

## Delegates engaged after first day of College Debate 2016

College Debate 2016, a first-of-its-kind initiative created by Dominican University of California to provide college students from throughout the United States a platform to discuss and debate the complex issues facing our country, is already having an impact.

The opening day of the two-day workshop for 140 delegates from across the country featured award-winning filmmaker Julie Winokur presenting her documentary [Bring It to the Table](#). Following the screening, she talked with the delegates about bridging political divides, examining assumptions, and engaging in civil discourse to help move democracy forward.

“The film was excellent in distinguishing the difference listening and hearing,” said Logan Adams, a delegate from Lindsey Wilson School in Kentucky.

“It was great speaking in an environment that’s conducive to listening rather than arguing to try to get your point across,” said Rachel Arco, a delegate from Albuquerque, N.M. attending Southwestern University in Texas. “That is a lot healthier because you have time to think about your response and time to be thoughtful.”

Rachel, in fact, walked to downtown San Rafael with a group of delegates on the first day of [College Debate 2016](#). They engaged in meaningful dialogue over ice cream about a number of topics, including current transgender bathroom laws.

“We got involved in discussion even with members of this community who were sitting nearby who wanted to be involved in the conversation,” she said. “It was a pretty intense conversation for about 45 minutes with strangers in this ice cream shop and ourselves.”

College Debate 2016 is bringing together student delegates throughout the United States. Megan Currie, who lives in Connecticut, woke up at 3 a.m. Eastern time on Wednesday to fly to San Francisco.

“It was great event to kick off the program. It was something that you could get excited about,” said Megan, who completed her freshmen year at Bates College in Maine. “Personally – and I am guilty of this – I am drawn to the cycle of self-affirmation where you can pick the news you want. They tell you the facts you want to hear. You listen to the opinions you want to listen to and it further cements.

The goal of College Debate 2016 is promoting civil discourse, understanding responsible citizenry, and avoiding stereotypes and assumptions while focusing on the issues rather than party politics.

Using #CollegeDebate16 as an identifying tag on social media platforms, delegates will begin to engage each other and their networks. Following the June meeting, they will participate in online meet-ups, webinars, and other technology-mediated tools to expand the conversation.

Delegates will return to Dominican in September for a moderated town hall meeting, which will be live-streamed to campuses across the country. During the town hall, the students will agree on the key issues – and very specific questions – for the presidential candidates to address. These questions will be presented to the moderators of the 2016 presidential debates.

For more information, visit [collegedebate.org](http://collegedebate.org) or follow College Debate 2016 on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

*June 1, 2016*