

Michigan Speech Coaches, Inc.

For immediate release

Contact: John W. Rutherford

Phone: 248-495-0998

E-mail: jwrtheatre@gmail.com

Photo: available upon request

Michigan Speech Coaches Incorporated Coach of the Year

Mackinac Island, Michigan – May 18, 2019 – Red geraniums, white tulips and America’s longest porch served as the backdrop of a crowning achievement for Grass Lake High School teacher Amy Janz as she was awarded the MSCI Forensic Coach of the Year. The Coach of the Year awards take place each year in conjunction with the Michigan Speech Coaches Incorporated (MSCI) Mackinac Conference and Tournament. The annual awards ceremony was held this year Saturday, May 18, 2019 as the culminating event to a weekend that celebrated all that was great about speech activities in the State of Michigan at the beautifully historic Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island.

After a weekend filled with speech, interpretation, and debate competitions, as well as professional development seminars, the conference ended with a special awards ceremony in the theater of the Grand Hotel.

Approximately seven hundred audience members, consisting of MSCI board members, parents, students and alumni, were on hand to celebrate the award and applaud Janz for her outstanding achievement.

Amy Janz is a teacher and forensic coach at Grass Lake High School, which is part of Grass Lake Community Schools in Grass Lake, MI. The address for the school is:

Grass Lake High School
11500 Warrior Trail
Grass Lake, MI 49240

In presenting the award to Janz, Ms. Ruth Kay, Treasurer for MSCI, praised Mrs. Janz for her outstanding direction and talent for nurturing the forensic students of Grass Lake High School. Each year her students learn the “ins and outs” of forensic competition, and they regularly perform at a level of excellence. Mrs. Janz has instilled in her students the value of making constant improvements and work to be the best that they can be.

When asked to describe how she felt when she was presented the award she said, “Utter shock would be how I would describe my reaction. When I see the names of past recipients, it is such an honor to be listed among them. I am truly humbled at this recognition and the words of both my nominator and Ruth Kay's presentation.”

Janz went on to say, “It's common knowledge that communication skills are a key attribute to anyone's success, and speech activities foster so many attributes of good communication: poise, confidence, empathy, analysis, creativity, and so much more. Over the years, I have watched students of varying natural performance ability conquer fear and anxiety to achieve personal success whether that be a trophy or a simple knowing that they achieved *their* personal best. Students grow in their own ability to analyze a topic or a character or a read a room or judges' comments and creatively adjust their performance. As a team, they grow in their ability to support their teammates' through constructive criticism or even hugs when needed. All that and its fun too . . . who can ask for anything more?”

Mrs. Janz's went to say, "Since high school, forensics has a played a huge part of my life and is definitely a passion. About three years after graduating high school, my former coach asked me to judge for her. I will never forget judging that first round. About five words into this student's performance I had this amazing feeling of "I'm back!" Forensics has a feeling, an energy that captures a person and just doesn't let go. So many of my past students who competed have expressed this same idea "forensics was the best part of high school." By coaching forensics, I get to be a part of so many students' "best part of high school," and for that I will always be thankful. To be recognized for contributing to that is both surreal and gratifying.

Janz was in excellent company on stage at the Grand Hotel Theatre. She received congratulations from MSCI President Mr. Chris Kuhlman and from fellow Coach of the Year recipients: Kirstin Carolin (Theatre Coach of the Year), Nate Ritzema (Assistant Coach of the Year), and Kevin Weinstein (Middle School Forensic Coach of the Year). To learn more about the Michigan Speech Coaches Incorporated visit, www.michiganspeechcoaches.org.

The Michigan Speech Coaches Incorporated serves approximately 8,200 students in 100 Member schools throughout the entire State of Michigan. The organization strives to be of service to our students, to our speech professionals, to our schools, to our larger communities through several conferences, activities, awards, scholarships and grants.