



MYEROWITZ MOOT COURT COMPETITION

Four second-year Maryland Carey Law students competed in the annual Morris Brown Myerowitz Moot Court Competition, held March 9, 2016.

Myerowitz participants included (left to right below): Finalist Josh Carback, U.S. Tax Court Judge the Hon. Tamara W. Ashford, Best Brief winner Linda Morris, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit Judge the Hon. Paul V. Niemeyer, Best Oralist Jennifer Auger (also pictured left), Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Appellate Division, Assistant Public Defender Marc DeSimone '04, and Runner-up Oralist and Brief David Maher (also pictured left).



ADVOCATING OUR WAY TO THE TOP

“THIS IS THE TRIAL OF MR. PIG STRAW, MR. PIG WOOD, AND MR. PIG BRICK WHO ARE CHARGED WITH THE PREMEDITATED MURDER OF WILL KILL WOLF.” Middle schoolers pack the courtroom, listening intently and learning the legal skills required to successfully adjudicate a court case as the Trial of the Three Little Pigs: State of Forestville v. Pig Wood, Pig Straw, and Pig Brick unfolds.

“I started these mock trials for my now 30-year-old daughter’s grade school class to share insight into careers in law,” recalls Associate Judge Wanda Keyes Heard ’82, of the Baltimore City Circuit Court, who used Maryland Carey Law’s Moot Court Room for the educational, yet entertaining, fairy tale proceedings this past May.

“Participants are empowered to practice public speaking, see the intimate workings of the criminal justice system, and learn the importance of civic responsibilities. Ultimately, I hope it sparks an interest in the law for these students,” Heard says.

Advocacy teams provide many of the same benefits to law students, albeit on a more sophisticated level.

At Maryland Carey Law, credit-bearing advocacy offerings include Moot Court, International Moot Court, and the National Trial Team, as well as teams that participate in specialty competitions from the Business Law Program, the Environmental Law Program, the Law and Health Care Program, the Center for Dispute Resolution, and a Labor and Employment Team. Since the early 1970s, the law school has also hosted the internal

Morris Brown Myerowitz Moot Court Competition, whose winners go on to comprise the National Moot Court Team.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, Maryland Carey Law teams had plenty to celebrate. Wins included first place at the Lone Star Classic Mock Trial Competition, where one team member also won Best Closing Argument; Champion Mediator at the Jeffrey S. Abrams National Mediator Competition; Best Brief at both the National Constitutional Law Competition and National Energy and Sustainability Moot Court Competition; Best Advocate at the South Texas Mock Trial Challenge; first place in the Fifth Annual Health Law Regulatory and Compliance Competition; and top rankings in the semi- and quarter-finals of several competitions across the country.

GOOD ADVOCACY GOES BEYOND MOCK COURTROOM WINS

“I never prepared students to win, I prepared them to be all-around professionals,” says Jerome Deise, professor emeritus and former director of the law school’s nationally-recognized Trial Team. “If all you can say you got out of participation in a trial team is, ‘I won this tournament,’ then I have been a failure. I tell students they are assuming responsibility for people’s lives when they enter a courtroom. It is a privilege to represent a client, to earn their trust, and that’s the same way you treat a competition.”

When Deise arrived at Maryland Carey Law in 1991, the late Professor Abraham Dash was supervising a trial team that attended up to two competitions a year.

“Although small at the time, they did well. Abe was a gracious leader, and I have tried to continue a lot of the lessons he taught, like taking the high road at all times.” Deise soon found it essential to make the National Trial Team part of a course curriculum to establish integrity.

“The class and team experience combined is what teaches ethics in action, the art of rhetoric, trial psychology, and tactics,” says A.J. Bellido de Luna ’04, former director of the National Trial Team, who has firsthand experience with the commitment required of students from his days as team captain. He estimates team members participate in 50 to 75 practice trials by the time they graduate, the majority of which are before sitting or retired judges. “Hearing how judges rule differently on the same issue and

being able to ask why, is an invaluable experience,” he says.

Professor Mark Graber, the incoming National Trial Team director for fall 2016, adds, “Trial lawyers must learn how to persuade their fellow citizens, a task quite different from demonstrating to a professor that you have mastered the assigned reading for class.”

Looking forward to his first outside competition this year, third-year student Austin Strine, Moot Court Board president, hopes to broaden his understanding of the law by getting to “interact with people from varying parts of the country, who may see things differently.” With his goal of becoming a litigator in private practice, Strine specifically chose to participate in Moot

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Professor and Director of the Law & Health Care Program Diane Hoffmann joined coach Ian Clark '14, and team members Alexandria Montanio '16, Theresa Thompson '16, and Sherri Weinstein '16, (left to right above) following their win at the Fifth Annual Health Law Regulatory and Compliance Competition, hosted by Maryland Carey Law on April 2, 2016.



