



News Release

1
9
th
J
U
D
I
C
A
C
I
R
C
U
I
T

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

Date of Release: February 26, 2024
Point of Contact: Kasey Dunn Morgan
847-377-3818

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

20th ANNUAL MOCK TRIAL INVITATIONAL AT LAKE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Early this past Saturday morning, the hallways and courtrooms of the Lake County Criminal Court Tower came alive as the 20th Annual event took place. The morning began with a welcome from Chief Judge Daniel B. Shanes, opening remarks from Circuit Judge Victoria A. Rossetti, and an introduction of the judges, evaluators, teams, and coaches by Circuit Judge Christen L. Bishop.

The 24 high school teams competing against one another to attain first place in the competition included students from Barrington High School, Carmel Catholic High School, Chicago Christian High School, College Preparatory School of America, De La Salle Institute, Evanston Township High School, Glenbrook South High School, Highland Park High School, Lake Forest High School, Libertyville High School, Maine South High School, Maine West High School, Mundelein High School, Niles West High School, South Elgin High School, Southland College Prep High School, St. Charles East High School, St. Charles North High School, Stevenson High School, Timothy Christian School "A" and "B" Teams, Wheeling High School, Whitney M. Young Magnet High School, and York Community High School.

By 9:00 a.m., the students went to their assigned courtrooms to begin their first trial session. The mock trial, selected by the Illinois State Bar Association, was entitled "Parker Keating v. Charlie Spector." The problem the teams prepared involved three teenagers, Charlie Spector, Jessie Finch, and Parker Keating, who were on their way home from visiting Illinois colleges when their vehicle struck a City of Lincolnville Public Works vehicle that was parked on the right side of the road. Plaintiff Parker Keating was injured and has sued the driver of the car, Defendant Charlie Spector, for several claims arising out of the crash. The ISBA LRE Mock Trial Subcommittee hopes that this Mock Trial case raises awareness about the dangers of distracted driving; specifically, this problem raises awareness of Illinois' laws on distracted driving and Scott's Law (625 ILCS 5/11-907 et. seq.), also commonly called the slow down or move over law.

The teams tried the case twice, both as the prosecution and as the defense. Students performed the roles of both attorneys and witnesses to compete for outstanding performances. Lake County Circuit Judges Sharmila K. Manak, Reginald C. Mathews, Charles W. Smith, and Christopher R. Stride and Lake County Associate Judges Luis A. Berrones, Rhonda K. Bruno, Ari P. Fisz, Bolling W. Haxall, Charles D. Johnson, D. Christopher Lombardo, James R.M. Newman, Paul B. Novak, James K. Simonian, and George D. Strickland presided over the trials; while Assistant State's Attorneys, Assistant Public Defenders, and practicing trial attorneys volunteered to evaluate and score the students on their ability, presentation, and effectiveness.

Judge Rossetti and Judge Bishop brought the ever-popular event to Lake County in 2004, sponsored by the Law-Related Education Initiative, the Lake County Bar Association, the Lake County Bar Foundation, and the Lake County Juvenile Officers Association.

After lunch, an awards ceremony was held in the Jury Assembly Room. The individuals who had the top scores for their performances as attorneys and witnesses were named and presented with trophies by Judges Bishop and Rossetti. Lake County Bar Association Executive Director Greg Weider and Lake County Bar Foundation President Joann Fratianni awarded the first, second, and third-place winners with a check to help defray some of the expenses associated with the mock trial programs and state competition.

The winning school teams were Third place, Whitney M. Young Magnet High School; Second place, Timothy Christian School "A Team;" and First place, Maine South High School.

In closing, Judge Bishop thanked everyone for their participation and wished the teams good luck as they now prepare for the state competition in March.

###

www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter @19thCircuitIL](#)

Follow us on [YouTube](#)