



MOCK TRIAL NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2013

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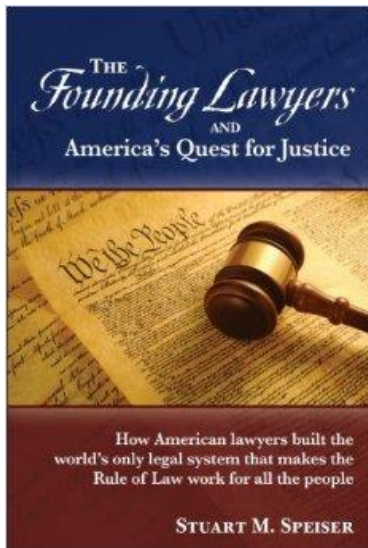
Carolina Center for Civic Education and the NCAJ Mock Trial Committee
"Investing in our future, creating tomorrow's leaders"

THE FOUNDING LAWYERS AND AMERICA'S QUEST FOR JUSTICE

By Sue H. Johnson

CCCE Mock Trial Program Coordinator

As we prepare for Thanksgiving, we are blessed to enjoy freedoms that many can only dream about. Why are we so fortunate? Because we live in a nation under the "rule of law" rather than the "rule of men," thanks to the wisdom and foresight of our Founders—many of whom were trial lawyers.



In his book *The Founding Lawyers and America's Quest for Justice*, Stuart M. Speiser discusses the pivotal role of "American lawyers in conceiving, initiating, and executing the plan for an entirely new form of government, which they called a Government of Laws." Speiser argues that the legal training and mindset of men such as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton were the *sine qua non* of our Constitution. But Speiser goes further, declaring that despite other nations' scorn of our "lawyer-dominated" society, the United States is the only nation "whose legal system provides access for the great majority of its citizens, regardless of their wealth/poverty and prominence/obscurity." He convincingly demonstrates that even in other democracies purporting to follow the Rule of Law, the middle class is denied access to civil justice through government-imposed barriers such as the Loser Pays rule, prohibitive filing fees, and prohibition of contingency fee arrangements for legal representation. Speiser's fascinating and persuasive work is a wonderful reminder that we have much for which to be thankful.

Through mock trial participation, high school students have the opportunity to experience first-hand the Rule of Law and our trial-by-jury system. Each year, more than 600 students and their families gain an appreciation for the vital role played by lawyers in maintaining our freedoms and liberties even today.

Students also gain a deeper understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, thanks to the investment of teachers and attorneys who serve as team advisors. Reinforcing this important lesson, **North Carolina Representative Rick Glazier** exhorted participants at our 2013 State Finals to invest in serving their communities. Rick closed his inspiring presentation by reminding the audience of the contributions of trial lawyers throughout our nation's history (*watch Rick's Friday night address to students and families at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFRtC5UDEvU> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kghLI88rCHI>*).

Many thanks to the attorneys and paralegals across the state who are already involved in advising mock trial teams; you are truly "investing in our future, creating tomorrow's leaders." **Keep reading** to learn how mock trial benefited and inspired **Sean Maroney**, former NC mocker and now an **Anchor/reporter at WNCN news**

in Raleigh. And if **you** want to impact others by serving as an attorney advisor, please contact CCCE Program Coordinator Sue Johnson at SueHeathJohnson@gmail.com.

FOCUS ON ALUMNI: SEAN MARONEY, ANCHOR AT WNCN

By Sean Maroney

Anchor, NBC affiliate WNCN in Raleigh

I count myself lucky. I basically get to compete in Mock Trial every day at my job. If you've ever had the hot lights on you and a camera with its red light blinking in your face, you know what I'm talking about. The thrill of live television certainly provides the rush that a Mock Trial competition affords. Not only that, but every interview is a "cross-examination" to some extent.



For those of you who coach and those who have competed as students, you all know that participation in Mock Trial is no guarantee that someone will go into law. I look back at my own teammates and currently see a vast array of professionals, including doctors, electricians, and scientists, as well as attorneys.

The beauty of Mock Trial is that it exposes you to, and then helps you mature, two skill sets: 1) working as a team; and 2) being self-reliant. Those two things, seemingly at odds but actually working hand in hand, will allow you to succeed anywhere in life, especially in the work place.

Mock Trial helped me buy into the concept that the success of the team is paramount and that no role is beneath you, whether you're making copies of exhibits for your co-counsel or presenting those exhibits to the court; or whether you're rolling the teleprompter or reading the words from the anchor desk. If any link in the chain is missing, the whole thing will collapse.

Back at my time competing with Asheboro High School, we believed passionately in the **team**. That's why students who were captains of their sports, valedictorians, club presidents and many times working part-time jobs to save for cars, college, etc. would spend countless additional hours of their own time poring over the case materials, writing arguments, rehearsing lines of questioning together and memorizing law. We all wanted the team to succeed. For that to happen, Mock Trial taught me that you need to be the understudy of every role.

