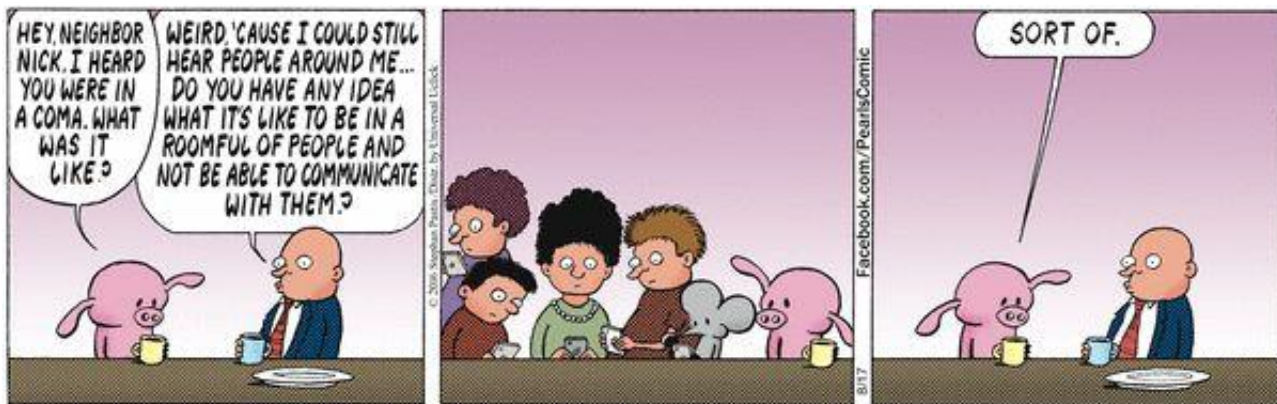


MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2017

Brought to you by the
Carolina Center for Civic Education
"Investing in our future, creating tomorrow's leaders"

MOCK TRIAL TEACHES COMMUNICATION SKILLS

By Sue H. Johnson, CCCE Mock Trial State Coordinator



Pearls Before Swine often provides insightful societal commentary in a humorous fashion, as demonstrated so effectively by the above comic strip. No doubt you've found yourself in similar circumstances – I know I have – and not just with Millennials or Gen Zers. Cell phones are incredible tools, but as Adam Alter argues in his book *Irresistible*, our 24/7 connectivity can lead to reliance on electronic media that bears hallmarks of addiction. For youth in particular, over-reliance on electronic means of communication can lead to a decline in face-to-face communication skills. Indeed, the ubiquitous nature of social media leads some experts to worry that teens' immersion in these technologies is promoting anxiety and lowering self-esteem at a very vulnerable time in these students' lives.

How can we as parents, friends, and concerned members of society address and fight against these trends? For starters, we may want to evaluate our own reliance on and use of social media and technology. When we meet with family, colleagues, or friends, are we "all there," or is our attention divided? What kind of example do we set for the important people in our lives?

We can also encourage youth to engage in activities that develop strong face-to-face communication and collaboration skills. Fortunately, mock trial fits the bill! Through mock trial participation, students not only learn about their civic responsibilities and our trial-by-jury system; they also learn to analyze complicated fact patterns, identify critical information, and communicate that information clearly and persuasively to strangers (mock trial judges and jurors). In the process, they learn to collaborate effectively



with teammates, develop leadership skills, and gain self-confidence. How do we know this is true? From the students themselves, as they recount the impact of mock trial on their lives:

“I expected the courtroom to be a brutal place where you succeed on your own or fail. [But] what I discovered as the season continued...mock trial is an experience to foster confidence, dedication, leadership, and cooperation...[Through mock trial I gained] the ability to take my public speaking, my legal knowledge, and my quick wit and use it to bolster not only myself but my team and our case as a whole.....A leader must focus on building up those around him or her so that they can eventually go on to achieve goals of their own.”
– Henderson County



“For me, mock trial has been a training ground for becoming a leader....I have learned how to put my team first, specifically through acting with confidence and leading by example....Many times this year I chose to be confident not because I felt it but because my team needed me to be.” – Randolph County



“I was always been a very shy kid, not one to step out of my comfort zone. I stayed out of any kind of spotlight as much as I could, in order to avoid the judgment of my peers that I feared so much.... [Because of mock trial,] the difference between that person and the person I am today is as clear as night and day....I learned how to take criticism, make changes and improvements, and learn from my mistakes. I began thinking more critically in every aspect of life, and found that I could formulate an argument and deliver my opinion with ease.... I learned what it means to be a part of something bigger than myself.... Mock Trial has given me confidence in myself, the ability to think critically, a love of public speaking, and so much more. Above all else, Mock Trial has given me a family.” – Gaston County

