



## ***MARCH 2022 MOCK TRIAL NEWS***

### **BROUGHTON WINS CHAMPIONSHIP AT THE NORTH CAROLINA ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL STATE FINALS**

On Friday and Saturday, March 18 and 19, twelve top teams from across North Carolina (Central Carolina Homeschoolers X's 2, Middle Creek, Terry Sanford, East Chapel Hill, Gray Stone Day X's 2, Broughton High, J.H.Rose, Hendersonville, Carborro High, and Raleigh Charter) battled it out for the title of State Champion. After two preliminary trial rounds on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, it came down to two teams: J.H. Rose and Broughton.

In the final championship round Chief Justice Paul Newby presided and jurors John McCabe, Burton Craige, Janet Ward Black, Rick Glazier, Quon Bridges, Adren Harris and Shannon Williams scored outstanding performances by both teams. At the end of the day, Broughton High won the State Championship and will represent North Carolina at the National High School Mock Trial Championship in May, hosted online this year by Kalamazoo, Michigan.



Our congratulations, support and cheers go to Broughton as they prepare for release of the Nationals case on April 1 and ready their team for the big event May 4 – 7. Our thanks and congratulations also go to Broughton's teacher adviser Laura Lineberger and attorney coaches Chris Nichols and Dale Stephenson.

The North Carolina Mock Trial Program board wishes to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the wonderful volunteers who made this season possible. This competition that positively impacts the lives of so many high school students across our state simply could not happen without them! *(See our listing of state finals volunteers and judges/jurors below)*

## **THE RETURN OF COURTROOM ART!**

A wonderful program of years past returned to the NCAJ High School Mock Trial Competition this year – Courtroom Art! In celebrating our 30<sup>th</sup> year of high school mock trial in North Carolina, it is fitting we had a return to this aspect of our program. We had several courtroom artists compete this season across the state, with four ultimately competing and submitting their art at State Finals. Competitors sketch with one team throughout the competition. At State Finals competitors worked on their sketches in the first round, finalizing and submitting them at the end of the second round. Drawings may be done in color pencil, pen and ink, pastel or marker. No watercolors or pain are allowed. Entries are photographed and submitted electronically. Sketches are evaluated and scored anonymously by a judge or judging team.



This year's State Champion Courtroom Artist is **Lydia Girdner** with the Central Carolina Homeschoolers (Lux). Lydia has also earned the right to compete as a Courtroom Artist at the National High School Mock Trial Championship to be hosted online by Kalamazoo, Michigan. She will accompany our State Championship team to do her sketching at Nationals. Congratulations Lydia!

## **M. GORDON WIDENHOUSE JR. AWARD** **FOR INSPIRATIONAL TEAM LEADERSHIP**

Each year the NCMTTP has the privilege of awarding one senior participating in the NCAJ High School Mock Trial Competition a scholarship which was established to honor the energy and commitment of the program's first chairperson, Gordon Widenhouse. The award recipient will not necessarily be a star witness or attorney, but he or she will be the person who held the team together throughout practices and competitions. Students are considered and selected based on a written essay and recommendation of their teacher or attorney advisor.



We are pleased to announce **Meagan Walker** with Central Carolina Homeschoolers (Lux) as the winner of the Widenhouse Award. For Meg, *"courage is not the absence of fear but the mastery over it"* (a Twain quote used by her coach, Darren Allen, when describing her growth from her first participation in mock trial as a freshman in 2019 to this, her senior year). As a freshman who struggled with anxiety and fear, Meg chose to face those fears head on. As she noted in her essay: "My struggles aren't my fault, but they're my responsibility to work through, and no one else's... Mock trial offered me the space to overcome my anxiety and learn leadership skills and connected me with friends who taught me how and inspired me to try." Meg says: "Mock trial was where I found the inspiration to overcome anxiety and become a leader. That inspiration came in the form of coaches and teammates who wanted to see me

succeed. They supported me, challenged me, and helped me grow as a leader, teammate and person.” Meg found, in leading her team the importance of empathy and determination:

*Empathy doesn't make a person weak, but allows me to connect with and inspire my teammates, ultimately making our team much stronger. There's so much division in the world, and I think a lot of it comes from the fact that we don't necessarily see others as fellow humans. I think there's value in remembering that we're all people with struggles, but empathy brings us together, allows us to understand each other, and find solutions. But empathy has to come along with determination and courage, and I emphasize to my teammates that it's okay to be afraid, and we just have to find ways to work through the fear.*

Congratulations, Meg! You are an inspiration and we are proud that you have been part of the NCAJ High School Mock Trial Competition and NCMTTP programs over these last four years. We wish you the best and cannot wait to see what you accomplish going forward!

## **THE STEVE SCHMIDLY COACHING AWARD** **INAUGURAL YEAR**

In our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of mock trial in North Carolina, it is fitting that we recognize our amazing and committed team coaches. Steve Schmidly was one of those coaches. For over 14 years Steve served as the attorney advisor for Asheboro High School and not only saw record numbers of wins, but also inspired his students to excel in so many aspects of their lives. Even when he could no longer coach, Steve mentored his “mock trial kids” right up until his death in 2014. Steve was truly a prime example of “investing in our future and creating tomorrow’s leaders.”

