This last weekend, February 23 – 25, Saddleback College’s Speech and Debate Team competed at the 2018 Pacific Southwest Collegiate Forensics Association’s Regional Championship Tournament, hosted by Long Bach College. Competition was stiff at the tournament – one of the largest of its type in the nation – as community colleges and four year universities from across California and Arizona came together to compete in a multitude of events. Saddleback College carried on its tradition of standing strong, with its coach and Co-Director of Forensics, Shawn O’Rourke reporting, “The students worked hard and it paid off. Naturally we are always looking for ways to improve, but considering this a rebuilding year for the program, we couldn’t be prouder of everyone.”

Winning awards were:

Mason Knittle – 2nd Place, Novice Prose.
Katy Schofield – 3rd Place, Novice Prose.
Matt Paradee – Finalist, Junior Persuasion.
Chris Russo – 2nd Place, Open Dramatic Interpretation.

Coach, Heidi Ochoa, echoed Shawn’s enthusiasm, stating, “This is always an interesting tournament. Many of our newer competitors were bumped up to the higher divisions in order to get them some practice in preparation for our state and national tournaments. Some of our competitors, who are in their first year of competing, were going against students from other schools who have been in the activity for years. It can lead to less impressive results sometimes, but it is a necessary part of the process. To beat the best, you have to compete against the best.”

The team is now preparing for its State Championship Tournament that will be held in Sacramento next week. We wish them well as they prepare for this important test for the team!