



MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER

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STATE CHAMPS EXCEL AT NATIONALS

*By Susan H. Johnson, MPH
CCCE Program Coordinator*



On May 12 – 14, 2016, 46 teams of excited high school students took part in the 2016 National High School Mock Trial Championship in Boise, ID – including the 3-time NC state champions, the Central Carolina Homeschoolers. Boise welcomed the nearly 1,000 competitors and supporters with open arms, putting on a wonderful event showcasing their lovely city.

To adjust to the time zone, our NC team arrived on Tuesday May 10, giving them ample opportunity to scrimmage other teams and enjoy exploring the state capital, Boise greenbelt pathway along the river, and other local attractions. As sophomore Caitlin Kelly remarked, “Nationals was the perfect ending to my sophomore year. I really enjoyed working with my teammates, facing some talented competitors, and meeting other dedicated mockers from around the nation. Plus, Boise is a gorgeous city, which added a lot to the whole experience.”

The Nationals mock trial case was quite educational, revolving around a civil dispute between a cattle rancher and sheep herder of Basque heritage (mimicking actual events in Idaho history). On Thursday, students had a chance to mingle with and meet their peers while experiencing Basque culture at the “Pin Exchange.” During this event, held at the Basque Block, participants enjoyed delicious Basque delicacies such as paella and marveled over a demonstration of Basque traditional dancing, all while trading

memorabilia from their home state or territory. It was a fun-filled way to make new friends prior to the start of the trial rounds the following day.

Our North Carolina team faced strong opponents in every round: Pennsylvania, Northern Mariana Islands, Mississippi, and Florida. They argued for the defense on both Saturday rounds and on behalf of the plaintiff on Sunday. Coach Alice Boyette observed after the event, “We were proud to represent NC at the 2016 National High School Mock Trial Championship in Boise, Idaho, in May. The CCH team members competed in each round to the best of their abilities. The attorneys argued objections with confidence, thought quickly on their feet and delivered well-reasoned openings and closings. The witnesses were believable and held up well under some tough crosses.”



And the team’s hard work and strong efforts paid off, as they won three of their four rounds (8 of 12 ballots), finishing 8th out of 46 teams! In addition, senior Sarah Boyette earned recognition as one of the top ten Outstanding Attorneys in the entire competition!



Reflecting on her experiences after returning home, Sarah Boyette summarized her mock trial “career” as follows: “In 2013, I competed at my first nationals as a freshman opening for the plaintiff, and our team placed 8th. In 2016, I competed at my fourth nationals as a senior closing for both the plaintiff and the defense and our team placed 8th, and I received a “top 10” attorney award. Even though the results sound similar, I am a much different person than I was as a freshman. Because of mock trial, I have improved confidence, public speaking skills, and reasoning abilities. My mock trial teammates have been my best friends. Mock trial has been

the highlight of my high school years!”

Congratulations to Sarah and all the members of our 2016 state champions, the Central Carolina Homeschoolers! We are proud of your success and happy to have played a role in providing you with this outstanding educational opportunity. Our best wishes accompany all the seniors as you embark on new adventures – and we look forward to welcoming the others back in the fall!

MOCK TRIAL INSTILLS LIFE-LONG LESSONS FOR MOREHEAD WINNER!

By Kunal Lodaya

NC School of Science and Math, Durham, N.C.



Editor's note: While most students who participate in mock trial do not intend to pursue law as a career, they all benefit tremendously from the skills that mock trial develops –analytical reasoning, persuasive communication, teamwork, leadership—and the increased self-confidence that results. Keep reading to learn about yet another mock trial program participant who learned important life skills through mock trial.

My introduction to Mock Trial was a rather unexpected one; I was never particularly interested in pursuing law, and I didn't enjoy public speaking too much. When I entered Chapel Hill High School, music was my singular extracurricular focus. I knew I wanted to get involved with wind ensemble, marching band, pit orchestra, or anything else that would let me play the drums. Joining Mock Trial was almost an accident; one of the older members of my drumline mentioned that he was the leader of the school's Mock Trial club, and within a month I found myself named captain of our junior varsity team.

More than a new experience in the courtroom, Mock Trial acted as my first instance of leadership. I was organizing practices, delegating roles and coordinating with our faculty sponsor just a few weeks into high school, and I felt seriously out of my depth. However, I took ownership of my role, and by my sophomore year our junior varsity team was successful enough to reach the Regional Finals. I took important lessons from that time that have stuck with me till today: to be comfortable with being uncomfortable, and to be willing to jump into new situations. This drive has carried me into unfamiliar territory like research, math competitions, and talent shows, and I could attribute much of my high school experience to it. This is part of a larger theme of Mock Trial developing skills for me that didn't necessarily apply solely to the courtroom.



There was a time, around the end of my freshman year, where I wanted to be a lawyer; my successes at my first Mock Trial competition (rather minor ones, in retrospect) played a large part in that. That time passed, and I decided teaching was for me, but I continued with Mock Trial, even when I enrolled at the NC School of Science and Mathematics. I wasn't looking for future job experience any more, but rather the intangibles of the competition. Late night cram sessions the night before regionals, brainstorming themes for hours to get one that sounded just right, sitting in the stairwell during lunch the day of a competition memorizing an opening – these are experiences I feel that any high school Mock Trial member could relate to, and they are truly what make this competition what it is. The lessons I took from those experiences are ones that will stick with me for the rest of my life, no matter what I do.

Congratulations to Kunal on his Morehead-Cain Scholarship! We are proud of you and wish you and our other graduating seniors well in all your future endeavors!

THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 – 2016 OUTREACH PROGRAM SPONSOR!

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State Finals: Rudolf Widenhouse

Asheville: Melrose Law, PLLC

Supporters: 28th Judicial District Bar Association *and* Asheville Area Paralegal Association

Charlotte: The Sumwalt Law Firm

Durham:

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Fayetteville: Britton Law, P.A.

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Greenville: Hardee & Hardee, LLP

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

CALENDAR 2015 – 2016 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

Summer Camp

July 27 - 30, 2016

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

Special thanks to our 2015-16 Regional Coordinators and CCCE Board Members: Asheville Regional Coordinators Mark Melrose and Marion Parsons-Groat, Charlotte Regional Coordinator Jennifer Errington, Durham Regional Coordinators Russell Johnson and Robert Jessup, Fayetteville Regional Coordinator Rebecca Britton, Greenville Regional Coordinator Phillip Entzinger, High Point Regional Coordinator Rich Manger, Raleigh Regional Coordinators Christine Scheef and Lindsey Granados, Wilmington Regional Coordinator John H. Anderson, Jr.; and CCCE Board Members Gordon Widenhouse, Rebecca Britton, Rich Manger, Adrienne Blocker, Katy Parker, Christine Scheef, Brooke Schmidly, Mark Sumwalt; Chris Nichols (ex officio) and Brad Bannon (ex officio).

Special thanks also to our 2015-16 Site Coordinators:

Asheville: Victoria Townley, ***Charlotte:*** Beverly K. Moore, ***Durham:*** Patti Clapper and Lakisha Chichester, ***Fayetteville:*** Elizabeth Owens, ***Greenville:*** Kristin Byrum; ***High Point:*** Adrienne Blocker, ***Raleigh:*** Michelle Keely and Sandra Strickland, ***Wilmington:*** Brandy Jo Lea and Christi Wert.

*****If you are interested in supporting or 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.***