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**District Student of the Year Nomination [Madison Cousins]**

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**National Speech & Debate Association** <info@speechanddebate.org>

Thu, Jan 25, 2018 at 1:33 PM

Reply-To: info@speechanddebate.org

To: jrankin@bettendorf.k12.ia.us

Hi Joe,

Below is a nomination for District Student of the Year submitted by Maggie Rietz for consideration by your District Committee. A copy of this form has also been sent to the national office.

If you have any questions about the nomination process, please email [info@speechanddebate.org](mailto:info@speechanddebate.org).

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**Coach Information****Nominating Coach**

Maggie Rietz

**Nominating Coach Email**[rietzm@davenportschools.org](mailto:rietzm@davenportschools.org)**School**

Davenport West

**State**

Iowa

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**District Information****District**

East Iowa (IA)

**District Chair Name**

Joe Rankin

**District Chair Email**[jrankin@bettendorf.k12.ia.us](mailto:jrankin@bettendorf.k12.ia.us)

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**Student Information****Student Name**

Madison Cousins

**Grad Year**

2018

**Academic Achievements**

GPA	/ out of (scale)	Weighted (Yes/No)	AP (Yes/No)	IB Certificate(s) (Yes/No)	IB Diploma (Yes/No)	Cambridge (Yes/No)
3.907	4.0	No	Yes	No	No	No

**Merit Points**

Total years of speech/debate experience (include this school year)	Debate Points	Speech Points	Congress Points	Service Points	District Points	National Points
5	75	138	66	0	57	37

List the top three speech and debate achievements of which this student is most proud.

Year	Tournament/Organization and Event	Place/Honor
2017	Districts, Informative Speaking	National Qualifier
2017	Iowa City Classic, Informative Speaking	2nd place
2015	Bettendorf Bulldog Invitational, Informative Speaking	3rd place

## Essay from Nominating Coach

### Student's Disposition Toward Speech/Debate and Exhibition of Code of Honor Tenets

Madison Cousins is exactly the leader the world needs to make a difference; she is the perfect representative for East Iowa Senior of the Year. In the 2016-17 school year, Madison wrote her Informative speech about the inequality of funding in Iowa school districts to bring more awareness to the problem, and she qualified to Nationals and expanded to how funding differs across the nation. But it didn't stop there. Madison has made it her mission to help bring change to Iowa to ensure that all districts receive the same funding, even though as a senior now, it will not impact her own education, because she knows how important the issue is. Madison founded Davenport West's "Worth-Less" committee and organized teachers and students to contact legislators, has led multiple Get On The Bus lobbying days to Des Moines, is a student representative on the DCSD legislative affairs committee, has lobbied at meetings with Governor Branstad and Governor Reynolds, and has met with local legislators to help bring change to our schools.

It still doesn't stop there. Madison wants to make sure the public is well aware of the issue, so she wrote a guest column for the Quad-City Times, spoke on public radio and a podcast, and presented at a conference to city leaders and NAACP, LULAC, John Deere, Arconic, the QC Chambers to help convince large local employers to get behind the movement. The skills she has gained and improved on through speech and debate competition helped Madison have the confidence and poise needed to impress these community leaders in her presentations. The research she has done has made her a well-informed citizen, understanding the issue far better than many, even those in the legislature.

Beyond her activities in the Worth-Less campaign, Madison is very active in school and in the community. She is on the swim team at West, and qualified for State twice in the medley relay, holding a school record in the 200 medley relay, and she actively competes for a club swim team. She's on the board of directors for Spanish Club, treasurer of ecology club, a Junior Rotarian, a section leader in orchestra, and a participant in the Southeast Iowa Honors Orchestra. Madison spearheaded a Dash Out Hunger fundraiser at West, raising \$2000. In the community, Madison mobilized a student group for the annual Water Party for Empower Tanzania to raise money to build and repair wells. She actively participates in church to help raise money for a sister parish in Haiti. She works as a lifeguard in the summer. Even though she keeps very busy in school and in the community, Madison maintains a 3.90 GPA, taking as many AP classes as possible, and is a National Honor Society member.

I have no doubt that Madison Cousins will continue remain active in the community, using the skills she has developed in speech and debate, to enact positive change in society. Madison is the perfect candidate for Senior of the Year.