

**National Christian Forensics & Communications Association**  
**President's Letter ♦ July 2009**



Dear NCFCA Affiliate Families,

Another season of NCFCA competition has just ended, so let's begin the new season with a fresh look at the vision for competitive forensics within NCFCA. The NCFCA Mission Statement lays out our purpose as follows: *The National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA) believes that formal speech and debate can provide a means for home schooled students to learn and exercise analytical and oratorical skills, addressing life issues from a Biblical world view in a manner that glorifies God. To provide these opportunities to home schooled students, NCFCA shall facilitate qualifying tournaments throughout the country and the annual national tournament.*

Whether speaking to competitors at a tournament, visiting with new families just becoming involved, or talking to coaches and organizational leaders, I am often compelled to bring the conversation back to the NCFCA Mission Statement so that we can properly consider the vision for this activity. Each year there are many families who participate as "new" Affiliates, and many of them really take hold of the NCFCA Mission and want to make this real in their student's lives. To make this happen, every one of us needs to keep our focus in the right place – we need to realize that ***the league is about training students to be able to engage the culture*** and not about collecting trophies or other awards.

Competition refines speaking and thinking skills in a way that other activities simply cannot match. The pursuit of excellence which accompanies fair and honest competition, in its purest sense, does a great job of preparing our students to engage the culture. But ***if the awards and accolades become the goal instead of the training we should impart***, then at its best the trophies are hollow and at its worst ***we've made an idol of this activity***. If those of us who are coaches and leaders lose sight of this fact, then we've also set the stage for the students to follow our example and pursue questionable practices in the name of winning. This is unacceptable and compromises the vision for the league.

Proverbs 3:5-6 gives us a simple reminder of how we should approach competitive forensics. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths (NKJV)*. As we all prepare for the upcoming speech and debate season, may we continually trust in the Lord for the outcome, acknowledge His hand in training the competitors for excellence, and earnestly seek to follow the paths He lays out for us.

This edition of the President's Letter is being sent directly to each NCFCA Affiliate Family at the close of the 2009 season. Future editions of this letter and other important league information will also be available on a regular basis at the NCFCA website.

Grace & Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Mike Larimer".

Mike Larimer, NCFCA President

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