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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Concordia Speech Team Places 17th in National Tournament

Concordia placed 17th in the American Forensics Association National Speech Tournament with 2 students breaking into quarterfinal rounds.

MOORHEAD, Minn., Apr. 7th, 2021— Concordia sent 12 members to the American Forensics Association National Speech Tournament (AFA-NST). In a normal year, the team would've boarded a plane and traveled to the tournament location across the country. This year, students competed virtually alongside 67 other colleges and universities from across the United States via the competition platform Yaatly, streaming their performances from classrooms in Olin on April 2-5th. This is the second time in the past four years that the Concordia has placed in the top 20 teams in the nation. Concordia's 2021 national team consists of three seniors, one junior, three sophomores, and five first-years. The students took 29 entries to the AFA-NST.

There are 11 competition categories: Impromptu Speaking, Informative Speaking, Prose Interpretation, Dramatic Duo, Extemporaneous Speaking, Persuasive Speaking, Program Oral Interpretation, After Dinner Speaking, Communication Analysis, Drama Interpretation, and Poetry Interpretation.

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Dr. Najla Amundson is in her fourth year as DOF at Concordia. She says, "Placing in the top 20 this year is especially satisfying for several reasons. It was a tough year for everyone competing in a virtual world where we were separated by a screen from our audiences - and in many cases - never saw their faces. It was also one of the largest national tournaments in the history of the AFA-NST; and with no divisions we are competing against some huge programs. To finish 17th just demonstrates how strong our program is."

Leah Roberts '21 and Josephine Núñez '21 both broke into quarterfinals. Roberts in Dramatic Interpretation, and Núñez in Dramatic Interpretation, Prose Interpretation, and Informative Interpretation. This puts both Roberts and Núñez as two of the top 26 competitors in a field of 114 in Dramatic Interpretation. Núñez placed among the top 26 competitors in a field of 126 in Informative Speeches and one of the top 26 competitors in a field of 137 Prose Interpretation pieces.

"Joining Concordia college's Speech team was like coming home. I have never in my life found a group of people that has made it so easy for me to be myself around," Roberts said. "Being on this team has been, without a doubt, the greatest privilege of my life. I will constantly sing its praises."

About Concordia College Speech

At Concordia College we take the position that speech is more than just a co-curricular activity that allows students to compete in speaking events and debate tournaments; it is also a participative laboratory experience where students are exposed to and experiment with various ideas, concepts, and literature. Through collaboration with teammates, peers at other institutions, judges, and coaches; our students receive feedback which opens up opportunities to understand, explore, and pursue the limits of one's own potential. We believe that well-designed and supported competition improves teamwork, enhances emotional and social development, increases intrinsic motivation, facilitates a growth mindset, builds mental toughness, develops agency and creates academic self-confidence among our students. Ultimately, we believe that speech is an activity which teaches to the whole self. We constantly, and unapologetically, push our team members to be better: better students, competitors, speakers, and citizens.

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