

Mockology

News of the North Carolina Mock Trial Program July 2024

(Click a story to read more)

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2024-2025 Mock Trial Competition Dates

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- 8/30 Registration Opens
- 9/6 Case Release Posted
- 11/1 Deadline Final Registration
Registration Fee
- 12/20 Deadline Withdraw (without penalty)
Forms: Code of Ethics, Release, Team List
- 1/10 Deadline Team Rosters
Regional Site Assignments Posted
- 2/8 **Regional Competitions**
- 2/21 Deadline Widenhouse/Britton Award Nomination
Schmidly Coaching Award Nomination
- 3/14-15 **State Finals at Campbell Law School, Raleigh**
- 5/8-10 **National High School Mock Trial Championship Phoenix, Arizona**

Thanks to the 2023-2024 Teams, Coaches & Attorney Advisors

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<u>School</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Attorney Advisor</u>
AC Reynolds High School	Jennifer M. Turner	Jennifer M. Turner
Ardery Kell High School	Amanda Jones	
Athens Drive Magnet High School	Leigh Ann Frazier	Anne Middleton
Bradford Preparatory	Michael Brady, Jolie Fabrizio	Corey Stanton
Bunn High School	John Dietz	Jack Malsbary
Cardinal Gibbons High School	John Aragona	John Aragona
Carolina Friends School	Dylan Buffum	Dylan Buffum
Carrboro High School	Jerrod McConnell	Jeff Hirsch
Cary Academy	Richard Pellicciotta	Hardison Wood
Cary High School	Laura Kerrigan, Troy Colvard	
Central Carolina Homeschoolers	Janet Phillips, Tim Hunnicutt	Darren Allen
Chapel Hill High School	Matthew North	Mark Kleinschmidt
	Janet Fort, Dr. Kathryn Fitzpatrick	Jonathan Wilson
Charlotte Catholic High School	Sarah Richardson	Marsha Goodenow
Charlotte Country Day School	Angela Vanore	
Chatham Early College	Ethan Brown	Derrick Larsen-Chaney
Classical Scholars High School	Anthony Yodice	Kristen Nardone
Community School of Davidson	Amy Cox-Gruendel, Shannon Coffey	Amy Cox-Gruendel, Shannon Coffey
Covenant Day School		Kelsey E. Rector
	Roshan Varghese	Kyle A. Tatich
David W. Butler High School	Tani Caudle, Renee Roberts	Judge Carlton Terry & Wendy Terry
Davie County High School	James Evans	
East Chapel Hill High School	Andrew Miller	Robert McDonnell
East Mecklenburg	Kim Perry	Lori Meyerhoffer
Enloe Magnet High School	Dr. Bob Hodges, Megan Shaw	
Excelsior Classical Academy	Christa Pratt, Robert Fernandez	Christa Pratt
Gaston Christian School	Olivia Petersen	Lisa Cline
Gray Stone Day School	Ronald Richardson	
Green Hope High School	Kathleen Holland	
	Malaika Mokashi, Edward Waddell	Lauren O'Malley
Green Level High School	Emily Quinn	Matthew Harbin
Grimsley High School	Dr. Tripp Harmon	Kristi Pallen
Haw River Christian Academy		

