

FROM THE DESK OF
Heidi Christensen

*A Lifetime
of NFL*

Over the years more than 1 million students have chosen to be part of the nation's oldest and largest honor society for speech and debate. You are one of those million. You have carried on the tradition of excellence and hopefully have looked back fondly on those years!

Our mission and goals have been designed with you in mind. We're building new and exciting programs around alumni of all ages to keep you connected to the magic you experienced during your years in the NFL.

Some of NFL's new initiatives include:

- Professional Development Programming
- The Publications Clearinghouse - www.nflonline.org/OnlineStore/InstructionalBooks
- NFL's "Give Them a Voice" campaign, which focuses on grants to help support forensics throughout the country
- The Colleges and Universities of Excellence program, which partners top colleges and universities with our talented students
- Alumni gatherings and receptions
- Forensiconline.net - an interactive speech and debate forum
- Schools of Excellence Scholarship Programs
- United Nations Foundation Global Debates

....and much, much more!

Thank you for being a part of this great organization. Reading the following pages, you will notice alumni who are grateful to the NFL for the lessons learned, skills developed, and most importantly the community of friends, classmates, coaches, teachers, and parents that grew because of the NFL.

The National Forensic League was founded in 1925 and will continue its tradition of success because of support from alumni like you!

Gratefully,
Heidi Christensen

Heidi S. Christensen

Alumni Coordinator

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Richard Kind

“The journey to success is often more rewarding than the success itself.”

You may have seen Richard on television or on Broadway, heard his voice on one of the many voiceovers on movies, or perhaps watched him perform earlier in his career working with Second City. Wherever you encountered this amazing actor, one thing is for sure: you probably couldn't forget him! Richard Kind, with his larger than life personality, has been on a number of stages, films and TV shows. His resume is long and his accomplishments are many...and it all started at Pennsbury High School, PA.

Richard doesn't remember exactly how he got into the NFL. “I just began doing forensics. All the smart kids were doing it -- and I was recruited because they had seen me in plays.” Once he started on the team, he knew he had found his niche. “I loved performing...I enjoyed just getting on the stage and although I didn't always win it, I always enjoyed doing it.” Tournaments weren't all fun and games, however. He noted, “The worst part about tournaments was waiting. We had to wait for the rounds to start then I had to wait until it was my turn...I just wanted to get up and perform. I did not want to wait.”

His favorite event was HI, although he liked all Interp events. He learned over the years that you don't have to be someone else completely to be successful in speech events. “I realized that acting is not just performing a character, but acting is just being.”

After high school Richard went to New York and went on tour with Children's Shows, waited tables and took classes. After 4 years of the Big Apple he headed to Chicago. In Chicago he started with the Improv troupe Second City. “Being part of Second City was the greatest break of my life,” he explains. He was discovered while performing with “Second City.”

I asked Richard what he loves most about acting. He said, “I love working on stage. That's what I live for. TV is my waiter job so I can afford theatre.”



Pauley Visits Plymouth

During a brief visit to Plymouth HS, Indiana, noted journalist Jane Pauley spoke about her forensic experience and its role in her future success. Approximately fifty members of the community had gathered to meet the former co-host of Today and Dateline on NBC. She personally spoke with Jason Pickell, a first-year member of the Plymouth High School NFL chapter, and encouraged him to remain active in the forensic community. “You have made a great decision to join your speech team,” she told Pickell. “Stay with it.”

Pauley speaks from experience. She was a member of the NFL chapter at Warren Central High School in Indianapolis, where under the direction of Coach Harry Wilfong she competed in Extemporaneous Speaking and earned second place at the Indiana state tournament. While in Plymouth, she noted: “I owe all of my professional success to my speech coach at Warren...he taught me how to speak and to think.” She graduated in 1968 and went on to Indiana University before becoming a journalist, achieving success on Today and Dateline.

Pauley is one of over 1.3 million alumni who have found their voice in the NFL. She continues to inspire and teach us with the skills she first learned in high school speech and debate.

ENSURING NFL VOICES CONTINUE TO BE HEARD

By making a tax-deductible contribution to the Bruno E. Jacob Youth Leadership Fund, you ensure that students from 3,000 high schools across the country enjoy the benefits that come from participation in NFL high school speech and debate programs. Simply visit us on the web at www.nflonline.org/Giving to learn more and make a donation today.

