

November 28, 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are writing to ask you to join us in contributing to the Jack Jenkins Debate Opportunity Fund, an endowed charitable fund of the Austin Community Foundation. Our contributions to this fund will help memorialize Jack, who tragically died last summer at age 17, and will help economically disadvantaged central Texas high school debaters in perpetuity.

This fund has been established by Jack's parents, Scott and Sarah Jenkins, to honor Jack's life and ideals. Jack was an avid and accomplished debater who lamented the fact that competitive debate was an expensive pursuit, limited to those whose families or schools could afford it. Debate inspired Jack during his high school years and provided him with a community of friends who, like Jack, believed in the importance of the free and open exchange of ideas fostered by debate.

The goal of the Jack Jenkins Debate Opportunity Fund is to reduce the economic barriers for high school students who demonstrate aptitude for debate but who are otherwise unable to participate meaningfully in competitive debate because they are financially disadvantaged. The Fund will support these students and enhance their debate skills by providing tournament fees and travel expenses, scholarships to university-sponsored debate camps, debate consultants to augment the preparation offered by local high schools, and computer equipment to assist students in their research and writing. We hope to find volunteer mentors, as well.

Scott and Sarah Jenkins have contributed the initial \$50,000 to start the Fund. We hope to raise an equal or greater amount. With an endowment of \$100,000, the Fund should generate interest of at least \$5,000 per year to contribute to debate programs. High school debate budgets are limited, particularly in the very schools at which families cannot afford to supplement the schools' budgets. There is no money available at Reagan, Lanier, Akins or Travis High Schools, for example, to send students to summer debate camps, which provide important training and experience for competitive debaters. Debaters whose parents or schools can afford debate camp, laptops on which to gather and store evidence, tournament entry fees and travel expenses, and tournament-appropriate clothing can fully participate in high school debate, while many debaters whose schools and families cannot afford these expenses are simply unable to participate at a competitive level. We hope to change this.

You may make a tax-deductible contribution by clicking [here](#) or you may mail a contribution to the Austin Community Foundation address above, noting that it is for the Jack Jenkins Debate Opportunity Fund. If you are willing to volunteer to be a mentor for an economically disadvantaged debater or debate team, please contact Jan Soifer at [jan@lasfirm.com](mailto:jan@lasfirm.com) or (512) 583-0451.

To learn more about Jack, you may visit these memorials: [WC Fish \(www.wcfish.com/\\_mgxroot/page\\_10780.php?id=450919\)](http://www.wcfish.com/_mgxroot/page_10780.php?id=450919) or the [Austin American-Statesman \(www.legacy.com/Statesman/Obituaries.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonID=93000833\)](http://www.legacy.com/Statesman/Obituaries.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonID=93000833)

Participation in competitive high school debate empowers students and prepares them to question ideas, to listen to one another, and to explore controversial topics openly and in the spirit of tolerance and cooperation. With your support, we will honor Jack's life by enabling other talented students to engage in this life-changing activity that Jack loved. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Austin Community Foundation or any of us.

Sincerely,

Ray Bonilla  
George & Edna Ramón  
Butts  
Michelle Cheng  
Ray Chester  
Sheryl & Kevin Cole  
Berry Crowley  
Craig Deats  
Martha Dickie  
Leslie Dippel  
Claude Ducloux  
Jeff Edwards  
Ed Fernandes

Lulu Flores  
Rick Freeman  
Ann Greenberg  
Patricia Hayes  
Chuck Herring  
Randy Howry  
Mary Keeney  
Frank King  
Paul Knisely  
Gary Lewis  
Elias Lorenzana  
Michael Marin  
Jo Ann Merica

Steve McConnico  
Mike McKetta  
Margaret Moore  
Bob O'Boyle  
Patrick J. O'Connell  
Robert Oliver  
Joe Parker  
Richard Peña  
Tom Prehoditch  
Velva Price  
Beverly Reeves  
Jeff Rose  
Steve Sather

Lance & Laura Sharp  
Jan Soifer  
Tim Sulak  
Gavin Villareal  
DeLaine Ward  
Kirk Watson  
Amy Welborn  
Bill Whitehurst  
Raymond Winter  
Todd Wong  
Gary Zausmer