Excellence

The League hopes to benefit its participants as much as possible. Therefore, beyond the standard expectations of debate coaching, we ask the following from our coaches:

- 1) When possible, bring in community members, subject area experts, or otherwise beneficial persons to interact with or give lectures to team members. For example, if there is an area of debate in which a friend or fellow coach excels, bring them in to teach the lesson for a week. Be as creative as possible.
- 2) If a coach has a specific skill set or beneficial talent, certification, or degree which falls outside of the realm of debate, but may still be useful to incarcerated persons, we always encourage them to use it. A coach's positive influence on their team members is never restricted to debate training.

As with our desired efforts for access to college education, we do not guarantee this in any of our teams, but we hope to provide these things where and when it is possible.

Article 11

Amendments and Revisions

Any amendment to these bylaws, addition or removal of any of executive officer positions, or substantial change to the League's operation must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Any proposed change must be communicated to each member of the Board at least three (3) days in advance of the meeting at which the change will be voted upon.

Article 12

Affirmation of Bylaws

We, the inaugural Board of Directors for the Justice Debate League, on this date of September 1, 2017, officially affirm this document as the League's Bylaws.

Signed,



Katrina Burlet
Chairperson

Jon Sahlman
Board Member

Fedhii Gobena
Board Member

Taylor Brewer
Board Member