



MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2013

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

THE ONLY WAY TO WIN

By Sue H. Johnson

CCCE Mock Trial Program Coordinator

The new mock trial season is about to begin! Students and teachers excitedly await the release of the new materials on September 3rd, and teams will soon be devising their case theory and assigning roles. Expectations will run high as students invest untold hours in case preparation. Teams will look forward to showcasing their talents at Regionals in February, hoping to earn the right to compete at State Finals in March. Such striving for excellence is exciting and appropriate—as long as teams keep the bigger picture in mind: a successful season will depend less upon the results of the ballots than upon the character the students develop along the way.

In his book *The Only Way to Win*, Jim Loehr, performance psychologist and co-founder of the Human Performance Institute (HPI), argues that “building character drives higher achievement and greater fulfillment in business and life.” We’ve all seen athletes, businessmen, and others who have sacrificed their integrity for a short-term “win,” only to find that the actions that they thought would lead to happiness proved unsatisfying and even destructive in the end. As Mr. Loehr explains, “Achieving society’s goals can often leave you feeling empty . . . and *not* achieving society’s goals can leave you feeling empty, too.” But if you focus on building character in the activities you undertake, you will truly win.



The Human Performance Institute sponsors an elite tennis academy for young athletes. On their first day of training, the students are told the foundational principle at the academy: “We use the demands and stress of elite tennis to most importantly help you become strong, resilient people of great character. We care about your tennis but we care more about who you are becoming because of tennis. . . . Every day represents another opportunity to grow in self-control, respect for others, persistence, positivity and trustworthiness. No matter how far you go as a player, if you use tennis to strengthen character, tennis will always be a priceless gift.”

Just as with competitive tennis, mock trials (and “real” trials, for that matter) present an opportunity to respond to stressful situations by developing great character. Teams that recognize this truth will end the season as winners, regardless of the outcome of the ballots at regional competition. By pursuing excellence with integrity—whether students eventually become doctors or attorneys, teachers or entrepreneurs, stay-at-home parents or scientists—their participation in mock trial will indeed be a priceless gift to them and to those whom they impact throughout their lives.

MOCK TRIAL PROGRAM FEATURED IN STATE BAR JOURNAL!

By Sue H. Johnson

CCCE Mock Trial Program Coordinator

Each year attorneys all across North Carolina devote countless hours to the statewide mock trial program. Scores of legal professionals mentor hundreds of students by serving as team attorney advisors, explaining the nuances of courtroom decorum and the Rules of Evidence. Over 350 additional attorneys share their expertise with students by serving as Presiding Judges and scoring jurors at our eight regional competitions in early February and State Finals in March. Why do so many busy professionals invest their time in our students in this way? They do it because the experience enriches their lives as much as it benefits the students.



The June issue of the North Carolina State Bar *Journal* describes the impact of the mock trial program on students, teachers, and legal professionals. As CCCE President M. Gordon Widenhouse explains, “The mock trial experience is a wonderful way to enhance the public awareness and perception of the judicial system and the right to a trial by jury. Watching the program grow and hearing the students, teachers, and parents express the difference it makes in their lives is most gratifying.”

Student Richard He, recipient of the 2013 Widenhouse Award for Inspirational Team Leadership, can attest to the impact of the mock trial program. In his award application, Richard He wrote, “My three years in mock trial have transformed me not only into an effective and responsive leader, but also into a citizen with a broader appreciation for the American legal system and a strong interest in pursuing a career in law.”

Teacher coach Nema Patel at Garinger High School in Charlotte has experienced the program both as a student and as a team advisor. As he recounts in the *Journal*, “Without the leadership I picked up as a high school competitor, I can say without a doubt my life would be significantly different. . . . I attribute many of my victories, both on a large scale and small, to the mock trial program. Moving forward, I encourage every coach, every attorney advisor, and every parent to make the most of this brilliant program!”

We at the CCCE wholeheartedly agree! To read the full story and learn why you should become involved in our mock trial program, download the article on our website at <http://ncmocktrial.org/blog/2013/05/mock-trial-program-impacts-lives>. Article reprinted with permission of the North Carolina State Bar.

FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERS: CCCE CHAPEL HILL SUMMER CAMP TEAM MENTOR

Carolina Mock Trial President **Matt Burke** served as a volunteer team mentor at our Chapel Hill mock trial camp, guiding one of the teams in our Advanced track. Matt describes his reasons for investing in our students: “I like to think of UNC Chapel Hill as that place where I get to take classes while I do mock trial. Whenever I’m able to share my love for the program and my knowledge with new mockers, I jump at the chance. The CCCE summer camp provided me with just such an opportunity. I’ve served as a team captain each year since I joined Carolina Mock Trial, so I saw the mentor role at the camp as just giving me another team to captain.

“What woke me up around 8:00 A.M. each morning to mentor my team was not the coffee served at breakfast, but my students’ enthusiasm and drive to improve their mock trial skills (though the coffee probably didn’t hurt). After the first day of work in the breakout sessions, my students would come to me constantly throughout the day with new ideas on the case problem. That skill – finding new ways to think about the set of facts you’re given – translates to success in so many other areas. That’s not even mentioning the obvious improvements in public speaking, confidence, and attention to detail that come from practicing mock trial. I don’t expect that every student who attended this camp will go on to have a legal career, but that doesn’t mean their time spent ‘mocking’ was wasted. I view my time mentoring as a worthwhile investment in these students’ lives for their benefit and the benefit of the growing mock trial community.” *Matt Burke, Carolina Mock Trial President, UNC Class of 2014 Philosophy/PPE*



Matt Burke (second row on far right) poses with his team of students at the Chapel Hill Mock Trial camp

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013-14 OUTREACH PROGRAM SPONSOR!

Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company of North Carolina

We still need more sponsorship support to fully realize the goals of our outreach program. If you can join us in this important outreach, please contact Sue at SueHeathJohnson@gmail.com or CCCE Vice-President Rebecca Britton at rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013-14 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: TBD
Raleigh: Twiggs Strickland & Rabenau, P.A.
Wilmington: Shipman & Wright, LLP

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

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

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

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

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