Making a financial commitment to the NFL gives over 93,000 youth their voice.

Contact the Office of Development for more information or to submit a donation at:

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Austan Goolsbee

“Never take yourself too seriously.”



Of all the advice I expected to hear from one of the country’s leading political advisors, “never take yourself too seriously” was not on the list. However, it makes perfect sense - especially coming from one of the most successful, passionate, dedicated and intelligent men in economics.

Austan began his NFL career under the guidance of Randy McCutcheon and Debbie Simon at Milton Academy, MA. He started his sophomore year in high school with Extemporaneous Speaking, then decided to try LD. By senior year, he was a champion in International Extemp. I asked Austan how important these experiences in the NFL were to him after high school and he said, “I learned as much or more from doing Extemp and Oratory than everything else in high school combined. You were forced to think on your feet and you were constantly familiarizing yourself with world issues and policies.”

One thing about Austan that you may not know is that beyond being the Robert P. Gwinn Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, a research fellow at the American Bar Foundation, a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, a member of the Panel of Economic Advisors to the Congressional Budget Office, and President Elect Barack Obama's economic advisor since Obama's successful U.S. Senate campaign in Illinois, he is also very interested in Improv! He explained, “Improv isn’t that different than Extemp. It’s time pressure, it’s good practice for the classroom and for the campaign trail. You always have to be ready to go by the seat of your pants.” That must be why you can never take yourself too seriously!

Some of Austan’s greatest memories of the NFL are not while competing but being involved in events that surrounded the competition. He remembers long bus trips, airport adventures involving his tubs filled with files exploding in the luggage carrier, being left at a truck stop bathroom and making memories with classmates and competitors he still calls friends.

His advice for those who may be interested in pursuing a career in economics and/or politics: “Read the newspaper every chance you get, be up on all the issues, and no matter what field in economics you decide to pursue, remember everyone is equally talented. It’s who’s persistent and who remains interested who will be successful. Don’t be afraid and stick to it, whether you’re at a local tournament or on the big stage at Nationals.”

Over the years he has been named one of the 100 Global Leaders for Tomorrow by the World Economic Forum in Switzerland, one of the six 'Gurus of the Future' by the Financial Times, one of the 40 Under 40 by Crain's Chicago Business and one of the 30 Under 30 by the Chicago Sun-Times.

Looking back, Austan said he has never once asked himself why he was involved in speech and debate. “I use it all the time...every day,” He notes. “I am an economist and being involved in the NFL got me to where I am today.”

Finance, Public Policy, and Italian Night Trains: Using Debate in my College Life

My high school speech and debate coach, Angela Weber, likes to joke with me about not continuing forensic competition at the university level. To this, I like to respond:

Debate?

But, I've already done that!

However, I think it is about time that I rethink my response. After all, I use the lessons I learned from speech and debate competition more frequently than any other skill set. This was nothing short of abundantly clear to me after arriving in Milan, Italy to study for a semester as an international exchange student at the Luigi Bocconi University.

It is rather surprising how many Milanese locals ask me about my thoughts on the US Presidential Race. Most recently, on a night train to Naples (an experience I encourage all US exchange students to explore), I sat next to the psychiatrist from the local hospital. In her broken English, she asked me about my thoughts on John McCain's choice of Governor Palin for Vice President.

First, I was shocked by my ability to answer the question in Italian—rather, half-Italian. But then I was even more shocked by this woman's perspective, which was free from the influence of the American spinsters,

WSJ opinion polls and broadcast campaign advertisements. She was uninterested in the McCain vs. Obama, good vs. bad, Democrat vs. Republican nonsense that even the most aware American cannot avoid.

As I searched my Italian vocabulary for the words to describe my analysis of Governor Palin's nomination, I was immediately reminded of my time in the preparation room for Extemporaneous Speaking, where dispassionate arguments based on substance are the norm.

