

MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER

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NCAJ Mock Trial Committee and the Carolina Center for Civic Education*
"Investing in our future, creating tomorrow's leaders"
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North Carolina takes 9th at the National Mock Trial Competition

By Laura Bligh-Program Administrator

48 teams representing 44 states, South Korea, Australia, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands came to Arizona May 4th-8th. After four rounds over two days the NCHE Speech Club came in 9th place overall. In addition Sam Johnson took home a Best Attorney Award. The four rounds were presided over and scored by judges and attorneys from Hawaii, South Carolina, Texas, and Arizona. The awards banquet featured a few thoughts from former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. The 3rd round for NCHE Speech Club pitted them against Indiana in one amazing courtroom



battle. Objections and responses were flying back-and-forth at a dizzying pace. Witnesses were tested to know every inch of their affidavits. Never have I seen a round of Mock Trial Competition like it. Unfortunately the Indiana team did come out on top and went on to win the National Championship, but NCHE put every state on notice. Not in any recent national competitions had a team that had never competed at Nationals before placed in the top 10. Congratulations to everyone!

Left to Right:

James Compton, Coach Sue Gray, Michael Bojanski, Team Captain Samuel Johnson, Nainisha Chintalapudi, Anna Foulkrod, Jake Forest, Lydia Poisson, Nikita Chintalapudi, Coach Sue Johnson

**Use your smart phone to scan to
View footage of the state finals.**



WHY MOCK TRIAL?

Thoughts by Mala Chintalapudi

This year two of my daughters took part in the High School Mock Trial competition. This was their second year competing and first time to make it to Nationals. Last year they took part in Empire Mock Trial in NYC which was a wonderful experience and catapulted them forward.

Our home school team competed in Regionals and then moved on to the State level. The work was hard and involved many hours of prep work and writing and rewriting their openings and closings and preparing their witnesses. They

understood that the team is only as strong as the weakest member and they all strove for a united strength. However, in all of this they never lost sight of the fact that they were young men and women of integrity, and even in the midst of all their strategizing, they never consented to underhanded tactics.

Working together as a team taught them valuable lessons that will serve them well beyond their high school years. Team performance took a higher priority than personal goals. They learnt not only how to defer to one another, but also how to offer constructive criticism to each other and receive correction from others when needed. Even though for the most part they were working, yet the meetings were always interspersed with squeals of laughter and numerous jokes and funny comments that bound them into a very close knit group of young people who genuinely came to love each other and sought each other out.

The trip to AZ as a team took us to a whole another level of friendship. We spent a week together and though the stress of tournament seemed to stretch each one of them, they learned to handle it. It was exhilarating to meet the different teams from across the nation and some from abroad, and they knew they were competing against some of the best mock trial teams. The whole place was buzzing with excitement and despite the grueling pressure of the competition; they managed to enjoy their time. Once the competition was over, we were able to stop in Williams, tour Sedona, climb Grand Canyon and hike the many red rocks. The time spent together gave us all, parents and students, many opportunities to engage in heart to heart conversations.



When asked to look back on their high school career, both the girls said that mock trial was the highlight of their school. Not only because of the confidence it gave them to conduct themselves in a public arena, but also to think quickly on their feet and most of all because the friendships it has brought into their life. It was a delight for us as parents to see this apparent academic activity actually bear results in areas we had not even envisioned. They gained lifelong friends who indulged in heart revealing conversations with each other and truly count themselves as each others' "best buds".

MANY THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS THIS SEASON!

We extend our heart-felt thanks to our regional sponsors, to **NCAJ** and the **Florence Rogers Trust** for their generous donations and support, and to **Campbell Law School** for hosting and **Rudolf, Widenhouse & Fialko** for sponsoring the State Finals.

Regional sponsors:

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***If you are interested in sponsoring a regional competition next season please contact either Rebecca Britton or Gordon Widenhouse, Committee Co-Chairs, at Rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com or mgwidenhouse@yahoo.com.*

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

***If you would like to coach a team next season, let us know and we'll connect you with a high school in your area!*

For more information on the NCAJ High School Mock Trial Program, visit the NCAJ website at www.ncaj.com, click on public information and mock trial.