



2005-2006

Wade Edwards High School Mock Trial Competition

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GREENVILLE TEAM CROWNED MOCK TRIAL STATE CHAMPIONS *Students from East Chapel Hill won No. 2 spot*

RALEIGH – Students from Greenville’s J.H. Rose High School earned the title of Mock Trial State Champions yesterday after besting 15 other state finalists in a two-day tournament at the Mecklenburg County Civil Courthouse in Charlotte. East Chapel Hill High School finished in second place. Both teams will advance to the first-ever American Mock Trial Invitational to be held in Chapel Hill on May 16-17.

Based on their strong performance, Hendersonville High School and North Forsyth High School were named alternates for the invitational, which will be organized by the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers and the New Jersey State Bar Foundation.

“I am thrilled for the students, coaches and parents of the J. H. Rose mock trial team for their outstanding performance in the state championship,” said Dick Taylor, CEO of the NC Academy of Trial Lawyers, which sponsored the 14th annual Wade Edwards High School Mock Trial Competition. “I also congratulate the more than 80 mock trial teams from across North Carolina who participated in this year’s tournament for their hard work and dedication to learning the judicial process.”

At state finals, the 16 top teams argued both sides of the hypothetical case of *State of Utopia vs. Micky Finn*, which involved a Halloween prank that goes fatally wrong, ending in one death, an empty vial and several suspects. Students were judged based on how well they demonstrated critical thinking skills, public speaking, courtroom demeanor and teamwork.

Representing J.H. Rose at the championship were: Pamela Bland, Elizabeth Davis, Kathryn Jackson, Jordan Linscott, Sarah McCormick, Nermal Patel, Clayton Wilson and Nancy York, as well as teacher coach Liza Knight and attorney advisor Jeff Miller.

The students representing East Chapel Hill in the state finals were: Jill Akiyama, Meghan Cullen, Sarah Henke, Marek Jucovic, Greg Margolis, Shreya Prasad, Patrick Wilson, along with teacher coach Bob Brogden and attorney advisor Bob McClanahan.

In previous years, the state champion advanced to the National High School Mock Trial Championship. However, North Carolina recently withdrew from the National Championship because of a policy adopted in October 2005 by the National High School Mock Trial Championship Board of Directors that forbids schedule accommodations for students with religious restrictions.

The issue of religious accommodation was raised at the 2005 National Championship in May, which the Academy hosted in Charlotte. The Academy adjusted the competition schedule to enable New Jersey’s state champion, a Jewish Orthodox high school, to compete and still observe the Sabbath from sunset Friday to sundown Saturday. The accommodation had little impact on the scoring system and provided minimal disturbance to the existing schedule.



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“We were proud of the way we worked things out last year,” said Rebecca Britton, president-elect of the Academy. “No student should have to choose between his or her faith and participation in this competition.”

Since the National Board passed the motion barring accommodations, the New Jersey State Bar Foundation has withdrawn from the competition and U.S. Rep. Steve Rothman (D-NJ) has introduced a bill calling on the national board to reconsider its decision. The Academy and the New Jersey State Bar Foundation intend to invite other states that are considering withdrawal to the American Mock Trial Invitational.

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