No more than two days later, on a commuter line train from the ancient Roman city of Pompeii, I met a nice Mexican couple, an archeologist and his wife. They too asked me for my opinion on the US Presidential election (but before you start dubbing me tri-lingual, rest assured I was forced to switch from Spanish to English to discuss politics with them). They were interested to hear my perspective on how each candidate might improve America's standing with the international community, once again requiring an answer that transcended trite, one-candidate-is-better-than-the-other arguments.

I have come to realize that the best way to answer these types of questions is to transcend binary-thinking—that zero-sum, good vs. evil, mano-a-mano way of thinking that we all hear so often. Debaters know what I mean, because no resolution, Extemp question or legislation is without nuance. In fact, debate is all about recognizing nuances.

It is a skill, one I learned in debate, to be able to move beyond binary thinking. It's the result of four years of hard work and countless tournaments. It comes not from winning a trophy or breaking to final rounds, but rather from the analytical framework you create as a debater.



That framework has certainly served me well in college.

In 2006, I entered the NYU Stern School of Business as an undergraduate finance student. It was an enlightening experience to have so many intelligent students surrounding me in my classes. Many of them had gone through more college-level coursework in high school than I had (since I chose to balance my high school AP classes with my participation in speech and debate). The Stern School focuses its coursework heavily on maintaining a global perspective and learning about business holistically. All undergraduate students take a business core to understand the basics of accounting, finance, marketing, information technology, etc. As intimidated as I was by my intelligent classmates, I was happy to have debated in high school, where holistic analysis and diverse perspectives are always welcome.

I had learned a great deal about international relations and public policy while debating, but I was clueless when it came to finance. Fortunately, I soon realized that the most effective strategy for learning about the industry was the same strategy I had used in countless debate rounds. The research, evidence evaluation, and argument formulation was precisely the same. Whether I was writing a college essay about the Blackstone initial public offering or attempting to wrap

my head around the complexity of the financial markets, I kept coming across the same feeling: “I’ve already done this.”

Sure, the substance was different, but the process was exactly the same.

My skills were put to the test sophomore year as I began interviewing for summer internships in the financial services. The days leading up to my second-round interview with Bear Stearns (ironically, only one month before their sale to JP Morgan) felt like the days before a national tournament: my desk was covered in piles of research, highlighters in every color, and the ubiquitous yellow legal pad.

The interview was as difficult as I had imagined. I was expected to answer questions that had no easy answers:

“What industries do you expect to outperform the S&P 500 in the medium-term?”

“Do you think the market is in recession?”

“Can you explain what is happening in the credit markets to me?”

These were questions that even economists struggled with, yet I was expected to answer them to the best of my ability. I was reminded of the times in Student Congress cross-examination, where I was forced to answer questions that were “above my pay grade.” And, as I answered my interview questions, my tone and demeanor were reminiscent of an Extemp speech.

Debate taught me how to learn. And it comes as no surprise that my business presentations were made easier by my experiences in public speaking. However, my analytical skills were put to the test when it came to writing. I was surprised by how much easier analytical

writing was for me because of my experiences in debate. In the fall of 2006, I applied for the opportunity to write a law review-style article for the UCLA Undergraduate Law Journal.

It was the most brutal writing process. I was writing about US Detainment policy, which, while a familiar topic, was anything but clear to me. However, the end product, my published article in the journal, was a welcome result from countless revisions and detailed research. In many ways, it was the next step from

“Debate keeps me humble — humble enough to know that there is always a counterargument, humble enough to accept that even I may not be making the best argument.”

my speech and debate days — highly analytical, focused and dynamic. My sophomore year I applied to write an article for the same journal about an even more complex topic — securities litigation. My article, which calls upon Congress to reconsider creating an express right of action for aiding and abetting fraud liability, will be published in November.

I learned a great deal from my writing experiences. When suffering from writer’s block, I would try to outline my article like an extended Extemp speech. When searching for an argument, I would reread my research, like I did when stuck without an argument in a Student Congress round. When I saw my first article published in a journal, I felt the way any competitor feels after giving the best speech possible in a round—a sense of

accomplishment that only comes from hard work and practice.

Election years are always tough for me. You can turn on CNN at any time and find a horribly constructed argument. Watch a Senator speak, and you may hear a horribly articulated argument. It always brings me some peace to know that all around the world, former debaters are running around — researching without bias, evaluating the evidence without partisanship, making coherent, logical arguments. They understand what it means to think deeply.