On each successful Mock Trial team, I would bet that every participant – while specializing in his or her own specific task – knows the case and roles so well that he or she could step in at a moment's notice. It's amazing to me how foreign of a concept this is in the real world. You might not know the whole job, but a lot of times, you probably know enough to help out if needed. "That's not my job" is a phrase I hear to this day. It frustrates me because that type of selfish thinking hurts the final product, and at the very least, it damages the group's morale. Mock Trialers get that their job is the team's success, and managers most definitely notice that attitude when those students graduate into the workforce.

That said, the second skill of being **self-reliant** is equally important. Mock Trial teaches us that a team is only as strong as its parts. You can't hide behind the team. Each person must shine in his or her own way. When you're on the stand, all eyes are on you. When you're standing before the judge and jury, all eyes are on you. It's a level of responsibility most people either run away from or never get in their lives. Mock Trial students get the opportunity to experience it at an early age. No one is going to bail you out (pardon the pun) if you crash and burn in front of the judge during competition. You have to be prepared because at a certain point, you can't rely on whispered conversations at the counsel table.

I try to bring that level of preparation each day to my job, whether I'm talking to a store owner on South Street outside downtown Raleigh or posing questions to President Karzai in Kabul. Just as the judges at competition know if a student isn't prepared, my interview subjects, and ultimately the audience, will know if I'm not prepared. Mock Trial taught me to go the extra mile in doing my homework and to think critically about a subject.

Much can be said for Mock Trial helping students become better public speakers. Maybe you're a product of this mindset. You'll get no argument from me; it certainly does. But I challenge you to see those skills I mentioned reflected in your life or the lives of your students. No matter the profession, there's a sort of "Mock Trial Mafia" that positively impacts communities, both inside and outside our state. And having some understanding of the law and being able to share it with the general public in what you do certainly doesn't hurt.

-- Sean is a former Islamabad bureau chief and Pentagon correspondent for the Voice of America. He now anchors at Raleigh's NBC affiliate WNCN. Sean graduated from Asheboro High School (2002), where he was a three-time state champion and a national runner-up in Mock Trial. You can reach him at smaroney@wncn.com.

CALENDAR 2013 – 2014 MOCK TRIAL SEASON

Final Team Registration Form and \$150 Fee Due	Friday, December 13, 2013
Team Member List, Code of Ethics, Release Forms Due	Friday, January 10, 2014
Last Day to Withdraw Without Penalty	Friday, January 10, 2014
Regional Competition (Final roster due)	Saturday, February 1, 2014
Widenhouse Award materials due	Wednesday, February 19, 2014
State Finals - Campbell Law School, Raleigh	Friday – Saturday, Feb. 28 - March 1, 2014
National Championship – Madison, WI	Thursday – Sunday, May 8-11, 2014

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013 – 2014 OUTREACH PROGRAM SPONSORS!

Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
Lawyers Mutual Liability Insurance Company of North Carolina
North Carolina Lawyers Weekly

We still need more sponsorship support to fully realize the goals of our outreach program. If you can join us in this important outreach, please contact Sue at SueHeathJohnson@gmail.com or CCCE Vice-President Rebecca Britton at rebecca@brittonlawfirm.com

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013 – 2014 COMPETITION SPONSORS!

State Finals: Rudolf Widenhouse & Fialko
Asheville: Melrose, Seago & Lay, P.A.
Charlotte: The Sumwalt Law Firm
Durham: The Law Offices of James Scott Farrin
Fayetteville: Britton Law, P.A.
Greenville: Hardee & Hardee, LLP
High Point: Crumley Roberts, LLP
Raleigh: Twiggs Strickland & Rabenau, P.A.
Wilmington: Shipman & Wright, LLP

CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW - partnering with NCAJ to host our State Finals!

IT TAKES A VILLAGE . . .

Special thanks to Mock Trial Committee Members and Regional Coordinators who have agreed to serve for the 2013/2014 season: Mark Melrose (Asheville Regional Coordinator), Frances Knox and Paul Goodson (Charlotte Regional Coordinators), Russell Johnson and Robert Jessup (Durham Regional Coordinators), Philip Entzminger (Greenville Regional Coordinator), Rich Manger and Adrienne Blocker (High Point Regional Coordinators), Christine Scheef and Lindsey Granados (Raleigh Regional Coordinators), John H. Anderson, Jr., (Wilmington Regional Coordinator), Ken Campbell, Sheila Chavis, Laura Jenkins, Carlos Mahoney, Chris Nichols, John O'Neal, Katy Parker, Elizabeth Spruill, Mark Sumwalt, and Kim Vukovich.

Special thanks also to our Site Coordinators serving for the 2013/2014 season!

Asheville: Cindy Bryson, Charlotte: Beverly K. Moore, Durham: Patti Clapper, Fayetteville: Elizabeth Owens, Greenville: Kristin Miller; High Point: Karen Parrish, Raleigh: Lakisha Chichester and Fran LaFrankie, Wilmington: Brandy Jo Lea.