Hathaway Brown in ‘Sweet 16’ of debate competition

SHAKER HTS. — A team from Hathaway Brown School has advanced to the “Sweet 16” round in a global debate competition.

If Hathaway Brown can defeat Greenhill School of Dallas, its opponent in the next round, it will win an all-expenses-paid trip to the Bickel & Brewer/NYU International Public Policy Forum finals April 12-14 in New York.

The winning school at the IPPF finals takes home a $10,000 grand prize and the coveted Bickel & Brewer Cup.

William A. Brewer III, a partner in the Bickel & Brewer law firm and founder of the IPPF, credited Hathaway Brown with “an impressive display of writing and advocacy on the topic of climate change.”

In its 12th year, the IPPF gives high school debate students the opportunity to participate in written and oral debates on issues of public policy. The competition is open to all schools worldwide, public and private, for free.

This year, 213 teams — representing 34 states and 29 foreign countries — submitted qualifying-round essays either affirming or negating the IPPF topic, “Resolved: Adaptation should be the most urgent response to climate change.”

The essays were evaluated by a review committee, which determined the top 32 teams. Hathaway Brown was the only Ohio school to advance to the Top 32.

The Top 32 moved on to a single-elimination, written debate contest. Each team was assigned a position, affirmative or negative, and the schools then volleyed papers back and forth via email.

In late December, those essays were reviewed by a panel of judges. Hathaway Brown advanced by a 3-0 vote over Coral Reef Senior High School of Florida.

The “Sweet 16” round is now under way, involving teams from 12 states and three foreign countries. On Feb. 11, the “Elite 8” teams will be announced, and those teams will travel to New York for the IPPF finals.

The IPPF finals will allow students to supplement their written scholarship with oral advocacy. A panel of some of the world’s foremost experts in debate, business, and law and politics will judge the oral debates and select the 2012-13 IPPF champion.

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