



MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER MAY - JUNE 2019

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STATE CHAMPS HAVE A "BLAST" AT NATIONALS!

By Susan H. Johnson, CCCE State Coordinator



"All rise. Court is now in session." On Friday, May 17, hundreds of eager high school students stood, trying to squelch their nerves as Round 1 of the National High School Mock Trial Championship got underway in Athens, Georgia. Students from 42 states, South Korea, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands had been preparing diligently to argue whether their client, Hayden Beauregard or Billie Sherman, should receive the \$15,000,000 insurance payout after the Georgia Theater burned to the ground. As interpleaders, these two former business partners each claimed that the other had started the fire and was barred from recovery. Did Hayden set the fire by burning papers implicating Hayden in embezzlement?

Or did Billie rig a timer to cause an explosion since the court had granted Hayden control of the theater? Finally the time had come for these state and territorial champions to argue the issues in court.

Our state champions, Central Carolina Homeschoolers “Lux,” were one of those enthusiastic teams. As one of the “junior varsity” teams of the CCH program, Lux was comprised of three juniors, three freshmen, and three sophomores (one of whom, Faith Segers, had served as an alternate at state finals, so Nationals was her first time competing!). But Lux had a secret weapon as they worked to perfect their case presentations: the insights and support not only of their outstanding coaches, but also of their teammates, many of whom had competed at Nationals in Reno, NV last year. As Faith said, “Nationals was an incredible experience...I am so thankful for the coaches and team members who put in so much hard work to bring us this opportunity! We have truly become a family!” Ruth Lanier agrees. “Our coaches are always pouring into us, encouraging us, and pushing us to do better. We also couldn’t have done it without our other two teams. They scrimmaged us, came to all the practices, and were always there to love and support us.”



Although intense, Nationals is a time to make new friends. One opportunity came through the pre-competition scrimmages on Wednesday and Thursday. By practicing against teams from Mississippi, Ohio, and Nebraska, our champs benefited not only from the chance to refine their roles but also to meet students from other outstanding programs. Seth Finch notes, “The events, the time with my team, and even the conversations with other teams were all some of the greatest highlights of the competition.” Our students were thrilled when their new friends from Ohio and Nebraska each placed in the top ten (NE finished second in the nation!).



The socializing continued at the Thursday pin exchange. Taking place at Herty Field on the beautiful University of Georgia campus, the pin exchange followed the pattern of the renowned UGA football tailgate parties. Students enjoyed chicken fingers by hometown sponsor Zaxby, exchanged state-related memorabilia with other participants, and danced to top-forty hits spun up by an able DJ. Fortunately the weather played along, with sunny, perfect temperatures!



On Friday, our team faced tough competition from Missouri and Ohio, ironically arguing against OH on the same side of the case as their scrimmage the day before. But they rose to the challenge, presenting their case with passion and professionalism. Even as they faced tactics or theories that they had not seen before, our team maintained their composure and responded with confidence and civility. They had clearly internalized their coaches’ emphasis on competing, not only with excellence, but also with a determination to represent our state with honor, kindness, and integrity.

On Saturday, our team continued to argue their case with flair as they faced strong teams from Maine and Minnesota. Our attorneys skillfully argued objections and delivered openings and closings that were clear and compelling. Witnesses captivated and entertained the judges as they took on personas ranging from a

handyman “from a small town in the deep South” with a convincing southern drawl, to a “mathlete” accountant testifying against her boss, to a fire investigator whose expertise was bolstered by his German accent. After the fourth round concluded, we gathered on the law school green to await the announcement of the two final round teams: Nebraska and Tennessee. Our team grabbed a bite to eat before heading to the dessert buffet and awards ceremony.

After dancing and talking with their new friends in the Georgia Classic Center Great Hall, team members and supporters took their seats for the announcement of individual and team awards. Finishing in 20th place with a record of 2-2, our team lost two ballots by only one point, coming incredibly close to a top-ten finish. But they still came home with hardware – arguably the most important award of all: the **Larry Bakko Award for Professionalism and Civility**.