Moving beyond binary thinking was the first step for me. Debate keeps me humble — humble enough to know that there is always a counterargument, humble enough to accept that even I may not be making the best argument.

It’s something that my new friend on the night train to Naples already understood. It was something that the Mexican couple I met on my way back from Pompeii didn’t have to worry about. In fact, everywhere I go, I seem to find people from across the world, Americans included, who do not see “black and white,” but shades of gray. They do not like binary arguments any more than I do. And when I find people like that, I am so thankful for speech and debate. Because I know that I can make an argument, listen to their response, and learn — the most important skill I learned from debate.

So next time Ms. Weber asks me why I don’t compete in speech and debate anymore, I’ll know my answer.

I never stopped debating... and I never will.

*Ravi Shah
Dreyfoos School Of
The Arts, FL
Class of 2006*



Dr. James Poterba

“The NFL community
created years of
success.”



In the spring of 1972, Dr. James Poterba joined the NFL policy debate team at his high school. That year the debate topic involved tax policy issues, which he found to be very interesting. Who would have guessed that the topic that he debated that spring would establish the groundwork for his future? But as Dr. Poterba explains, those questions in Policy Debate back in 1972 “have been the focus area for my professional career.”

A natural in high school, Dr. Poterba went on to debate at Harvard. Like many other NFL alumni, Dr. Poterba found a family of NFL’ers at Harvard that helped ease the transition from high school to college. He states, “I already knew a dozen people or so because I used to spend all my weekends with them. It was a great family environment and helped so much those first couple of years.” Not only did he achieve academic success, but he was also successful in love. While attending Harvard, he met a fellow NFL’er Nancy Rose, who went on to become an Economics professor and his wife of 35 years!

This former Policy debater now has a new set of titles. After Harvard, Dr. Poterba went to Oxford and received a Doctor of Philosophy degree. He is now the Mitsui Professor of Economics at MIT. He is also the President of the National Bureau of Economic Research and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Econometric Society. He is the Vice-President of the National Tax Association. He has served as a Director of the American Finance Association and as a member of the Executive Committee of the American Economic Association. In fact, Dr. Poterba’s accomplishments are many. He served as a member of the President's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform in 2005. He is a trustee of the College Retirement Equity Fund (CREF), and a former member of the MIT 401(k) Plan Oversight Committee. He edited the Journal of Public Economics, the leading international journal for research on taxation and government spending, between 1997 and 2006. He is a member of the advisory board of the Journal of Wealth Management. He is a co-author of *The Role of Annuity Markets in Financing Retirement* (2001), and an editor or co-editor of *Global Warming: Economic Policy Responses* (1991), *International Comparisons of Household Saving* (1994), *Empirical Foundations of Household Taxation* (1996), *Fiscal Institutions and Fiscal Performance* (1999), and *Fiscal Reform in Columbia* (2005) (<http://econ-www.mit.edu/faculty/poterba/short>).

Dr. Poterba has many fond memories of the NFL but one thing that really stands out to him is community. He was happy to find classmates who had the same interests, goals and ambitions. He explains, “We all enjoyed the same activity and we really created such a wonderful bond. We progressed through the NFL together. Things that once seemed so difficult in the beginning seemed so much easier by our junior and senior years. The memories created those four years will always be a joy to reflect back on.”



Clark Ervin

“I thought NFL was invaluable for law...then I realized it was invaluable for life.”

Clark Ervin progressed naturally into politics after developing an interest in law at an early age. He said, “I knew being part of the NFL would be necessary for law. Learning how to debate and doing Extemp and Oratory were essential when honing my speaking skills.” He realized right away that the NFL would train him in logic and argumentation and that those skills would be important for his career goals. He stated “I soon found out that no matter what field you go into, or what you want to do in life, there’s nothing more useful than being part of a speech and debate program.”

Clark Ervin has certainly had his fair share of experience throughout the years with logic and argumentation. He has served as a member of the Texas State Government, as the Inspector General of the United States Department of State, and on the Broadcasting Board of Governors. He was also the first Inspector General of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Shortly after leaving the DHS, Ervin published a book entitled *Open Target: Where America is Vulnerable to Attack*, which gives details of his tenure at the DHS as well as his views on the current state of preparedness for new terrorist attacks. He is currently the head of the Homeland Security Program at the Aspen Institute.

