

# Honors debates hone students' verbal skills

By Cindy Blount

"Only a mother can teach her daughter to be a woman," declared Dorothy Hager during the Honors Program debate competition, held Jan. 21 in Johnson Hall, "and only a father can teach his son to be a man."

Hager's comments came in support of her argument that sexual orientation should be a factor in considering parents' qualifications for adoption of children. She was arguing against allowing homosexual couples to adopt a child. "A child in a home with two homosexual women or men would become a social misfit," argued Hager. A child raised in such an environment, she continued, "would be confused about their sex."

Despite Hager's arguments, the Freshmen lost the debate to the sophomore class. The judges were SGA President Miguel Purvis, Sheldon Lynch, a senior and Joe Porter, a junior.

Debate contestants were judged on organization and delivery, analysis of the resolution, argumentation and proof, refutation and rebuttal and cross examination skills.

Sophomore class team members were Nikki Etheridge, Tysain Bryant, Wyvondalynn Gilchrist and Karen Felton. Freshmen were Wanda Parham, Carlton Eley,

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Andrea Cox and Dorothy Hager.

Sophomore team member, Nikki Etheridge went into the debate with no apprehensions at all, but "ready to redeem herself from the loss of the debate her freshman year."

Etheridge learned from her freshman year to be aggressive but not rude, convincing the audience that she believed in what she was debating regardless of her personal beliefs.

The second honors debate will be held February 18, 1992 at 2:00 pm in Johnson Hall. The topic for debate to be resolved is "It is Unfair to Create Exclusive Schools for Inner-City Afro-American Men."

Debate topics, coaching and presentation are "All student directed and motivated," said Dr. Carol Jones, Director of the Honors Program. "I'm pleased that the students can use their own ideas and discretion in carrying out the debate," she added. "It helps them to conduct research, do some critical thinking and

adaptive reasoning; and certainly it taps on to their communication skills, their ability to write and read and to speak well."

Designed to challenge students with above average academic ability, ECSU's Honors Program offers an accelerated academic program which includes a colloquium, a senior thesis and special honors classes which are rigorous and demanding, according to Jones.

"The Senior thesis is a representation of graduate school research, therefore I gained preparation for graduate school from the Honors Program," explained Rodney Moore, a Senior English News Media major.

Senior Lisa Newell describes the Honors Program as a positive experience, "helping her to build character."

ECSU has 84 students in it's Honor's Program.

To stay in the Honors Program, students must maintain a cumulative 3.0

grade point average. According to the departmental brochure, the Honors program is specifically designed to ensure that by graduation students will display exceptional proficiency in the command of both oral and written communication skills, acquire a knowledge base which exceeds that of the average student and develop self-discipline and self-restraint both in character and in academic endeavors..."

Freshmen requirements for admission include a "B" average for four years of high school and a satisfactory SAT score. Additional criteria include: The successful completion of an interview with the director, teachers' recommendations and departmental placement tests.

ECSU students who are not in the Honors Program may be admitted to honors sections if space is available, with approval from the director of the Honors Program and the Director of the Division of General Studies.

ECSU graduates of the Honors Program have gone on to attend graduate schools including UNC-Chapel Hill, Ohio State and the University of Minnesota. Past graduates of the honors program currently hold jobs in the public school system, at NASA, in Spellman College in Atlanta, GA and in the United States Army.



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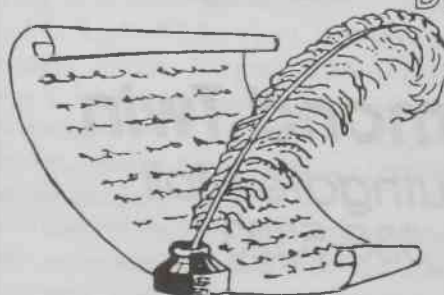
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