“Through the practices and tournaments, the wins and the losses, I have been stretched and challenged as a speaker, as a performer, and as a person. Mock trial has shown me my future career path, helped me overcome tough situations, and taught me about teamwork and cooperation.” – Wake County

“Mock trial represents the most positive aspects of the American system of justice. I hear a commitment to stand for what is right in the voice of every attorney’s closing summation. I see a dedication to justice in the witnesses’ gaze toward the jury. I observe individualism and critical thinking in every objection. I am humbled by compassion and mutual respect in each round of STAR Attorney and Witness awards. The opportunity to lead my team has been a powerful call to action reinforcing my resolve to campaign for justice and equality, to seek innovative and inclusive solutions, and to advantage my talents toward the advancement of all people through democratic processes.” – New Hanover County



We are deeply appreciative of the many selfless teachers, attorneys, mentors, family members, and volunteers who enable students across North Carolina to use mock trial to gain a vision of their potential to impact our society for good both now and in the future. Without the dedication of hundreds of such individuals across the state, these students would not have this tremendous opportunity.



We hope you are also inspired to help “create tomorrow’s leaders” by getting involved. How can you do that? One important way is by mentoring a team. Schools in **Charlotte** and **Davidson** are seeking attorney advisors to assist their teams. Please contact Sue Johnson if you may be able to help.

If it’s not feasible for you to advise a team, we would love for you to join us as a presiding judge or scoring juror at one of our nine regional sites on **Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018**. On that day, more than 650 students from across North Carolina will present their cases before panels of legal professionals. Our site locations are listed below. You can register on our website at <https://ncmocktrial.org/get-involved/volunteer/register/>. Our easy online form

allows you to choose the regional site, your preferred role, and the time(s) when you can join us.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact State Coordinator Sue Johnson at SueHeathJohnson@gmail.com. Thank you!

CALENDAR 2017 – 2018 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

Final Registration Deadline and \$175 Team Fee Due	Friday, Dec. 15, 2017
Team Member List, Code of Ethics, Release Forms Due	Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2018
Last Day to Withdraw Without Penalty	Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2018
Regional Competition	Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018
Widenhouse Award Nomination Materials Due	Weds., Feb. 21, 2018
State Finals Competition	Fri. – Sat., March 9-10, 2018
National Championship, Reno, NV	May 10-12, 2018

THANK YOU TO OUR 2017 – 2018 COMPETITION SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS!

State Finals:	TBD
Asheville:	Melrose Law <i>and</i> TBD
<i>Supporter:</i>	28 th Judicial District Bar Association <i>and</i> Asheville Area Paralegal Assn.
Fayetteville:	Britton Law, P.A.
<i>Supporter:</i>	Cumberland County Bar Association
Gastonia:	The Sumwalt Law Firm
Greenville:	Hardee & Hardee, LLP
High Point:	Manger Law Firm
Pittsboro:	Glenn Mills Fisher & Mahoney, P.A.
Raleigh:	TBD
Salisbury:	Rowan County Bar Association
Wilmington:	TBD

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

NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR – also hosting rounds at State Finals!

THANK YOU TO OUR 2017 – 2018 OUTREACH PROGRAM SPONSOR!

Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company of North Carolina

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

Special thanks to our 2017-18 Regional Coordinators and CCCE Board Members: Asheville Regional Coordinator Mark Melrose, Fayetteville Regional Coordinator Rebecca Britton, Gastonia Regional Coordinators Holden Clark and Daniel O'Shea, Greenville Regional Coordinator Phil Entzminger, High Point Regional Coordinator Rich Manger, Pittsboro Regional Coordinator Robert Jessup, Raleigh Regional Coordinators Christine Scheef and Lindsey Granados, Salisbury Regional Coordinator Darrin Jordan, Wilmington Regional Coordinator John H. Anderson, Jr.; and CCCE Board Members Gordon Widenhouse, Rebecca Britton, Rich Manger, Bradley Bannon, Adrienne Blocker, Christine Scheef, Brooke Schmidly, Mark Sumwalt; Valerie Johnson (ex officio).

Special thanks also to our 2017-18 Site Coordinators:

Asheville: Brett Pinkston, Fayetteville: Tanja Shurling and Karen Kueny, Gastonia: Beverly K. Moore, Greenville: Jeffrey Cannon, High Point: Rose Pratt, Pittsboro: Patti Clapper and Lakisha Chichester, Raleigh: Michelle Keely, Salisbury: Emily Applewhite, and Wilmington: TBD.

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