

[View this email in your browser.](#) The North Carolina Mock Trial Program administers high school mock trial competitions around the state. Please share this newsletter with teammates and parents! For more visit [ncmocktrial.org](http://ncmocktrial.org)



## October 2023 Mock Trial News

### **COMPETITION CASE RELEASED**

This year's mock trial competition case is now online! In 2024, high school students across the state will try both sides of *State of Utopia v. Fran Lewis*, a criminal case based in the state of Utopia. There, the Pinnacle Paper Company holds significant economic and political sway and has received recognition for its pollution control efforts, charitable contributions, and community development initiatives. However, a vocal minority accuses the company of false pollution control claims, linking it to environmental and health issues in Morse County. The 'Wetland Alliance,' an activist group, has staged protests and legal actions against the company, with some members recently convicted of trespass and vandalism. The group's leader, Fran Lewis, holds the company responsible for their spouse's cancer-related death. When the vice president of the company is found dead, law enforcement suspects another vandalism incident, leading them to suspect Fran Lewis as the murderer. The question remains: will the evidence be enough to convince a jury?

The North Carolina Mock Trial Program adapted this year's case from a case that was originally prepared for the National High School Mock Trial competition in 2004. The case was initially developed by the Honorable Judge Terry Lewis, a retired Florida circuit court judge who drew inspiration for this case from his fictional book entitled *Privileged Information*. Permission to edit this case was granted by Judge Lewis and the Justice Teaching Center for Civic Learning at Florida Southern College. We thank Judge Lewis for his efforts in preparing the original case materials and the Justice Teaching Center for granting us permission to amend the case for the North Carolina Mock Trial Program. The

NCMTP also extends its thanks to Case Committee members Sue Gray, Brianna Fanning, Christina Di Lorenzo, Andy McVey, Aimee A. Nwabuike, Jacob M. Morse, Brad Bannon, Katy Parker, and Emme McManus for generously sharing their time to review and edit this case for our use.

The North Carolina Mock Trial Program will hold the 2023-2024 Regional Mock Trial Competition (including our courtroom artist competition) throughout the state on Saturday, February 3, 2024. We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone live and in person in 2024! To view the case, visit our website at <https://ncmocktrial.org/compete/case-materials/>.

### **2023 – 2024 MOCK TRIAL SEASON CALENDAR**

Early Registration Deadline	Friday, Sept. 29, 2023
Final Registration/Team Fee Deadline	Friday, Dec. 08, 2023
Code of Ethics, Release Forms, Team Member Lists Due	Thursday, Jan. 04, 2024
<b>**Last Day to Withdraw Without Penalty**</b> Thursday, Jan. 04, 2024	
Team Rosters due by Noon	Thursday, Feb. 01, 2024
Regional Competition	Saturday, Feb. 03, 2024
State Finals Competition	Friday-Saturday, Mar. 15-16, 2024
National Championship, Wilmington, DE	Thursday-Sunday May 2-5, 2024

### **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:

- Cumberland County
- Durham County
- Guilford County
- Henderson County
- Mecklenburg County
- Pasquotank 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 NCMTP 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 [emme@ncmocktrial.org](mailto:emme@ncmocktrial.org).

## **[RICH MANGER STEPS INTO EMERITUS ROLE](#)**



Photo of Rebecca Britton and Rich Manger on behalf of NCAJ

In June of this year, Rich Manger transitioned into the role of Emeritus Board Member. While Rich no longer holds a directorial role, the designation allows him to provide invaluable insight and serve the program in a more fitting capacity.

From the inception of the Mock Trial program, Rich has been an unwavering pillar of support. His involvement began during his tenure on the Public Education Committee of the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers (NCATL), now known as NCAJ. At that pivotal moment, an initiative at Wake Forest University was working to deepen students' comprehension of the U.S. Constitution, including the right to trial by jury, by putting on mock trials for high school students with the help of Wake Forest law students. The initiative faced significant challenges due to limited resources and support. Thankfully, Erin Reynolds orchestrated a vital connection between Wake Forest University and others at NCATL, including Rich. Significantly, Rich helped ensure the survival of the initiative.