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Hendersonville High School	Shelby Lewis	Kathryn Wells
Hickory Christian Academy	Mark Wheeler	
Honours Guild	Gina Good	Jason Vaughn
J.H. Rose High School	Liza Knight, Diane Padilla, Andrew Pierce	Hailey Bunce
John T. Hoggard High School	Taylor Cummings Shelley Stamper	
Kairos Christian Classical	Krystal Costantino	Sydney Carter
Lake Norman Charter School	Dr. Ray Leach	Ryan Thiede
Langtree Charter Academy	Thomas Whaley	
Leesville Road High School	Chris Craddock	Cody Moss
Millennium Charter Academy	Anderson Rouse	
Mock Trial Teens of the Triangle	Christy Batts	Terry O'Connell
Moore County Teen Court	Beth Tanner, Mark Burdette	Judge Beth Tanner
Myers Park High School	Ben Boyles	Ben Boyles, Taylor Boyles
North Carolina School of Science & Mathematics	Dr. Kyle Hudson	
Pine Lake Preparatory	Mrs. Faulkenberry	Ms. Chandler
Port City Mock Trial	Naomi Nason	
Providence Day School	Emily Young	Dean Loven
Raleigh Charter High School	Kenny Felder	Michael Joseph, Burcu Hensley
Research Triangle High School	Anna Cloud	Robert Brown
STEM Early College at NC A&T	Natasha Miller	Charlisa Powell, Shaun Arnold
Terry Sanford	Harriet Horner	Taylor McCallman Gabe Snyder Allison Dunlap
The Early College at Guilford Triangle Math & Science Academy	Pete Kashubara	
	Katherine Baese Amanda Evans	
Triton High School	Edward Nappi Kaleb Jones	Edward Nappi
UNCG Middle College	David Kay	
	David Kay	
UNCG Middle School	Kaleb Jones	
Unity Mock Trial	Jenny Creech	Nicole Winget
Village Christian Academy	Shon McAteer	Trey McLean
Village Christian Academy	Shon McAteer	Andy Dualan
Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy	Jan Thrasher	Kelli Clancy
Walter Williams High School	Lisa Marie Dukelow	Lisa Marie Dukelow
Westchester Country Day School	Ray Jones	John Bryson
William A Hough High School	Jackie Smith	

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Thanks to our Regional Coordinators & Site Coordinators

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Region	Regional Coordinator	Site Coordinator
Fayetteville	Brenée Orozco	Tanja Shurling, Leeann Brigman
Gastonia	Rachel Mosser	TBD
Greenville	Alexander Paschall	TBD
Hendersonville	Mary Ann Hollocker	Melanie Miller
Hickory	Jason Taylor	May Lo
High Point	Rich Manger Eric Richardson	Grace Lay
Hillsborough	Drew Haywood Rebecca Ugolick	Patti Clapper
Raleigh	Kathryn Martin	Amanda Miller
Salisbury/Concord	TBD	Alicia Coggins
Wilmington	John H. Anderson, Jr.	Catherine Holland

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Welcome New Executive Director Jerry Smith

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Greetings to all the mockers, parents, coaches, advisors, attorneys, paralegals and judges who make the North Carolina Mock Trial Program happen. It is a great honor to serve as your Executive Director. For 17 years, I was the head coach of the mock trial program at Hendersonville High School, where several of our teams advanced to the State Finals in Charlotte and Raleigh. I have just retired from teaching after 26 years in public high schools in Henderson County and Northern Virginia.

I am also a licensed attorney in North Carolina, having earned my JD from the NC Central School of Law. In the fall of 2006, I first started coaching mock trial at HHS and immediately fell in love with all parts of training, coaching and leading a high school mock trial team. We also helped start the first mock trial team at Hendersonville Middle School. I was fortunate to have taken over a successful program that had been coached by my mentor, Paul Goebel, for many years.

Over the years, I was blessed to have coached many great mockers who have gone on to make meaningful contributions to their families, communities and professions, some of whom are practicing attorneys today. They made being a mocker 'cool' at HHS, and together we developed a great culture of mock trial. For most of my tenure, I was also fortunate to have had a great assistant coach in Kathryn Wells, who served as an outstanding attorney advisor. As a former coach, I understand the importance of having mentors and attorney advisors who can work with our mockers to make a difference in their lives.

For 14 years, I served as a member of the Hendersonville City Council. From my days on council and in the classroom, I learned how to work with students and constituents with different points of view. I understand the importance of the NC Mock Trial Program continuing as an opportunity for North Carolina families from divergent backgrounds, and I look forward to further expanding our program to reach as many young adults as we can.

