

MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER
Brought to you by the
NCAJ Mock Trial Committee and the Carolina Center for Civic Education
SEPTEMBER 2011
"Investing in our future, creating tomorrow's leaders"



"My Cousin Vinny" 20th Century Fox, 1992

PROFESSIONALISM

This shot from "My Cousin Vinny" is classic. It also prompts some serious consideration of what is proper courtroom attire. The movie itself also provides examples of professionalism, covering the gambit: the good the bad and the ugly.

Professionalism will be the undercurrent, focus and theme in this competition season of the NCAJ High School Mock Trial Program. So why is it so important for us to be professional? To be courteous? To abide by the rules and play fair? These are questions we will focus on this season.

Professionalism can be a difficult word to define, but, like unprofessionalism, we all know it when we see it. We hope the excerpts below will help start the conversation with teams participating in this year's program:

What Childhood Cartoons Taught Me About Lawyer Professionalism

by [JamesBaron](#) in [Practice of Law](#)

From the first day of law school, we are taught the importance of professionalism and ethics in the law. It is vital that as lawyers, we uphold the highest degree of professionalism. It might help to remember some of these points if we think back to our childhood cartoons, which knowingly or unknowingly taught future lawyers some valuable lessons. Having grown up watching cartoons in the 1960's and 1970's, here is some of the lessons I first learned as a child, well before my first law school Professional Responsibility class:

- Sam and Ralph, the sheepdog guarding the sheep and the fox trying to get the sheep, taught me that **it's fine to be competitive and try to win, but you also need to be respectful of your opposition.** [Take a look at this cartoon.](#) It is entertaining to see the dog and the fox **sharing breakfast and being courteous with each other, enjoying each other's company, but as soon as the whistle blows, they go at it with everything they have.** At the end of the day, they stop their bickering and wish each other well.
- On the other hand, Bugs Bunny taught that **you can give someone the benefit of the doubt to begin with,** but as a zealous advocate **you can't let yourself or your client be taken advantage of.** If that happens, then as he said, "[Of course you know, this means war.](#)"

To our teachers and coaches, showing students examples of professional behavior and modeling it ourselves is a great way to set the tone of what is expected. We know we have amazing students who participate each year in this wonderful program. ***Please share with us your stories of catching students behaving professionally for future newsletters.***

RULE CHANGES AND CASE RELEASE

We have had several rule changes for this competition year. All changes have been made in an effort to simplify and offer the strongest competition possible. On Friday, September 23d, a red-line version of the 2011/12 Rules will be posted on the mock trial page of the North Carolina Advocates for Justice website and sent via email to teachers and advisors who registered with us last season. This year's case will also be posted on that date. Once teams register for this season, they will receive an updated copy of the rules with case materials. Rule changes will be discussed at the Teacher/Coach round table which will held Saturday, October 22nd in Raleigh.

CALENDAR SET FOR 2011/2012 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

Early Registration/Case and Rule Book Released	Friday, September 23, 2011
Teacher/Coach Training-Raleigh or via Phone Conference	Saturday, October 22, 2011
Registration Deadline	Friday, November 18, 2011
Team Roster Form and Money Due	Friday, January 6, 2012
Last Day to Withdraw Without Penalty	Friday, January 12, 2012
Regional Competition	Saturday, February 4, 2012
State Finals-Campbell Law School, Raleigh	Friday/Saturday, March 2-3, 2012
National Championship-Albuquerque, New Mexico	Wednesday-Sunday, May 2-6, 2012

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

***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, 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 your resources and mock trial.

THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL AND STATE FINAL COMPETITION SPONSORS!

Asheville: Melrose , Seago & Lay, P.A.

Charlotte : The Sumwalt Law Firm

Durham:

Fayetteville : Britton Law, P.A.

Greenville :

High Point :

Raleigh :

Wilmington : Shipman & Wright, LLP

State Finals: Rudolf, Widenhouse & Fialko

REGIONAL SPONSORSHIPS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR DURHAM, GREENVILLE, HIGH POINT, AND RALEIGH : IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING ONE OF OUR REMAINING REGIONAL COMPETITIONS, PLEASE CONTACT REBECCA BRITTON AT rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com

CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW - partnering with NCAJ to host our state final competition!

***Special thanks to Mock Trial Committee Members and Regional Coordinators who have agreed to serve for the 2011/2012 season:** Paul Goodson (Charlotte Regional Coordinator), Rich Manger and Adrienne Blocker (High Point Regional Coordinators), John H. Anderson, Jr., (Wilmington Regional Coordinator), Russell Johnson (Durham Regional Coordinator), Mark Melrose (Asheville Regional Coordinator), Christine Scheef and Sheila Chavis (Raleigh Regional Coordinators), Philip Entzminger (Greenville Regional Coordinator), John O'Neal, Chris Nichols, Mark Sumwalt, Elizabeth Kuniholm and Elizabeth Spruill.*

Special thanks also to our Site Coordinators who have agreed to serve in the 2011/2012 season!

*Asheville: Cindy Bryson, Charlotte: Beverly King, Durham: Patti Clapper, Fayetteville: Elizabeth Owens
Greenville: _____; High Point: Karen Parrish, Raleigh: Lindsey Granados, Wilmington: Brandy Balderson.*