



MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2014

*Brought to you by the
Carolina Center for Civic Education and the NCAJ Mock Trial Committee
"Investing in our future, creating tomorrow's leaders"*

NORTH CAROLINA TO HOST NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP IN MAY 2015!

*By M. Gordon Widenhouse, Jr.
CCCE President*

As President of the Carolina Center for Civic Education (CCCE) and a long-time participant in high school mock trials in North Carolina, I am excited North Carolina will host the National High School Mock Trial Championship on May 14-16, 2015, in Raleigh. Make that excited with a healthy dose of anxiety.



As anyone who has attended the national finals will attest, and anyone intimately associated with North Carolina's excellent hosting of the finals in Charlotte in 2005 knows, this undertaking is quite significant. The competition includes four preliminary rounds of trials on Friday and



Saturday at the Wake County Justice Center, followed by a final trial on Saturday to determine the national champion. Each trial requires a presiding judge and three lawyers to score the participants, as well as a courtroom monitor. The judges and lawyers must have previous mock trial experience. Assuming 48 teams participate, which is the average for the past several years, each of the four rounds will involve at least 96 judges/ lawyers, as well as 24 courtroom monitors and other volunteer staff. It is a sizable production.

If you know now that would be willing to serve as a presiding judge or scoring juror on Friday, May 15 or Saturday, May 16, 2015 (or both), please email me at mgwidenhouse@gmail.com. I will make sure you are on our master list.

The event includes several significant activities aside from the trials themselves. The weekend gets off to an exciting start with the eagerly anticipated "pin exchange" on Thursday evening, at which the students meet each other and trade souvenirs representative of their home state. After the first two preliminary



rounds, students can relax by taking part in a scavenger hunt in downtown Raleigh on Friday evening. Also on Friday evening, a fine reception will be held to thank our participating judges and lawyers, most likely at Campbell Law School. The weekend comes to a close with a dessert social on Saturday at the Raleigh Convention Center, where numerous attorney and witness awards are presented along with the crowning of the 2015 National Champion.

I would be remiss if I did not emphasize how critical, if not essential, it is for states to serve as host of the national finals. If a state does not come forward to host, the national championship might well cease to exist. The National Board does not have the financial resources or the “person power” necessary to handle the championship. For those of us who believe in a strong civic education program like we have in North Carolina, including the high school mock trial program

we have run for the past twenty-two years (in which hundreds of judges, lawyers, and legal professionals along with countless high school students participate every year), there exists a duty to step up and take on this enormous challenge.

I am extremely pleased to have a very impressive National Advisory Committee composed of Justice Robert H. Edmunds, Jr., Justice Paul M. Newby, retired Justice Patricia Timmons-Goodson, Cumberland County Superior Court Judge Mary Ann Tally, Wake County Clerk of Superior Court the Honorable N. Lorrin Freeman, Representative Richard B. Glazier, Campbell Law Dean J. Rich Leonard, Janet Ward Black, Rebecca J. Britton, Hampton Y. Dellinger, NCAJ CEO Richard N. Taylor, and Melvin F. Wright, Jr., Chair of the Chief Justice’s Committee on Professionalism (as well as me).

Justice Newby has agreed to assist as an author the of the competition case. We have a concept we believe will be both historically instructive and intellectually challenging.

We are in the process of organizing committees to work on various aspects of the competition. A number of people are already lined up for various "boots on the ground" work, including Adrienne Blocker, Lindsey Granados, Sue Johnson, Carlos Mahoney, Rich Manger, Chris Nichols, Katy Parker, Christine and Justin Scheef, and Mark Sumwalt. Some of the sub-committees will include judge and volunteer recruiting, social event planning, tournament logistics, and fundraising.

All help is welcome! If you are willing to roll up your sleeves and pitch in, please contact me at mgwidenhouse@gmail.com and I will put you in touch with the person handling whatever aspect of the competition in which you would like to be involved.

We also need to raise funds. Our working budget is \$165,000.00. If you know of potential donors or are in a position to contribute, I would welcome your input and assistance. From time to time, we are called upon to give of our time, energy, and resources for those things that are important. This is one of those times. I look forward to your participation and your support. See you in Raleigh next year!

CALENDAR 2013 – 2014 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

National Championship – Madison, WI
CCCE Chapel Hill Summer Camp
CCCE Asheville Summer Camp
CCCE Fayetteville Summer Camp

Thursday – Sunday, May 8-11, 2014
Wednesday – Saturday, June 25-28, 2014
Wednesday – Saturday, July 9-12, 2014
Wednesday – Saturday, July 30-Aug. 2, 2014

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013 – 2014 OUTREACH PROGRAM SPONSORS!

Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company of North Carolina
North Carolina Lawyers Weekly

MORE SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT IS NECESSARY to fully realize the goals of our outreach program. If you can join us in this important mission, please contact Sue at SueHeathJohnson@gmail.com or CCCE Vice-President Rebecca Britton at rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013 – 2014 COMPETITION SPONSORS!

State Finals: Rudolf Widenhouse & Fialko
Asheville: Melrose, Seago & Lay, P.A.
Charlotte: The Sumwalt Law Firm
Durham: The Law Offices of James Scott Farrin
Fayetteville: Britton Law, P.A.
Greenville: Hardee & Hardee, LLP
High Point: Crumley Roberts, LLP
Raleigh: Twiggs Strickland & Rabenau, P.A.
Wilmington: Shipman & Wright, LLP

CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW - partnering with CCCE to host our State Finals!

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

Special thanks to Mock Trial Committee Members and Regional Coordinators who served for the 2013-2014 season: Mark Melrose (Asheville Regional Coordinator), Frances Knox and Paul Goodson (Charlotte Regional Coordinators), Russell Johnson and Robert Jessup (Durham Regional Coordinators), Philip Entzminger (Greenville Regional Coordinator), Rich Manger (High Point Regional Coordinator), Christine Scheef and Lindsey Granados (Raleigh Regional Coordinators), John H. Anderson, Jr., (Wilmington Regional Coordinator), Ken Campbell, Sheila Chavis, Laura Jenkins, Carlos Mahoney, Chris Nichols, John O'Neal, Katy Parker, Mark Sumwalt, and Kim Vukovich.

Special thanks also to our Site Coordinators who served at Regionals in the 2013-2014 season! Asheville: Cindy Bryson, Charlotte: Beverly K. Moore, Durham: Patti Clapper and Lakisha Chichester, Fayetteville: Elizabeth Owens, Greenville: Kristin Miller; High Point: Karen Parrish, Raleigh: Fran LaFrankie and Michelle Keely, Wilmington: Brandy Jo Lea.

*****If you are interested in learning more about the NCAJ High School Mock Trial program, please contact Sue Johnson, Program Coordinator, at sueheathjohnson@gmail.com, or Rebecca Britton or Gordon Widenhouse, Mock Trial Committee Co-Chairs, at rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com or mgwidenhouse@yahoo.com.***