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Operator's Daughter Lands Top Trophy for Speech, Now Preparing for Next Round

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(May 4, 2010) Public speaking seems to come naturally to Esther Maddox, the daughter of Div. 15 Bus Operator Charles Maddox.

In March, the high school freshman spent six minutes before a live audience talking about world leaders like Nelson Mandela and Winston Churchill, and was thrilled to learn that her presentation had earned her a first place trophy and \$200 in the National Management Association Leadership Speech Contest (NMA).

The contest was sponsored by the Lockheed Martin Leadership Association in conjunction with the NMA.

On April 28, Esther competed in another speaking round and this time she presented a five minute speech on women's rights and placed among three finalists. Now Esther is expected to battle it out in a final round on May 7 in Lancaster with the winner walking away with a \$1,000 savings bond.

"I'm nervous when I get in front of people, but she enjoys getting up and performing," her father said indicating that his daughter has also performed in plays.

In the first contest, Esther, who attends Students on Academic Rise (SOAR) High School in the Antelope Valley, competed against ten other high school students from the region. Area Toastmasters helped the students practice before the event and then judged the students on speech content and presentation.

Esther's father said she was well prepared for the event, since she has always been interested in public speaking, enjoying a broad range of presentations from the 2008 Presidential debates to UC TV programs.

"She's a 4.0 student and I'm really proud of her," he said.

Curious about the political arena, young Esther joined her mother at a presidential debate party during the election and shared her analysis of the event in an interview with a local paper.



Public speaking champ Esther Maddox, a freshman at SOAR High School in Antelope Valley, is the daughter of Div. 15 Bus Operator Charles Maddox.

Esther plans to attend Oxford University in England to study law and/or theater and, her father jokes, with all the money she's winning she could pay for her own education.

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