



MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2015

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COLLEGE STUDENT DIES IN HAZING INCIDENT; FOUL PLAY SUSPECTED!

*By Robin Thomas, Investigative Reporter for Utopia Eyewitness News, WUNN
(AKA Sue H. Johnson, CCCE Mock Trial Program Coordinator)*

September 15, 2014: Breaking News! 11 pm newscast transcript

Reporter Robin Thomas here, with Utopia Eyewitness news. We've just learned that a student at Utopia University, Harper Finch, died this evening in a tragic fall from the historic *Paifang* gate at the university. Finch reportedly climbed the *Paifang* to be photographed while doing a variation of the recent "planking" fad – called "pandaing" – as part of an initiation stunt for pledging the Zeta Iota Pi honor society. That's all we know at this time, but we will follow this story closely as it develops.

September 16, 2014: 6 pm newscast transcript

Hello, this is reporter Robin Thomas with Utopia Eyewitness News. I'm here at Utopia University with Avery Koltasch, a friend of Harper Finch. Avery confirms that Harper, Avery, and a third student were in the process of completing three "Feats of Fortitude" for the ZIP honor society when the *Paifang* gate suddenly gave way, leading to Harper's sudden death. According to Avery, a large number of termites were unexpectedly present on the *Paifang* gate, leading some to suspect that foul play was involved. We hope to have more news on this disturbing event by tomorrow night.

September 17, 2014: 6 pm newscast transcript

Reporter Robin Thomas here, with another update on the heartbreaking events at Utopia University. We've learned that the termites found on the *Paifang* gate were an unusually aggressive type of termite not native to the area. The police are reportedly questioning several individuals connected to the ZIP honor society, including pledge Logan Kaufmann and current ZIP Pledge Master, Grayson Zayne. It appears that the police believe Harper's death was not merely an accident, although no motive or suspects have been identified at this time. We will continue to follow this story as it unfolds and will keep you apprised if criminal charges are filed.

Reporter "Robin Thomas" will soon have much more to report, for the case of *State of Utopia v. Grayson Zayne* will proceed to trial on **February 6, 2016**. Released on Sept. 1, the case was revised by CCCE Program Coordinator Sue Johnson from the 2015 Pennsylvania state case. Our 2015-16 North Carolina case includes many timely topics, including academic scandals, hazing, and forensic entomology. The case also seeks to raise awareness of ways students can engage in positive social action, such as raising funds for charities or soliciting volunteers to join the blood marrow donor registry.

Many thanks to the Pennsylvania case authors and to our CCCE Case Committee reviewers Katy Parker, Samuel Johnson, and CCCE Case Committee Chair M. Gordon Widenhouse, Jr.

2015 SUMMER CAMP IS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS!

By Sue H. Johnson

CCCE Mock Trial Program Coordinator



Early in the morning on Wednesday July 29, sixty excited high school students and teacher-coaches converged on Carmichael dorm in Chapel Hill. While many lived nearby, others had come from as far away as Ohio, New Jersey, Tennessee, and South Carolina. What inspired them to devote four days of their summer to an intense academic activity? Mock trial, of course! These enthusiastic students and teachers were eager to learn about our legal system during our third annual CCCE Chapel Hill summer mock trial camp. While some students were looking to refine their skills in the Advanced sessions, many Basic level campers weren't entirely sure what mock trial even was – but they were about to find out!



Former judges, attorneys, and other legal

professionals shared their knowledge in targeted sessions on trial preparation. Session topics included “Mock 101” (overview and case analysis), Direct Examination, Objections and Rules of Evidence, Witnesses, Cross Examination, Opening Statements and Closing Arguments, and Presentation and Demeanor. Instructors kept the students engaged by tailoring their presentations to the students’ level and employing the Socratic method. “Jeopardy” games provided a fun way to test the students’ knowledge of each day’s material, with prizes for individual answers and for the top two teams.



Teaching sessions were interspersed with hands-on breakout groups, in which the eight teams of students put their knowledge into practice by preparing for an end-of-camp mock trial. Law school and college-aged “mockers” with experience at the highest levels of high school and collegiate competition mentored each team, guiding students in their preparations and giving them confidence in their new skills.