Thanks to the Board of Directors for putting faith in me and Malinda Davidson, our Program Administrator, to lead the program. I also thank my parents, my wife Anne, and my kids Martha, Miriam, and JT, all of whom were mockers who made it to states, for their loving support of me as I take on this new role.

I look forward to meeting you, the "Mockverse", as I travel throughout the state trying to increase the number of teams, regional sites, volunteers and sponsors, as we "Rock the Mock!" and prepare for the 2024-25 season. Feel free to reach out at jerry@ncmocktrial.org.

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Welcome 2024-2025 Executive Board

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President



Christine Scheef
Vice-President



John Anderson, Jr.
Treasurer



Drew Haywood
Secretary



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Welcome New Board Members

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Hon. Darren Allen



Robert "Robby" Jessup



Amy Marschall



James "Jimbo" Perry
(ex officio)



Kevin Bunn (ex officio)



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North Carolina Mock Trial Program 2024-25 Board of Directors

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Thank You Outgoing Board Members Adrienne Blocker & Mark Sumwalt

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We wish to acknowledge outgoing board members, **Adrienne Blocker and Mark Sumwalt**. Together with **Rebecca Britton**, who is now transitioning to **emeritus status** on the board, these three board members committed decades of time, energy and dedication to our program. Without them, NCMTP would not be where it is today. Thanks, most sincerely, for your love and commitment to NCMTP. You will be missed.

Adrienne Blocker



Mark Sumwalt



In 2008, the NC Mock Trial Program was at a crossroads, as it came under the management of the Carolina Center for Civic Education (now North Carolina Mock Trial Program) after 15 years of operation under the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers (now North Carolina Advocates for Justice). There was a small core group of people who stepped up in the midst of that change to dedicate their time, talent and resources to make sure the program kept going. Adrienne Blocker and Mark Sumwalt were both key members of that group and have served on the NCMTP Board for the last 16 years.

In the mid 2000's, Adrienne Blocker was a fixture at the High Point Regional, helping now Emeritus Board Member Rich Manger run that competition. When the transition occurred in 2008, Adrienne stepped up to serve on the Board. She continued to help in High Point and then became the board member we could count on to send to any regional competition in the state where we needed her support and assistance.

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Adrienne served as Secretary of the NCMTP Board for a number of years and, in the 2023/24 season, as Treasurer. She was a member of our Planning Committee when we held the National High School Mock Trial Championship in Raleigh in 2015. When there was a need, Adrienne would answer the call.

Mark Sumwalt has been a tremendous support over these last 16 years, serving on our board since its inception. Mark and his firm sponsored our Charlotte and then Gastonia Regional competitions over the years as well as State Finals. We could always count on Mark to provide a steady and thoughtful voice on our board and, when funding got tight, he was the one to rally colleagues around the state to help us get through financially. In Mark's last year on the NCMTP board, he chaired our Development Committee at yet another time of transition as we worked to build support and participation statewide and take the NCMTP to the next level.

Many thanks to both Adrienne Blocker and Mark Sumwalt, who have helped shepherd the NCMTP through these last 16 years to the success it is and for building an amazing foundation from which this program will soar.

(Submitted by Rebecca Britton)

Widenhouse Award Update

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The NCMTP Board of Directors unanimously voted, in June 2024, to change the name of the Widenhouse Award to the Widenhouse/Britton Award in order to recognize the lifelong contributions of past president and executive director Rebecca Britton to the NCMTP. Starting with the 2024-2025 season, the award is now named the **Widenhouse/Britton Award**.

Rebecca Britton, 2024 Thurgood Marshall Award Winner

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Chris Nichols' Speech at NCAJ, Wilmington, NC, June 2024

It is a privilege to be here today to honor Rebecca "Becky" Britton, the recipient of the Thurgood Marshall Award from the North Carolina Advocates for Justice. This prestigious award is a testament to Becky's extraordinary and selfless service to the people of North Carolina, reflecting the legacy of Justice Thurgood Marshall. This speech is a challenge, because I only have a few minutes and, well, how do you honor one of your personal heroes in such a short amount of time?

