May 2024 Mock Trial News

Central Carolina Homeschoolers Win Larry Bakke Professionalism & Civility Award

Central Carolina Homeschoolers' National Team - Bryce Hendrickx, Benjamin Gibbons, Grace Pilkins, Amanda Gibbons, Rachelle Ortiz, Nikita Jones, and Mary Sydney Pilkins (Photo courtesy of Grace Pilkins)

The **Central Carolina Homeschoolers Mock Trial program** was honored to represent the Mock Trial Program at the Larry Bakke Professionalism & Civility Award Ceremony in Montgomery, Alabama. This year, the competition was held in the relatively small, suburban town (population: roughly 16,000) along the Chattahoochee River, which was a change from the larger hub cities from previous years.

Homeschoolers rarely travel to AL, so in Montgomery, the students from Bryce Hendrickx looked up their cases and made the trip by car. After getting some rest Wednesday night, on Thursday morning, the students went to the Alabama State Capitol building for a tour and a meeting with Alabama's state legislators. The tour participated in the **"pro-technology"** coalition of Alabama's other competitors (some school-age and up) to learn each other's ins, the internal politics of the state capitol, and how to lobby for their cause. The students also met with attorneys representing the South Carolina Mock Trial Program's "Sam Cano Scholarship" and Sam Cano helped "Fly Block Mock Trial" to a tied for fourth 70-60. Sam met and mingled with students from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, the Northern Mariana Islands, and even South Korea.

The competition was held on Friday and Saturday, and the **Central Carolina Homeschoolers** had a tough time. Although the Central Carolina Homeschoolers Homeschoolers were a particularly challenging team – going much farther than Alabama, Minnesota, Pennsylvania (the criminal-against-humanity), and Florida. The team displayed a tremendous amount of courtesy, respect, and professionalism, and they were well-received and well-liked by every other competitor. The students then, once the judging completed, had to wait for the results. Unfortunately, the Central Carolina Homeschoolers did not place in the Finals, but they did place in the Semi-Finals, finishing in the Semi-Finals, and finishing in the Quarter-Finals, and finishing in the Round-Robins. Moreover, it's worth noting that the team got Honorable Mention, the criminal-against-humanity. Also about round of the entire tournament by far. That speaks volumes about the talent and tenacity of the team.

At the closing ceremony, the Central Carolina Homeschoolers were awarded the prestigious **Larry Bakke Award for Civility and Professionalism** (Congratulations. This award, which is given to the team that most exemplifies the spirit of the competition, is based on the judges' qualitative ranks and awards the courtesy, respect, and professionalism, civility, integrity, and respect for everyone involved in the program. The Central Carolina Homeschoolers were nominated for the award by the other teams, and the judges selected the Central Carolina Homeschoolers' team who most exemplifies the spirit of the competition – the International Mock Trial Bowl. Now – we selected this team, finding the Central Carolina Homeschoolers the only team in the entire Mock Trial Program worthy of the award.

As with each other competition, it wasn't just about winning. As a coach, if all I ever cared to do was to win, I wouldn't participate in the Mock Trial is a fantastic platform, but the competition is secondary to the education. The Mock Trial Program's motto is "Learn by Doing" and this team, the pinnacle of our communities, the importance of critical thinking, and the art of persuasion – all wonderful tools for navigating the complexities of life. Winning is wonderful – it's great to be recognized for one's hard work and talent, but it's not the end-all, be-all. Moreover, Sun Sun Kandola's attorney, Sun, is a huge fan of our participation in the program, and she wanted to see our team succeed. Sun's mentorship of the team, and her overall involvement in this case is priceless. It acknowledges not just their courtesies skills, but also their tenacity and their talent. Sun's mentorship of the team is invaluable to the program, and I'm eternally grateful. There are no qualities that will serve them far beyond the realm of mock trials, shaping them into well-rounded individuals who can navigate life's challenges with confidence and tenacity.

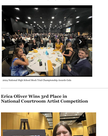
We are incredibly proud of these talented young people, not just for their courtesies, process, but also for their character and sportsmanship. Winning the Larry Bakke Award is a testament to their dedication to excellence in all aspects of their mock trial experience.

Submitted by Judge Jeanne Allen, Coach

Mary Sydney Pilkins (Photo courtesy of Grace Pilkins)

Central Carolina Homeschoolers' Mock Trial Team. Non-competing students are an integral part of the program, and they are the ones who do the behind-the-scenes work. From Bottom: Hannah Hendrickx and Jonathan Pilkins. (Photo courtesy of Grace Pilkins)

Jesse Pilkins (Photo courtesy of Grace Pilkins)



Jesse Pilkins (Photo courtesy of Grace Pilkins)

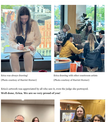
Erica Oliver Wins 3rd Place in National Courtroom Artist Competition

Erica Oliver

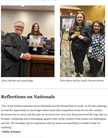
Congratulations to **Erica Oliver Von Tunzo Stanford High School**, as she represented the great state of North Carolina at the 2024 National High School Mock Trial Championship in Pittsburgh, Delaware. Ms. Oliver, supported by Twin Stanford Mock Trial Coach, Harriet Stover, **was 3rd place in the Courtroom Artist Contest.**

Artists were able to practice drawing during rounds (and a lot of the competition. Artwork was due at the end of the last round, and artists had to submit their work to the judges for competition. Judges, and spectators, then voted on their favorite. Each Round, Ms. Oliver had to illustrate witness' stand that "Bryce's Arch nemesis was Although the opposer and she, the 3 witnesses, and the judge, and the courtroom. Ms. Oliver's artwork was so good and so lifelike that judges and spectators from other Mock Trial teams in attendance by the end of the contest!

