

NEWS RELEASE



Carla L. Jackson
Assoc. Dir. of ACC CPPPS
Desk: 223-7049
Cell: 789-8373
Cjackso3@austincc.edu
www.austincc.edu/cppps

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cooperative Programming at ACC wins CASE IV District Award for 2008 popular Student Constitution Debate Event

Austin, April 11, 2009 – Does the U.S. Constitution matter? Is there something in it you should be fighting for? For many, the Constitution inspires, inflames, and informs. It fuels passion, sparks political rhetoric, and creates controversy. On April 6, 2009, the annual ACC Constitution Debate program moved the judges of the [Council for Advancement and Support of Education \(Case\) IV District Conference](#) to give the hosts, [The Center for Public Policy & Political Studies](#) (a nonpartisan non-profit center), the Government Department, and the Social and Behavioral Sciences Division at ACC, an award. Together they won the silver for **Category 5: Best Student Program**. The ACC event beat out over 100 other District submissions. Peck Young, the Director of CPPPS attended the reception/awards ceremony to receive the coveted award.

The Constitution: It's the perfect topic for a debate.

At the 2008 ACC Constitution Debate, which was held on September 24 at ACC's Eastview campus, over 400 students, 15 facilitators, and 10 experts experienced the above emotions. Separate groups of students were given unique topics, which referred to different aspects of the Constitution, to discuss. Experts explained the case law behind each issue, and ACC facilitators got the conversations going and kept debates civil. The end purpose of the discussions was to have each group come up with majority and minority opinions that expressed the group's thinking about their issue. By the end of the evening, everyone had learned something new about the Constitution, about how to work together in a group on a complex issue, and about themselves.

“The Constitution is one of the most important documents in our history as well as in modern politics,” said Peck Young. “And, it is also probably the most debated document in our history.”

“In 2007, we had almost 200 participants. In 2008, we had 400 student attendees,” recalled Jeffrey Millstone, an instrumental part of the producing team and Government professor at ACC. “We are obviously tapping into a need of students to understand how the government, then and now, affects them, and how they can affect it back.”

The keynote speaker for the 2008 debate was Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement at the University of Texas. Dr. Vincent’s specialty was Constitutional law. His biography can be viewed at www.utexas.edu/diversity/about/bio.php.

The 2009 Debate will be held on September 23, beginning at 6:00 pm at the LBJ Library, 2313 Red River St. Austin, TX 78705. This event is free and open to ACC students, staff, and faculty. For more information, please contact Carla L. Jackson at cjackso3@austincc.edu or 512-223-7049.

###