Becky's journey is an inspiring tale of determination and resilience.^[1] In the 1980s, working as a secretary at a law firm in Poughkeepsie, New York, she realized that she could do the work of the attorneys she assisted. This realization led her to sell everything she owned, except her car and cat, and move to Maine to pursue her undergraduate degree at the University of Maine, followed by a law degree at Campbell Law School. We all know about the famous Maine to Campbell pipeline.

Supported by her family, despite their initial skepticism, Becky embarked on a path that would ultimately change many lives. After graduating, she joined the Fayetteville firm of Beaver, Holt, Richardson Sternlicht, Burge & Glazier, where she discovered her passion for plaintiffs' work and got involved with the NCAJ. Becky's dedication to justice was exemplified in her work on the case of Lesly Jean, a wrongly convicted ex-Marine. Becky's relentless pursuit of justice for Jean, who was wrongfully imprisoned for nine years, culminated in his exoneration through DNA evidence and legislative change.

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allowing DNA testing for inmates and the establishment of the North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission.

This dedication to justice echoes Justice Marshall's belief that "In recognizing the humanity of our fellow beings, we pay ourselves the highest tribute."

While working on high-profile cases, Becky also dedicated herself to education through high school mock trial programs. She volunteered as a juror in 1992. Then, starting in 1995, she coached and mentored students, many from underprivileged backgrounds, helping them realize their potential and achieve remarkable success. Her teams won state finals and competed nationally, embodying the transformative power of self-belief and hard work.

Becky tells a story that as they drove in the van back home in the dark, many of the kids were asleep but one said, **"Hey, Mrs. B, how are we gonna get to New Mexico?"** She said, **"we're going to fly"** and suddenly every one of them woke up. **Why? No not one of them had ever been on a plane.** Becky raised money, got them on that plane, but not until she took them to Belk's and got them all new suits.

I spoke to Naomi Gentle, who 26 years ago, was on that van from Westover High School bumping along back to Fayetteville. I have to stop here and describe Naomi's speaking skills. When I spoke with adult Naomi, she had a commanding presence. A voice so clear and melodic, I could listen to her read a Denny's menu for hours. But this is what she said about 9th grade high school Naomi.

Naomi described herself as "a young unsure black girl, not quite convinced I had a place in this mock trial world." When I asked her what her experience with Becky and mock trial had done for her, she said "She gave girls like me the courage to become champions. She taught me how to be fearless, how to stand up for my principles." Then with a twinkle in her eye, she added "And how to be a good public speaker."

Of course, we all know that since those early days, Becky (and her husband, John, who is here with her) made Mock trial her third child, along with their other children, Sarah and Robert. She and John have managed to get two of their kids out of the house- we are still working on getting mock trial to move out.

Becky became the Board director, and has nourished and guided this program, growing from a dozen teams to this last year, over 100 teams competing. With 8 kids on a team and 30+ years of mock trial, we are talking likely 20,000 students- then add in their family, friends. Amazing.

Becky has had an indelible influence on this state. I'd venture to say no one has had this wide of an impact in every corner of this state.

Becky has also hosted TWO National High School Mock Trial Championships in North Carolina.

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I spoke with Adrienne Blocker, another of our longstanding mock trial board members. Adrienne recalled that Becky also stands up for what she believes in – which takes me back to the 2005 National Competition hosted by NCMTP.

There was an observant Jewish school who could not participate in the competition from sunset Friday through sunset Saturday. The national program didn't want to accommodate that, but Becky, being Becky, looked them in the eye and with that smile she so often has on her face, said "No, that's not how we do it here", and she reached out to other teams and was able to accommodate the students' religious observation. The National Mock Trial Program protested about our accommodations. Now, I wasn't there in that meeting, but I can imagine Becky had that same smile on her face when she said "Ok, fine, we will start our OWN National Championship." And she did. We withdrew from the National organization for two years, until they came back and apologized. This is just one small sample of Becky standing up for what is right in an often-unjust world.

