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September and October 2022 Mock Trial News

[COMPETITION CASE PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 6](#)

The North Carolina Mock Trial Program is planning to hold the 2023 Regional Mock Trial Competition (including our courtroom artist competition) in-person throughout the state on **Saturday, February 4, 2023**. The competition Rules book, now published [online](#), retains the 2022 rules regarding virtual competitions in the event that we must go virtual. Regardless, we are planning for and very much looking forward to seeing everyone live in 2023! And here is a [Memo](#) regarding some big Rule changes for 2023.

Students participating in the 2022-2023 NCAJ High School Mock Trial Competition will be presenting both sides of a Civil Defamation case, ***Morgan Matthews vs. Utopia Resort and Spa***.

Defamation in and of itself is a statement or statements that injures a third party's reputation. Morgan Matthews, an impassioned news reporter who may be a little inclined towards embellishing the facts, finds him/herself in the middle of an exposé after he/she is exposed to bed bugs in the luxurious Utopia Resort and Spa. Matthews believes "the people who condemn me are often the people whom I have targeted." The manager of Utopia Resort and Spa is simply flabbergasted by the appearance of bed bugs at their pristine establishment and is quick to tell the "real story" to a local newspaper about how Morgan Matthews planted the bed bugs in the hotel room and fabricated the bed bug infestation. Who defamed who? That is what we will find out in our upcoming case.

The case this year was originally prepared by Susan Roberts for the Indiana Mock Trial Association and later amended by the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education. We thank Ms. Roberts, the Indiana Mock Trial Association and the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education for their efforts in preparing the case materials and for their permission in allowing the materials to be adjusted and edited for the North Carolina Mock Trial Program.

We also express our appreciation to **Michael Austin**, a summer intern and student at Duke University this fall, for his insights in refining this case. Thank you also to NCMTTP Case Committee members **Sue Gray, Laura Clark, Michael Austin, Jacob M. Morse, Christine Scheef, John H. Anderson, Jr., Brad Bannon, Katy Parker, and Joyce Britt** for generously sharing their time to review and edit this case for our use. All names used in this mock trial case are fictitious. Any similarity to an actual event or person is strictly coincidental.

Oh no, bed bugs.



ATTORNEY ADVISORS NEEDED!!

Are you an attorney who can partner with a local teacher and help to coach high school students in your community as they prepare for mock trial? We are in need of Attorney Advisors in the following counties:

- Guilford County
- Henderson County
- Mecklenburg County

- Surry County
- Wake County

Attorney Advisors typically meet with students approximately 6-8 times between *October* and *February* (this is flexible, depending on what your schedule allows). The NCMTTP offers attorney advisors plenty of support including this list of [suggested activities](#) and all of these student [training materials](#). Can you help coach? Your role as a mentor will be forever remembered by these students and you will be joining a network of hundreds of lawyers who support this important program as regional coordinators, presiding judges, and attorney advisors. If available to help, please email joyce@ncmocktrial.org.

WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBER **BRENEE W. OROZCO**



The NC Mock Trial Program is excited to welcome former volunteer and scoring juror, **Brenée W. Orozco**, to the NCMTTP Board. For over a decade, Brenée has served as a

volunteer and scoring juror with the NCAJ High School Mock Trial Program. Brenée received her Bachelor's Degree from Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, New York in 2001. She relocated from New York to Sherwood, Arkansas where she earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law in 2005. Upon moving to North Carolina in the winter of 2007, she began to study for the North Carolina Bar Exam and was licensed to practice law in 2008. Her main area of practice is Abuse, Neglect and Dependency.

WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBER **SUE GRAY**



The NC Mock Trial Program is grateful to welcome former Mock Trial Coach, **Sue Gray**, to the NCMTTP Board. Sue has enjoyed coaching and encouraging students to develop their communication skills through competitive forensics for over 15 years. In August 2016, Sue was awarded her first Diamond Coaching Award for excellence with the National Speech and Debate Association. Sue is passionate about Mock Trial and enjoys seeing students reap the many benefits that this adventure has to offer.

NEW TO MOCK TRIAL? REQUEST A RECENT **RECORDING OF A VIRTUAL INTEREST MEETING**

A big **THANK YOU** to Hendersonville High School Social Studies teacher **Jerry Smith** and Attorney **Kathryn Wells** for leading our recent September 8, 2022 Virtual Interest Meeting for new teachers. Are you new to mock trial? Learn all you need to know about starting a mock trial team at your high school and giving **YOUR** students the chance to further develop their critical thinking and public speaking skills through mock trial. If you would like to have a copy of the recording from 2021's Virtual Interest Meeting, please email joyce@ncmocktrial.org.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2022-2023 COMPETITION SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

NCAJ High School Mock Trial Competition Program Sponsor:



Program Outreach Sponsors:

- Sumwalt Anderson Law Firm

Regional Sponsors:

- Fayetteville: Britton Law
- Gastonia: Hometown Counsel
- Greenville: Hardee, Massey & Blodgett, LLP
- Hendersonville: Van Winkle Law Firm and TBA
- Hickory: Orndoff Law Firm; and Law Offices of Jason E. Taylor, P.C.
- High Point: High Point Bar Association
- Hillsborough: Patterson Harkavy LLP and TBA
- Raleigh: Settlement Planning Services, LLC; and Maginnis Howard
- Salisbury: 19C (Rowan) Judicial Bar
- Wilmington: Shipman & Wright, LLP

NCMTP REGIONAL AND 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 <https://ncmocktrial.org/supporters>. We thank both our new coordinators and long-time coordinators very much:

Regional Coordinators

- Fayetteville: Rebecca Britton, Jordan Godwin
- Gastonia: Holden Clark
- Greenville: Meredith Hinton
- Hendersonville: Mary Ann Hollocker
- Hickory: TBD

- High Point: Rich Manger, Eric Richardson
- Hillsborough: Drew Haywood and Rebecca Ugolick
- Raleigh: TBD
- Salisbury: John Basinger
- Wilmington: John H. Anderson, Jr.

Site Coordinators:

- Fayetteville: Tanja Shurling
- Gastonia: Jacqueline Thurman
- Greenville: Sandra Strickland and Hillary Lassiter
- Hendersonville: Melanie Miller
- Hickory: Bianca Lopez
- High Point: Grace Lay
- Hillsborough: Patti Clapper
- Raleigh: Michelle Keely and Amanda Miller
- Salisbury: Alicia Coggins and Connie Cassatt
- Wilmington: Catherine Holland

NCMTP Board Members: Rebecca Britton (President); Rich Manger (Vice President), Andrew McVey (Treasurer), Adrienne Blocker (Secretary), Bradley Bannon, Drew Haywood, Christine Scheef, Brooke Schmidly, Mark Sumwalt, Valerie A. Johnson (*ex officio*), Jacob Morse, John H. Anderson, Jr., Brenée W. Orozco, and Sue Gray.



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