On Saturday, the students “showed their stuff” by arguing for either the prosecution or the defense in the case of *State of Arcadia v. Kinsley Williams*. While notes were allowed due to the compressed time frame, many students confidently proceeded from memory alone. Objection battles were adroitly argued, and witnesses gave convincing portrayals even under withering cross examinations. At the end of the day, the students and their proud families were thrilled by all they had accomplished!

Preparing to leave Chapel Hill, the campers and teacher-coaches raved about the camp. As one participant proclaimed on the evaluation survey, “The camp was a fantastic learning experience. I feel like I have been able to grow as a mocker along with my teammates, and we will do better at competition because of this camp.” A teacher-coach agreed: “I highly recommend the camp! The Resource Manual was exceptional, and the Presenters were incredible!”

Our volunteer instructors were equally enthusiastic. N.C. Supreme Court Justice Robin Hudson, who presided in one of the trials, wrote afterwards, “Those students were amazing, especially as young as they are. I enjoy seeing how talented our young people are, and helping out is the fun part of my job. The pleasure was all mine!”

As a result of our summer camp, several new schools plan to join the mock trial program this fall – a wonderful benefit to students statewide who will thereby gain important skills and a deeper appreciation for our legal system.



A HUGE "THANK YOU" TO OUR VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS AND STAFF!!

Instructors: Darren Allen, S. Quon Bridges, Hailey Bunce, Philip Entzminger, Susan H. Johnson, Mark Kleinschmidt, and Justin Matarrese.

Presiding Judges: Justice Robin Hudson, S. Quon Bridges, Justin Matarrese, Michael D’Ippolito.

Mentors and Volunteers: Toby Benjamin, Michael Bojanski, Matt Burke, Rachel Cline, Shaza Gaballah, Madeline Gooding, Frankford Johnson, Andrew Kelly, Arvind Krishnamurthy, Logan Spaller, Elise Wilson, David Yasinovsky, and Sydney Zorowitz.

CALENDAR 2015 – 2016 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

Competition Case Released!	Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2015
Early Registration Deadline	Friday, Sept. 25, 2015
Final Registration Deadline and \$175 Team Fee Due	Friday, Dec. 11, 2015
Team Member List, Code of Ethics, Release Forms Due	Friday, Jan. 8, 2016
Last Day to Withdraw Without Penalty	Friday, Jan. 8, 2016
Regional Competition	Saturday, Feb. 6, 2016
Widenhouse Award Nomination Materials Due	Weds., Feb. 24, 2016
State Finals Competition	Fri. – Sat., March 11-12, 2016
National Championship, Boise, ID	May 12-14, 2016

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

Special thanks to our 2015-16 Regional Coordinators and CCCE Board Members: Asheville Regional Coordinators Mark Melrose and Marion Parsons-Groat, Charlotte Regional Coordinator Jennifer Errington, Durham Regional Coordinators Russell Johnson and Robert Jessup, Fayetteville Regional Coordinator Rebecca Britton, Greenville Regional Coordinator Phillip Entzminger, High Point Regional Coordinator Rich Manger, Raleigh Regional Coordinators Christine Scheef and Lindsey Granados, Wilmington Regional Coordinator John H. Anderson, Jr.; and CCCE Board Members Gordon Widenhouse, Rebecca Britton, Rich Manger, Adrienne Blocker, Chris Nichols, Katy Parker, Christine Scheef, and Brooke Schmidly.

Special thanks also to our 2015-16 Site Coordinators:

Asheville: Victoria Townley, ***Charlotte:*** Beverly K. Moore, ***Durham:*** Patti Clapper and Lakisha Chichester, ***Fayetteville:*** Elizabeth Owens, ***Greenville:*** Kristin Miller and Jill Gustman; ***High Point:*** Karen Parrish, ***Raleigh:*** Michelle Keely and Fran LaFrankie, ***Wilmington:*** Brandy Jo Lea and Christi Wert.

*****If you are interested in supporting or learning more about the NCAJ High School Mock Trial program, please contact Sue Johnson, Program Coordinator, at sueheathjohnson@gmail.com, or Rebecca Britton or Gordon Widenhouse, Mock Trial Committee Co-Chairs, at rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com or mgwidenhouse@yahoo.com.***