Clark Ervin traces much of his interest and experience with politics back to the NFL. According to Clark, “I read newspapers, quoted newspaper articles...I learned how to speak in sound bytes intelligently.” His personal interest in foreign affairs started while debating in high school and has continued ever since.

When asked what advice he would give to NFL’ers today, he said “If you want to practice law, join the NFL, if you want to be successful in politics, join the NFL, and if you want to be successful at life...join the NFL!”

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for your continued support.*



Together, we are giving youth a voice!

Scott Halberstadt

“At the end of the day it doesn’t matter what you did with your forensics team...just that you were part of it. Whether you win or lose, you will use what you learned every day of your life.”



Scott’s love for theatre began in high school, when he followed in the footsteps of his older brother and joined the speech and debate team. He started out with Prose, dabbled in Congress and found out his love was in Extemp. “The worst and best speech I ever gave was an Extemp on euthanasia. I was a freshman...I was an idiot. I didn’t know what that meant. I had to give a 3-5 minute speech and I didn’t know what I was going to do. After a moment or two I realized there’s only one thing to do...tell the truth. So, I gave a 3-5 minute speech on how I didn’t know what the word euthanasia meant and the three ways I could go about giving this speech. 1. Pretend I know. 2. Blame the education system which I am a part of for not teaching me about euthanasia. 3. Stand up and tell the truth...I had no clue what it meant. After feeling quite defeated my friends and I were waiting for results in the cafeteria when I heard a loud expletive from a competitor come from across the room... I HAD WON!”

After a very successful NFL career he made the decision to go to theatre school. He states, “I remember taking mandatory public speaking classes in college. It was so easy! The worst part was they wanted me to write my speech out on note cards. I just didn’t give a speech that way.” After graduation he lived in Chicago, where he was the Assistant Director at a theatre. He moved to Los Angeles in 2001. “I worked in insurance for a year and a half in the Medicare division. I spent all day calling nursing homes to make sure people were still there...worst job ever.” He got a break when his agent called with a project, which he describes as “a really terrible, non-union movie” called *In Your Face*. However, after that exposure he worked a quite a bit on stage and screen. It was a great start!

These days, Scott is perhaps best known by the younger generation for his three-year stint as Eric on the hit Nickelodeon series *Drake & Josh*. He has also been very busy when not making films, having a feature role in several commercials. He has done 32 spots for Alltel Wireless, representing the rival AT&T/Cingular Corporation (he’s the one in the orange). Scott can also be seen in commercial spots for Capital One credit cards, asking viewers: “What’s in your wallet?” In the future, Scott plans to pursue writing. “I have control over writing, and have a passion for it”.

Reflecting back on his days in forensics, he notes that one of the things he loved about being part of the NFL was that “no matter where you went, wherever you were you ran into someone on the stage or screen that knew exactly what you were talking about when you said high school speech and debate. [Joining NFL was] the best decision I ever made!”

NFL Gives Students and Alumni a Voice

You may already know that NFL is the nation's oldest and largest speech and debate honor society. Perhaps you have a certificate on your wall, carefully updated with degrees, or even a forensics trophy from your high school days. Sometimes, it is tempting to focus on the competitive aspect of forensics. However, what we do at NFL is actually much broader. More than teaching youth to speak, or training them for leadership... we give them a voice.

Giving youth a voice is significant. Teaching them to speak means showing them how to make a point; giving them a voice means instilling confidence that their ideas are important. Teaching them how to speak means showing them how to persuade, inform, or entertain their audiences; giving them a voice means showing them how to use such skills ethically. Teaching them to speak means giving them skills to succeed; giving youth a voice means empowering them to be thoughtful and engaged members of a global community. At NFL, it is our mission to do both.

Just as we have given the students a voice, we want to give Alumni a voice! Connect with former classmates, competitors, coaches, and current students through our new interactive Web sites.

Visit.....