After a distinguished career, Becky sold her firm in 2020 and has since semi-retired, moving to Waynesville. She remains active as a certified mediator and arbitrator and continues her involvement with the mock trial program as an emeritus board member.

How do you sum up Becky's impact on Mock Trial? I spoke with our own Mark Sumwalt, who has been on the Board for many years, and here is what Mark said:

Without Becky Britton, there would be no high school mock trial in North Carolina. There have been lots of contributors over the years but only one indispensable part. This program has been at a crossroads many times. Becky has simply willed its survival, time and time again.

I'll end with this story. At the beginning of the Convention, Becky and I were talking about this speech and the award. Becky said something to me along the lines of "you know, I always wanted to get an award from Howard Twiggs. He was an amazing speaker and had such a way with introductions."
So, you know, no pressure, right?

But that got me thinking about Howard the last few days. For those of you who are new, Howard Twiggs was one of our amazing founders. Those who knew him remember how he could inspire you beyond what you ever thought you could do. The way he could just touch your shoulder, look you in the eyes, make you feel like the only person in the room, and magically reassure you that you had everything that you needed to succeed (even if you didn't believe it!). To make you feel apart. To make you remember that what you do, what we do, is important, and that truly, we stand as the guardians of justice, of democracy, and that we do it- one person - one case- one well-crafted argument - at a time.

Howard was amazing. I'm no Howard...but...The only person I know, other than Howard Twiggs, who could inspire that confidence, touch you and make you think

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everything would be ok, all born of love of their fellow person, is none other than....
Becky Britton.

Today, as we honor Becky Britton with the Thurgood Marshall Award, we celebrate a legacy of tireless dedication to making the world a better place. Becky, your work has touched countless lives, and we are profoundly grateful for your contributions. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.

Thank you.

[1] Special thanks to Amber Nimocks, NCAJ's Director of External Affairs, for the article she wrote about Becky in the April 24, 2024 edition of *Trial Briefs*. Much of the biographical information in this speech has been taken from that article, with Amber's permission. <https://www.ncaj.com/news/making-a-difference>

Large Law Firm Meeting

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The leadership of the North Carolina Mock Trial Program recently had the opportunity to meet with some of the largest law firms in North Carolina. The June 12 meeting at the N.C. State Bar brought together program alumni, coaches, and some current competitors with managing partners and other representatives of large law firms around the state. The gathering provided an opportunity for NCMTTP leaders to provide an overview of the program and the way in which the firms could support it.

Chief Justice Paul Newby, who has been a long-time participant and advocate for the program for many years, gave the keynote address for this gathering noting the tremendous benefits of mock trial to students, communities and the legal profession. He encouraged firm leaders and representatives to consider ways to participate and support this tremendous civic education program. State Bar President-elect, Matthew W. Smith, also participated in the meeting, emphasizing the State Bar's support of the program.

Two members of this year's State Championship team, Daisy Gaither and Haley Kramer, as well as one of their coaches, the Honorable Darren Allen, all spoke about how their participation in NCMTTP has changed their lives. Haley, the 2024 Gordon Widenhouse Award Winner, wowed the audience when she delivered her closing argument from this year's state case. Although it had been almost three months since the State Finals, Haley gave a flawless performance.

The meeting was part of a larger effort to build upon the program's growth in recent years and expand opportunities for participation in mock trial around the state. We look forward to connecting with many other law firms around the state to explore ways in which they can participate and support the program. If you are interested in supporting NCMTTP, please visit our website at www.ncmocktrial.org, or contact Executive Director Jerry Smith at jerry@ncmocktrial.org.



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Mission Statement

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The North Carolina Mock Trial Program believes that teaching high school students about our justice system and trial-by-jury is crucial to preserving our rights as citizens. Our mission is to create engaged citizens through the hands-on learning activity of mock trial, thereby enabling students to gain the civic understanding, self-confidence, analytical reasoning, and communications skills that are vital for tomorrow's leaders.

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