



Syosset High School's winners from the NYS Forensic League Championship Tournament with Forensic Society adviser Lydia Esslinger.

## Syosset School District Honors

### Forensic team and middle school recognized

BY TRIBUNE STAFF

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Once again, the Syosset High School Forensics Society scored big at the New York State Forensic League Championship Tournament held at Hofstra University. The team won first place in the Speech events division, placed second in both the Debate events and Student Congress divisions and won the award for Best Overall in the state.

This year's team produced three individual state champions as well: Ronit Dhulia (Lincoln/Douglas debate-novice level); the team of Jahnvi Arora and Aram Moghaddassi (Lincoln/Douglas debate-varsity level) and Iree Mann (Oral Interpretation-varsity level).

According to Syosset Forensics Society adviser Lydia Esslinger, students qualify for the state competition either through a consistently good showing during the academic year or at a regional qualifying competition. Eighty students from Syosset High School's team qualified for the championship this year, capturing numerous placement awards in addition to the state champion trophies. Syosset Forensics also remains a top debate team in the country, holding its position among the top 1 percent and consistently ranking in the top 10, overall.

The team is also sending a large number of students to two major national tournaments. Twenty-three students qualified for the National Catholic Forensic League Grand

National Tournament to be held in Louisville, KY later this month, while 12 qualified for the National Speech and Debate Association National Tournament to be held in Birmingham, AL in June. Esslinger will be honored there with the Eighth-Degree Diamond Award as a member of the NSDA Honor Society whose teams have earned at least 22,000 points.

H.B. Thompson Middle School has also been named a "No Place for Hate" school by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). ADL's No Place for Hate initiative identifies schools and communities who demonstrate a long-term commitment to combating bias, bullying and hatred while leading initiatives for creating and maintaining

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## New Rabbi Installed

BY JO-ANN HERTZMAN

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On Sunday, May 21, congregants, clergy, local politicians and members of the community attended the installation ceremony of Rabbi Moshe P. Weisblum. The festivities were enjoyed by 200 attendees.

Congregation Beth Tikvah (CBT) is a conservative egalitarian synagogue, located near the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway, on Woodbine Avenue in Wantagh. Congregants proudly welcomed Weisblum to the community. He will serve as spiritual leader of approximately 300 families. Weisblum was born in Sedei Ya'akov, Israel and is a 14th-generation rabbi. For the past 15 years, he has led Congregation Kneseth Israel in Annapolis, MD. Weisblum is available to assist any individual in all matters pertaining to Judaism and personal concerns.

CBT has gone through a number of major changes since it formed through the consolidation of Wantagh Jewish Center with Farmingdale Jewish Center and the Israel Community Center of Levittown. CBT's membership includes congregants from Wantagh and the immediate surrounding areas of Levittown, Seaford, Plainedge, Merrick, Bellmore, Massapequa, Bethpage, East Meadow and Freeport, as well as Farmingdale, Melville, Islip, Woodbury, Syosset and Plainview.

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