The National Forensic League - www.nflonline.org

We are continually updating our Web site to bring you cutting edge NFL information. Check back often for alumni news, flash page stories, school rankings, NFL policy and procedure changes, tournament schedule listings and much, much more!

Forensiconline - www.forensiconline.net

In 2007, site creator and webmaster Jason Mehta graciously donated ForensicsOnline (FOL) to the NFL to promote the ideals and vision of an online community. His incredible contribution to the League and to the forensic community helps ensure the continued growth of the activity.

We have completely redesigned the site as a community portal for forensics including social networking features that you may be familiar with from other sites. For example, in addition to the forums that remain intact from the old version of FOL with improved security and anti-spam features, this version includes a fully-functional blog interface, tournament calendar, photo albums, and much more.

Facebook - www.facebook.com

Reconnect with fellow alumni through this social networking Web site. Just sign up for a Facebook account and search groups for "I'm an NFL alum (Not football, Speech and Debate!)"

LinkedIn - www.linkedin.com

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site. The purpose of the site is to allow registered users to maintain a list of contact details of people they know and trust in business. The searchable LinkedIn groups feature allows users to establish new business relationships by joining alumni, industry, or professional and other relevant groups. Just sign up for LinkedIn and join the National Forensic League group!

With all these opportunities to keep in touch, staying connected is easier than ever!

ANNUAL GIVING REPORT

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This circle of generous donors represents our esteemed alumni & coaches, their families, and the many friends of the National Forensic League.

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Sarah Ralston

From One Real World To Another... And Back Again

Last season, all you reality TV show fans may remember Sarah, the beautiful brunette from Arizona. However what you may not know is this beauty has brains too! Sarah graced the set of MTV's *Real World*, but before that she graced many an NFL stage, earning a number of titles in Original Oratory and Prose.

After a very successful high school NFL career Sarah went on to Arizona State University, where she competed for their nationally prominent forensic team. She also followed her dream by receiving a degree in Journalism. Just before graduating in May after only three years of college, she went to an open casting at a music festival. She had never actually watched an entire episode of the *Real World* before! "I'm more of a feminist and I really didn't like the *Real World's* traditional female roles they cast, but I thought maybe they'd choose me for a different perspective," she reasoned. Sure enough, right after graduation she was chosen for the cast of *Real World Hollywood* and moved into the house in August 2007. I asked her what she learned from being on the *Real World*. She explained, "People have seen me at my worst, and having always been an overachiever that was hard at first. But after a while it made me realize it's okay for people to see your flaws, to see the real Sarah all the time."

After filming, the transition back to the "real world" was challenging at first. "You're used to people being around all the time, and then it's just you." She went on to say, "I even kept checking my clothes for mics!" Sarah recently married another NFL alumnus, Ryan Hubbell. The pair currently resides in New York, where Sarah is working on her Ph.D. and still doing *Real World* interviews. She also made an appearance last summer at Desert Lights Nationals in Las Vegas, NV.

Sarah's advice for students in the "real world": "It's okay not to have instant success. You have to work on it... blood, sweat and tears will make it all worth it in the end."

Legacies of the NFL

Family connections have long been a part of the National Forensic League, building legacies of involvement through the generations. These legacies trace a direct family path through years of long bus trips, excitement at tournaments, lifelong friendships made in cafeterias, and even generations of being a NFL National Tournament competitor.

Many of the students involved with the NFL today are sons and daughters of our Alumni. Other fellow students may follow a path which reaches farther into the past. These paths to the NFL may even include grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers and sisters.

Are you a legacy? Are one of your sons or daughters currently participating in the NFL at his or her high school? If so, I want to hear from you! Tell me your family legacy within the League. Tell me the excitement you felt when your family member wanted to follow in your footsteps and you were able to watch them shine on stage. Help us keep the legacies alive through stories, so generations to come will be able to participate in the greatest activity that is speech and debate.

Send your anecdotes, stories, and testimonials of generations of involvement in the NFL to hschristensen@nflonline.org.

Integrity. Respect. Leadership.

