



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL INVITATIONAL AT THE COURTHOUSE

The 13TH Annual Lake County High School Mock Trial Invitational will be held at the Lake County Courthouse on Saturday, February 25, 2017. High school students from Lake and neighboring counties have been practicing their role assignments since early last year in anticipation of participating in Lake County's popular annual event, often referred to as a dress rehearsal for the State's mock trial competition which will be held in March. The sixteen teams contending for first place in Lake County's invitational this year include Bartlett, Carmel Catholic, Chicago Christian, College Prep of America, Evanston, Highland Park, Libertyville, Maine South, Maine West, Mundelein, Nilis West, Normal Community, St. Charles East, St. Charles North, Timothy Christian, and York.

The program, spearheaded by Circuit Judges Victoria A. Rossetti and Christen L. Bishop, is a collaborative effort with the Lake County Law-Related Education Initiative, the Lake County Juvenile Officers Association, and the Lake County Bar Foundation.

The mock trial, selected by the Illinois State Bar Association, is entitled, "*People of the State of Illinois vs. Taylor Cartwright*." The case is set at Lakeview University and involves a co-ed university-sponsored honor society. During a Pledge Olympics event called "Water Jeopardy," one of the pledges (the victim) consumes a large amount of water, collapses and passes out. 911 is called and the victim is taken to the hospital where he/she dies two hours

later. The autopsy reveals the victim died from a swollen brain stem caused by the large consumption of water. The defendant is the pledge master of the society and is charged with involuntary manslaughter and hazing.

The teams try the case twice (at 9:00 a.m. and again at 10:45 a.m.) – first, as the prosecution and then as defense. Students play out the roles of attorneys and witnesses who compete for outstanding performances. The students as well as their teams are evaluated and scored by volunteers that consist of assistant state’s attorneys, assistant public defenders, and practicing trial attorneys who appear in Lake County courts. Several sitting Lake County judges preside over the cases as presented by the different teams.

After the scores are tallied, an awards ceremony is held and announcements are made naming individual students for their great performances and the names of the first, second, and third place winning teams.

The State competition, hosted by the University of Illinois College of Law, in Champaign-Urbana, will be held on Saturday and Sunday, March 11-12, 2017.

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Press is invited.

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