The Larry Bakko Award is determined by the votes of their peers, as each team votes for the team that best exemplifies integrity, civility, kindness, and a spirit of fair play. On their nomination forms, teams are asked to provide comments explaining their selection. The comments in support of our champs demonstrate that our students achieved their highest goal, of competing with kindness and character no matter what happened. In the words of their peers, the CCH team “[had a] fun welcoming attitude before the trial even started,” [demonstrated] “grace under fire,” were “courteous, considerate, and most important, KIND,” and “every member of their team did their best in keeping the round civil and fun.”

As the weekend drew to a close, team members reflected on their experiences. Leonard Pace describes Nationals as “Unforgettable – one of the most amazing and humbling experiences of my life!” Team



captain Kenan Sims elaborates: “One thing that stood out to me in particular was how passionate and devoted not only the competitors were, but also the parents, judges, and jurors! They truly cared for this competition and for our future. They cared so much that it made you feel motivated...What I obtained most from this competition was gratitude. Gratitude [for the chance to face] amazing

competitors who were excellent, extremely generous, and ethical and polite before, after, and during all rounds. Most of all we were thankful for our coaches, parents, and supporters for keeping us going and encouraging us nonstop all along the way.” Rachel Rogers agrees. “Nationals was nothing short of incredible...The experience, the memories, the laughs, the stress, the tension, and all the praise for the Lord was something I’ll cherish...It was a week I’ll legitimately never forget!”

The students, coaches and supporters all expressed their deep appreciation for the CCCE Board, our State Coordinator, and the hundreds of sponsors and volunteers that made this experience possible. I know I am not alone in saying that we are proud of the way these students represented themselves and our program. Well done!



Don't forget to sign up for Summer Mock Trial camp!!

The final deadline for camp is **June 18**, so interested students and teachers should act now! For more information, visit our website at <https://ncmocktrial.org/camps/ccce-summer-camps/> or contact Sue Johnson at SueHeathJohnson@gmail.com. We look forward to another great year at camp!

CALENDAR 2018 – 2019 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

Mock Trial Summer Camp, Chapel Hill

July 24-27, 2019

THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 – 2019 COMPETITION SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS!

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| State Finals: | Ward Black Law |
| Durham: | Glenn Mills Fisher & Mahoney, P.A. |
| <i>Supporters:</i> | Durham County Bar Association <i>and</i> Olive & Olive |
| Fayetteville: | Britton Law, P.A. |
| <i>Supporter:</i> | Cumberland County Bar Association |
| Gastonia: | The Sumwalt Law Firm |
| Greenville: | Hardee & Hardee, LLP |
| Hendersonville: | The Van Winkle Law Firm |
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| High Point: | Manger Law Firm |
| Salisbury: | Rowan County Bar Association |
| Wilmington: | Shipman & Wright, LLP |

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

THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 – 2019 OUTREACH PROGRAM SPONSOR!

Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company of North Carolina

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

Special thanks to our 2018-19 Regional Coordinators and CCCE Board Members: Durham Regional Coordinators Robert Jessup and Drew Haywood, Fayetteville Regional Coordinator Rebecca Britton, Gastonia Regional Coordinators Holden Clark and Daniel O’Shea, Greenville Regional Coordinator Nancy Ray, Hendersonville Regional Coordinators Mary Ann Hollocker and Beth Stang, High Point Regional Coordinator Rich Manger, Raleigh Regional Coordinators Christine Scheef and Lindsey Granados, Salisbury Regional Coordinator Darrin Jordan, Wilmington Regional Coordinator John H. Anderson, Jr.; and CCCE Board Members Rebecca Britton (President/Treasurer), Rich Manger (Vice President), Adrienne Blocker (Secretary), Bradley Bannon, Christine Scheef, Brooke Schmidly, Mark Sumwalt; Mary Pollard (ex officio), Sonya Pfeiffer (ex officio).

Special thanks also to our 2018-19 Site Coordinators:

Durham: Patti Clapper, Fayetteville: Tanja Shurling and Karen Kueny, Gastonia: Stephanie Elliott, Greenville: Sandi Baughman-Egan, Hendersonville: Leigh Ann Allen, High Point: Kayla Neil and Rebecca Robinson, Raleigh: Michelle Keely, Salisbury: Emily Applewhite, and Wilmington: Courtenay E. Byrd.