When my son Fritz, now a senior, decided to join the debate team at the beginning of his freshman year at Claremont High School in Claremont, California, it gave me the opportunity to reignite my own passion for debate. I had been a successful high school debater in Colorado in the 1980s, but had been out of the debate world since. During the 05-06 school year, I volunteered as a judge for many tournaments and spent time working with the Claremont team. I absolutely loved it. The following year I started a speech and debate team and NFL chapter at Chaffey High School, where I teach history. Debate has given Fritz and me a way to connect and spend time together. We talk debate all the time; (to the occasional annoyance of my very patient and understanding wife) sharing case ideas, strategies, and stories. By his junior year, Fritz's debate skills had far exceeded mine and I couldn't be more proud. He has qualified for Nationals all three years, and this year was district champion in two events. This fall I have moved to Los Osos High School in Rancho Cucamonga, California where I have started another new NFL chapter in the hopes of bringing the benefits of high school forensics to more students.



Erik Pielstick
Claremont, CA
Coach - Los Osos High School and NFL Member since 1980



Nick is a recent graduate from Northwestern University. While attending, he was a member of the sketch comedy Improv group Mee-Ow and the long form improv group The Titanic Players. He also performed in and co-directed Griffin's Tale and the professional wrestling sensation Wrestlepocalypse. He can now be seen performing with the Striking Viking Story Pirates in New York City Story. Pirates is a non-profit children's theater company that takes stories written by kids and adapts them into sketches and songs to perform. They also do lots of creative writing workshops to encourage creativity in kids and celebrate their imaginations.

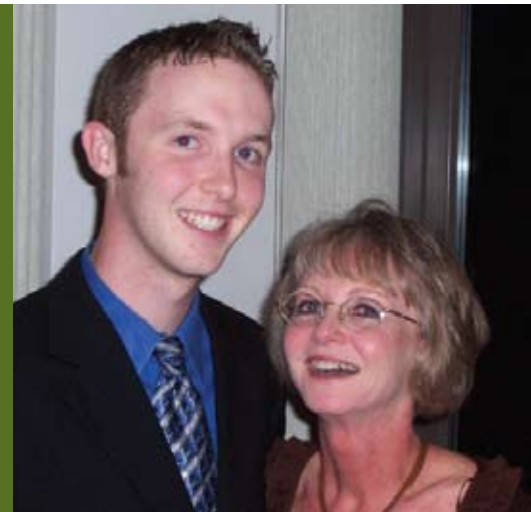
"I am proud to be and I am indeed a legacy. Both of my grandfathers and my father were active members of the NFL. My grandfather David Kanellis is a NFL hall-of-fame coach. He coached at Iowa City West High School (the same high school that I went to) and made the school a national powerhouse. My father also competed for West High and had great success in Oratory and Prose Poetry, and then also helped me to win a National Championship in Humorous Interpretation my Junior year. Speaking of that, my other grandfather, Bob Ray, also won a National Championship in Humorous Interpretation his Junior year. I always thought it was cool that we both won a National Championship in the same event at the same age."

Nick Kanellis
Iowa City West High School
2003

Humility. Service. Since 1925.

My parents were HDA partners in high school and Duo partners in college. This happened at Belleville (East) high school and Belleville Area College, now called Southwestern Illinois College. They attended NFL's their Senior year. Also, they went to Phi Rho Pi and placed gold with the script, "Tartuffe." I am 21 years old now and have been out of high school at Belleville (West) for a few years now. I am about to start my Junior year at Illinois State University. I chose to attend that school because of their strong forensics program. I am starting my 7th year of forensics and I am studying Communication Education so I can be a speech coach for a high school someday and eventually work on an NFL committee. If it were not for my speech team and the NFL, I might not be alive today. This activity literally changed my life and existence on this planet.

Clayton Sanders
Belleville West High School, IL
2006



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Moving?

Before you move, be sure to change your address so you'll continue to receive the Alumni Connection. Just send your updated information to Heidi Christensen at hschristensen@nflonline.org or call 920-748-6206.

Alumni News

Do you have news to share? New job? New addition to the family or just a great story about being a NFL alumnus? Please send those stories in! We'd love to hear from you. Just send your stories directly to Heidi Christensen at hschristensen@nflonline.org

Holiday Shopping

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As always, we want to hear from you - if you have new merchandise suggestions, please contact Andrea Neitzel at 920-748-6206 or e-mail andrea@nflonline.org