

Bill of Rights Institute Announces Student Finalists for Overseas Debate Program

Twelve high school students will head to London in November to challenge UK peers in civil debate

ARLINGTON, VA, UNITED STATES, April 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Bill of Rights Institute, a national leader in civics and history education, announced today that twelve students were selected to participate in [Debating Matters: Transatlantic](#), a five-day in-person program in London which takes place November 11-15, 2026.

The Institute is partnering with UK-based organization [Debating Matters](#) to bring together high school students from the United States and the United Kingdom to build their civil discourse skills and debate issues facing both nations.

“

These students have demonstrated the best of civic engagement and civil dialogue.”

Gerald Gangaram, Vice President, Student Programs

The US finalists were chosen from a group of 50 students nationwide who competed in a rigorous selection process which included virtual coaching sessions, practice debates, peer feedback, and a debate qualifier.

During the qualifying round, students debated whether the US Congress has delegated too much or too little authority to the Executive branch to use military force.

In London, finalists will debate topics related to digital surveillance, Artificial Intelligence, NATO, and free speech.

“Participating in this program changed the way I approach disagreement by helping me see it as an opportunity to understand different perspectives rather than something to avoid. Through

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debates and discussions, I learned how to actively listen, analyze opposing viewpoints, and respond thoughtfully instead of emotionally,” finalist Arianna Oropeza remarked during the qualifying round.

The US finalists for Debating Matters: Transatlantic are listed below:

- Angel Song, Harvard-Westlake School, Los Angeles, CA
- Arianna Oropeza, iPrep Academy North, Miami, FL
- Ayesha Mohammad, Owen J. Roberts High School, Pottstown, PA
- Catherine Hu, Mount Olive High School, Flanders, NJ
- Deepa Dhandapani, Brookfield East High School, Brookfield, WI
- Ethan Brough, Logos Classical Academy of Northern Virginia, Lorton, VA
- Lillian Allison, North Andover High School, North Andover, MA
- Makayla Sinkler-Dunn, Appomattox Regional Governor’s School, Petersburg, VA
- Marlee Schoen, Canyon Springs High School, North Las Vegas, NV
- Nimca Cabdullahi, American Leadership Academy, Gilbert, AZ
- Ronald Hart III, St. Albans School, Washington, D.C.
- Tyler Fisher, Terra Environmental Research Institute, Miami, FL

“These students have demonstrated the best of civic engagement and civil dialogue,” Bill of Rights Institute Vice President of Student Programs Gerald Gangaram said. “We’re thrilled to have the opportunity to help students at home and across the pond exchange ideas, become open to others’ opinions, and grow as citizens.”

Debating Matters: Transatlantic is possible thanks to the generous investment of [Carnegie Corporation of New York](#).

The Bill of Rights Institute is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that teaches civics and history through market-leading curricula and educational programs for teachers and students. To learn more about Bill of Rights Institute programs and resources, visit www.mybri.org.

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