

# SPEAKING BEARCATS OPEN SEASON WITH VICTORY

BOLIVAR, Mo. – In a season of virtual competition, the Southwest Baptist University [Speaking Bearcats](#) opened 2020-2021 with an overall sweepstakes victory in the Missouri Mule tournament on Oct. 16-17 at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg.

The Speaking Bearcats faced competition from 28 other colleges and universities in the online tournament, taking home top honors in overall and individual event sweepstakes. They also were named the top Pi Kappa Delta chapter in attendance.

Two of the four SBU teams reached the elimination rounds in public forum debate. Mariah Barber and Jessica Paxton were quarterfinalists, and shared that distinction with Kadie Thomas and Samantha Baldus, who also were quarterfinalists.

## More Missouri Mule results:

- **Jessica Paxton** – Pentathlon (second place); Dramatic interpretation (fourth place); Poetry (third place); Prose (fifth place)
- **Breanna Prater** – Persuasive speaking (second place)
- **Kadie Thomas** – Informative speaking (third place); Persuasive speaking (fourth place); Impromptu speaking (fifth place)
- **Evan Kirksey** – Persuasive speaking (champion); Informative speaking (second place); After-dinner speaking (fifth place); Impromptu speaking (sixth place)
- **Samantha Baldus** – Program of Oral Interpretation (fourth place)
- **Mariah Barber** – Program of Oral Interpretation (third place); Poetry (fifth place); Prose (sixth place)

The Speaking Bearcats are preparing for their next competition on Nov. 13-14. For more information about the team, please contact Director of Forensics [Dr. David Bailey](#) at [dbailey@SBUuniv.edu](mailto:dbailey@SBUuniv.edu).

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