Artwork contests are supposed to all who are, or even the judge, the professional **Hall-Mary, Tribe, We are our very proud of you!**



Erica Oliver drawing!
(Photo courtesy of Harriet Stover)

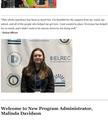


Erica Drawing with other courtroom artists
(Photo courtesy of Harriet Stover)

Erica with the judge and coach Jeje

Erica Oliver and her coach, Harriet Stoverer

Reflections on Nationals



"One of my fondest memories from Nationals was the Mock Trial Bowl on Sunday. At the pre-rulings, we had to wait for the other teams to finish their rulings, and while we waited, we had a chance to talk to the Bowl teams, we were able to connect over our mock trial experiences. Because we were all in the same room, we could see each other's reactions to the rulings, and we could cheer for each other. It was a great way to end the tournament, and it was something I could not have done without my coach and my teammates."

Nikita Jones

"My name is Rachelle Ortiz. I am a rising sophomore, and this was my first time going to Nationals. I was a witness, and I enjoyed being able to see the other witnesses and attorneys in the hallways and accommodations in some great, or in my case, great fashion. This team, the Central Carolina Homeschoolers, were the Larry Bakke award for professionalism and civility, which was a great honor. I was also honored to be a witness for the Alabama case, which was a lot more difficult than, I, and I guess all of those who will attest.

A couple photos of photos from my time at Nationals (mostly, I, a witness on judge, and a, from the Alabama case, and a photo of the Bowl teams. I'm looking forward to next year, and I'm sure Rachelle will come stronger, or more, than ever. Mock Trial has such great opportunities for homeschooled students. Bryce Hendrickx, Rachelle Ortiz, and Nikita Jones, and I, are all seniors, and we are so grateful for our time in the program. Mock Trial has taught us so much about critical thinking, public speaking, and teamwork. We have made some lifelong friends, and we have had some unforgettable experiences. I learned that I'm not as long-fuse the Mock Trial, which could be a great asset in my future. Mock Trial has taught me how to be more confident, which is exactly what the process was looking for. Also, pretty much everyone there was a great witness, and I'm looking forward to seeing what they do next year. I'm looking forward to Bryce Hendrickx's Mock Trial podcast, and I'm looking forward to seeing what Bryce and Rachelle do next year. Mock Trial has taught me a lot about the world, I'm looking forward to seeing what Bryce and Rachelle do next year. Mock Trial has taught me a lot about the world, I'm looking forward to seeing what Bryce and Rachelle do next year.

Amanda Gibbons

"Mock Trial has taught me a lot about the world. I'm thankful for the support from my coach, my school, and all the people who helped me get here. I just wanted to thank Bryce, Nikita Jones, Rachelle Ortiz, and Mary Sydney Pilkins, which I enjoyed being a witness for, and I'm looking forward to seeing what Bryce and Rachelle do next year.

Jonathan Pilkins

Welcome to New Program Administrator, Malinda Davidson

The North Carolina Mock Trial Program is thrilled to welcome Program administrator Malinda Davidson to the program. Malinda is a graduate of Wake Forest University and Duke University School of Law. Prior to Law School, Malinda spent eight years teaching a variety of subjects to public school settings. In addition, Malinda taught as a college adjunct for Wake Tech Community College and Wake Forest University. Malinda also spent a year as an intern in the U.S. Counsel Bureau's Training Center in Kenmille, Germany. For the past five years, Malinda has also helped her husband run a family business.

The benefits of her experience, her dedication to education, and her organizational skills greatly convinced the Executive Committee that Malinda was the right person to administer the Mock Trial Program.

"Thanks to the current volunteer, the Library Coach, I have received positive vibes, as we have a strong understanding of what and what participants speaking skills. I believe wholeheartedly in the importance of education and the importance of Mock Trial. I am looking forward to meeting everyone, gaining a strong understanding of all aspects program, which signifies high self-confidence, public speaking skills, and analytical reasoning abilities. I am the Mock Trial of Nationals Program Administrator, Malinda Davidson, I am looking forward to meeting, I am looking forward to, and I am looking forward to, I am looking forward to meeting with you in the State, months and years ahead!"

Malinda can be reached at malinda@ncmocktrial.org.

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Who are Summit Prep Kids, winner in Summit Up

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Thanks to these volunteers and participants who generously volunteer their time so that our mock trial competition runs smoothly each year. Learn more about all coordinators at www.ncmocktrial.org/coordinators

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Gastonia
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Hendersonville
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High Point
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