Since then, the program has weathered its fair share of triumphs and challenges, and Rich has been a steadfast presence throughout. When mock trial faced economic uncertainty yet again after the recession, Rich, along with Rebecca Britton and Janet Ward Black, rose to the occasion to birth a new nonprofit entity, now known as the NCMTP. In the face of economic uncertainties, he played a crucial role on the executive committee and worked to ensure the program's continuity and stability. His advocacy served as a reminder of the value the program brings to students all around the state. Prior to assuming his Emeritus position, he served as Vice President, spearheaded various committees, orchestrated competitions, mobilized legions of legal luminaries, and stood as the guiding light for High Point Mock Trial Regional. He has spoken about how he has personally witnessed the profound influence mock trial imparts on students—cultivating a deep well of self-confidence, nurturing a source of pride in their endeavors, and offering a window into our legal system. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to him for helping make that a reality.

## **WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBER DAVID SHERLIN**



David's first job out of law school was with the Wake County District Attorney's office. After six years with the District Attorney's office, he went to work for David Kirby and Mark Holt focusing on medical malpractice cases. In 2013, Mark and David opened Holt Sherlin where he worked until 2021. Most recently, he joined his friend Jake Epstein's firm, now known as Epstein Sherlin, PLLC. His practice focuses on personal injury and wrongful death cases. Over the past several years he also served as president of the Wake County Bar Association, president of Theatre in the Park Board of Directors, and currently

as a member of the North Carolina Advocates for Justice Board of Governors. David met his wife, Lisa, while in school at UNC and they try to go to every Tar Heel basketball and football game possible. They have a daughter, 17, and a son, 15, who both attend Broughton High School, and two dogs.

**A few words from David:** "I am beyond thrilled to have joined the North Carolina Mock Trial Program Board! Earlier this year I was able to attend my first NCMTP competition. In short, I was absolutely blown away by what I saw from these high school students. I had heard great things about the NCMTP from friends and colleagues, but I had no idea how impressed I would be by the presentation by these high school students. I left that competition with a great sense of pride in what the NCMTP has become and, as importantly, extremely proud of the students that I saw that day. I am truly excited to now serve as a member of the NCMTP Board."

## **WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBER MANISHA P. PATEL**



Manisha is an attorney based in Greensboro, North Carolina with a deep-rooted passion for justice. She graduated with a B.A. in both Economics and History from Virginia Tech and earned her Juris Doctor degree from Elon University School of Law. She practices family law, focusing her practice on collaborative law and alternative dispute resolution. She's a proud member of several professional organizations, including the Greensboro Bar Association, where she serves as President-Elect, the North Carolina Bar Association, a Past-President of the North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys, along as a

past family law section chair and member of the North Carolina Advocates for Justice Board of Governors.

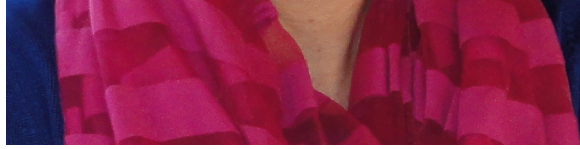
## **WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBER CHRIS NICHOLS**



Chris has been coaching or participating in the North Carolina Mock Trial program since he was a second-year law student during Mock Trial's first year in 1992. Chris has coached teams in western North Carolina and, since 2016, coached the Broughton High School team in Raleigh with his co-coach, Dale Stephenson, and teacher advisor Laura Lineberger. In 2023, their team won the state championship and placed eleventh at Nationals. Chris is a civil litigator at the Nichols Law Firm in Raleigh, representing individuals with claims of negligence against wrongdoers. He is a past president of NCAJ. Chris is married to Beth, a longtime supporter of mock trial, and he coached their daughter, Zoe, during her high school years.