At the State Finals reception on Friday, March 18, Steve’s daughter, Brooke Schmidly, bestowed the Steve Schmidly Coaching Award to two very deserving recipients; both of whom not only have made lasting, tremendous, positive impacts in the lives of their students, but also had close connections to Steve through mock trial:

**DARREN ALLEN** actually coached Asheboro High School teams along with Steve for several years. Darren is an attorney in private practice in Asheboro, NC and tried cases against Steve early in his career. Darren devotes a shocking amount of time to coaching multiple mock trial teams both in our regional and state competitions and in competitions around the country in the summer months. He also instructs at our summer camp program. Darren believes that coaching is about building students up and has spoken movingly about how coaching with Steve led to his love of coaching which has benefitted so many students over the last decade. Darren has coached the Central Carolina Homeschool teams to several State and National tournament championships. His teams have also received national recognition for civility in competition. Darren, like Steve, not only coaches his students, he mentors them and continues contact with them after their graduation from the program with some even coming back to assist younger teams.



**LIZA KNIGHT** has been a teacher advisor for J.H. Rose for 20 years and spent many anxious hours with Steve pacing the hallways and becoming good friends while their teams competed against each other. Liza has coached and coordinated up to four teams in one year, this year coaching three. She manages everything from recruiting attorney advisors to helping students with their presentations. She has been described by attorney advisors as having a natural ability to get the best from her students, without harshness. She makes everything run effortlessly from tryouts, to team organization and zoom practice rounds and competitions. Some of Liza's past students have spoken movingly about what her help

and support has meant to them and to their success both in mock trial and in their lives. She is so devoted to Mock Trial and to her students that when planning a family vacation for this year, she avoided the first and second weekends in March as those are usually around when the State Championship competition is held. State Finals were, however, the third weekend of March this year and Liza joined her team via Zoom from Disney World. Liza has had a

tremendous impact on students at J.H. Rose every year for 20 years. Liza, like Steve, has set the bar high, investing in our future and creating tomorrow's leaders.

Our heartfelt thanks and congratulations go to Darren Allen and Liza Knight for their dedication and commitment to the mock trial program and, especially, to their students.

### **STATE FINALS VOLUNTEERS:**

#### **PRELIMINARY ROUNDS**

##### Presiders

Hon. Kent Harrell  
Hon. Lucy Inman  
Hon. Mary Ann Tally  
John Anderson  
Quon Bridges  
Rick Glazier  
Leah Howell  
Laura Jenkins  
Daniel O'Shea  
Manisha Patel  
Andy McVey  
Nicole Winget

##### Scoring Jurors

Naomi Gentle  
Angela McIlveeh  
Christine Scheef  
Brooke Schmidly  
Denyse Brewington  
Emily Zody  
Deana Thorne  
Adren Harris  
John Britton  
Larry Futrell  
Ann Harris

Chris Cerreiro  
Jordan Godwin  
Katy Parker  
Allison Quigley  
Shannon Williams  
Thomas Clare  
Helen Baddour  
Connie Whitener  
Tacker LeCarpentier  
Adrienne Blocker  
Brittany Chadwick Schultz

Eric Richardson  
Julie Boyer  
Laura Clark  
Anna Kalarites  
Allison Layton  
Patrick Quinn  
Nicole Winget  
Harold Kaplan  
Kelsey Purcell

#### **FINAL ROUND:**

**Presiding:** Chief Justice Paul Newby

**Scoring Jurors:** Burton Craige, Janet Ward Black, John McCabe, Rick Glazier, Quon Bridges, Adren Harris, Shannon Williams

#### **COURTROOM LIAISONS:**

Amanda Miller  
Leeann Brigman  
Alicia Coggins

Nancy Powning  
Justin Scheef  
Michael Mellons

Christine Scheef  
Michelle Keely

**SCORING MANAGEMENT:** Rich Manger, Jonathan Parisi, Tanja Shurling, Leeann Brigman

**ZOOM MANAGEMENT:** Rebecca Britton, John Anderson, Catherine Holland, Tanja Shurling, Michelle Keely

### **OUR SPONSORS:**

#### **STATE FINALS SPONSOR: SUMWALT ANDERSON**

**FOR A LISTING OF ALL PROGRAM SPONSORS:** <https://ncmocktrial.org/about/north-carolina-mock-trial-program/program-sponsors/>

## ***NCMTP REGIONAL & SITE COORDINATORS***

The below group of attorneys and paralegals generously volunteer their time to make mock trial competition run smoothly each year. Learn more about all coordinators at [ncmocktrial.org/supporters](http://ncmocktrial.org/supporters).

Fayetteville	Rebecca Britton/Tanja Shurling
Gastonia	Holden Clark and Ivana Hughes/Jacqueline Thurman
Greenville	Meredith Hinton/Sandra Strickland and Caitlin Tatum
Hendersonville	Mary Ann Hollocker/Melanie Miller
Hickory	Blia Vang/Bianca Lopez
High Point	Rich Manger/Grace Lay
Hillsborough	Drew Haywood and Rebecca Ugolick/Patti Clapper
Raleigh	Lindsey Granados, Christine Scheef/Michelle Keely, Amanda Miller
Salisbury	John Basinger/Connie Cassatt, Alicia Coggins and Deandra Hall
Wilmington	John H. Anderson, Jr./Catherine Holland and Rachel Royal

***NCMTP Board Members:*** Rebecca Britton (President), Rich Manger (Vice President), Andrew McVey (Treasurer), Adrienne Blocker (Secretary), Helen Baddour, Bradley Bannon, Drew Haywood, Christine Scheef, Brooke Schmidly, Mark Sumwalt, and John McCabe (ex officio)