## **WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBER LIZ JONES**





Liz is the former Executive Director of the North Carolina Mock Trial Program (2020-2022). She earned her B.A. in International Affairs from the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia in 2000 and worked in non-profit management at an international development company in Washington, DC (2000-2005) and at the NC Advocates for Justice (NCAJ) in Raleigh, North Carolina (2006-2019). As an NCAJ staffer, she served as program coordinator of the high school mock trial program for several years before leading the association's publication projects.

**A few words from Liz:** "As a new NCMTTP Board Member, this will be my third occasion to champion North Carolina's high school mock trial program; I am looking forward to doing so and seeing many familiar faces again! I thoroughly enjoyed working with inspiring teams and generous volunteers across the state. Together, we got through the Covid-19 pandemic, adopting new technologies that make the NCMTTP offerings stronger today. Indeed, the mock trial program has been my most rewarding project!! Time and again I could see the tremendous value we are offering our high schoolers — a chance to practice their critical thinking and leadership skills and develop their capacity to work well with others. Mock trial demands of them humility, strength, professionalism, patience, and strategic thinking; I believe students are better off throughout their lives, regardless of their eventual career choices, for honing these skills at such an impressionable age. This is why I am thrilled to join the Board — to have the opportunity to further a mission I value and be part of a terrific team that works tirelessly to strengthen and grow the program. Mock Trial can not happen well without MANY dedicated attorneys and paralegal volunteers – nearly 500 of them – who help as coaches, competition judges and jurors, and event hosts; they, along with our teacher coaches, are all program heroes!\* Mock on!"

\*If you are not yet involved, please learn more at [ncmocktrial.org/get-involved/](https://ncmocktrial.org/get-involved/).

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## **[THANK YOU TO OUR 2023-2024 COMPETITION SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS](#)**

**NCAJ High School Mock Trial Competition Program Sponsor:**



### **Regional Sponsors:**

- Fayetteville: Britton Law
- Gastonia: DeMayo Law Offices, LLP
- Greenville: Hardee, Massey & Blodgett, LLP
- Hendersonville: to be announced
- Hickory: Orndoff Law Firm and The Law Offices of Jason E. Taylor
- High Point: High Point Bar Association
- Hillsborough: Patterson Harkavy LLP and Mills & Mahoney, PA
- Raleigh: Settlement Planning Services, LLC and Maginnis Howard
- Salisbury: Rowan County Bar Association
- Wilmington: to be announced

### **Outreach Project Sponsor:**

- Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company of North Carolina

### **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 and Brenèe Orozco
- Gastonia: to be announced
- Greenville: to be announced
- Hendersonville: Mary Ann Hollocker
- Hickory: May Lo
- High Point: Rich Manger and Eric Richardson
- Hillsborough: Drew Haywood and Rebecca Ugolick
- Raleigh: Kathryn Martin
- Salisbury: John Basinger and Darrin Jordan
- Wilmington: John H. Anderson, Jr.

### **Site Coordinators:**

- Fayetteville: Tanja Shurling and Leeann Brigman
- Gastonia: Jacqueline Thurman
- Greenville: to be announced
- Hendersonville: Melanie Miller
- Hickory: Jason Taylor
- High Point: Grace Lay
- Hillsborough: Patti Clapper
- Raleigh: Amanda Miller
- Salisbury: Alicia Coggins and Connie Cassatt
- Wilmington: Catherine Holland



**NCMTP Board Members:** Rebecca Britton (President); Brooke Schmidly (Vice President), Adrienne Blocker (Treasurer), Christine Scheef (Secretary), Bradley Bannon, Drew Haywood, Mark Sumwalt, Jacob Morse, John H. Anderson, Jr., Brenée W. Orozco, Sue Gray, Andy Banzoff (*ex officio*), Rich Manger (Emeritus), David Sherlin, Chris Nichols, Manisha P. Patel, and Liz Avery-Jones.



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