The National Trial Team (above) took home top prize October 19, 2016, at St. Mary's University School of Law's annual Lone Star Classic Mock Trial Competition. Front row (left to right): Assistant Coach Magaly Bittner '14, Benjamin Garmoe '16, who also won an individual award for Best Closing Argument, Morgan Thomas '16, Daniel Kaprow '16, Erick Kim '16, Head Coach Lindsey McCulley '12, and former Director A.J. Bellido de Luna '04. Back row (left to right): U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Western District of Texas the Hon. John W. Primomo, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas Richard L. Durbin Jr., and Deputy Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Texas Donna F. Coltharp. *Photo credit: St. Mary's School of Law*



David Flores '16 (left) and Jacob Memon '16 (right) competed in the National Energy and Sustainability Moot Court Competition, hosted by West Virginia University College of Law March 3-5, 2016. They represented the Environmental Law Program, taking home the Best Brief Award and advancing to the semifinals out of 24 teams.

Court because it balances the writing skills he would garner from contributing to a journal and the oral competencies that are essential on a traditional trial team.

Government leaders, business executives, and community activists alike also benefit from advocacy skills and the art of persuasion.

William Pittler '59, CEO of the Friendly Finance Corporation, a Maryland Carey Law Board of Visitors member, and a financial supporter of the Business Law Program's team, recalls that although his professional aspirations have long been in private industry, his legal education and participation in Moot Court "prepared me for what I would do the rest of my life." In 2013 and 2015, Maryland Carey Law won first place for its drafted agreement at the regional Transactional LawMeet, where business students also compete in mock contract negotiations—realistic exercises that Pittler calls vital, because "no matter what field they go into, lawyers are always negotiating some type of contract."

The Alternative Dispute Resolution team also uses advocacy skills in ways beyond traditional litigation. The team's growth and success—as Regional Champions of the American Bar Association Law Student Division Negotiation Competition in

2013 and 2014, as well as first place Attorney-Client Team in 2015 at the International Alternative Dispute Resolution Tournament—have mirrored an increasing need for mediation in the vast majority of legal conflicts.

Dawna Cobb, Moot Court faculty advisor, sees career benefits for participating students. Moot Court Board members, especially, put extensive time into planning and organizing, as well as managing financial responsibilities for travel and the annual Myerowitz event. During her 22 years as a practicing attorney, Cobb considered young lawyers with these practical experiences, in addition to the ability to work in a team, to be front-runners when deciding whom to hire.

A HISTORY OF WINS, A LEGACY AS PROFESSIONALS

"A collateral benefit from preparing to be the best legal professionals possible is we do win competitions. We prepare like lawyers, not like students," according to Deise.

Traveling to outside appellate contests for many years, since 2010 alone, Moot Court Board members have advanced to the final rounds in more than one-third of the 36 competitions in which they have participated. They have also secured two top-10 placements at the National First Amendment Moot Court Competition.

The Secret to Maryland Carey Law's Rising Tide in Advocacy

TRADITION OF SUPPORT FROM LAW COMMUNITY KEY TO SUCCESS

"When [the National Trial Team] travels to competitions around the country, we carry a reputation as a team that will be clean, fair, and very difficult to beat," points out Benjamin Garmoe '16, former Moot Court Board and National Trial Team member. "That reputation is no accident. It comes from a strong support system that has developed over multiple decades of success at the highest levels."

Not just faculty, but countless alumni and judges dedicate time, talent, and financial backing to carry on the tradition because they have a vested interest in seeing students become leading lawyers. In many instances, they serve not just as mentors, but become lifelong colleagues and friends.

"Law is a profession of mentorship," says Marc DeSimone '04, Moot Court coach, adjunct professor, and assistant public defender in the Appellate Division of the Maryland Office of the Public Defender. Former students often call him for advice as they prepare for their first appellate arguments. "As alumni, that's how we continue our proud history. The law school community exists to foster great lawyers who are a credit to our institution."

"My experiences in Moot Court were by far my best and most memorable in law school," says Holly Leasure '16, immediate

past president of the Moot Court Board, who plans to return as a coach in hopes of giving back some of the immeasurable skills she gained. "I learned so much from participating in each Moot Court competition, especially the outside competitions, and I want future students to share that same experience."

National Trial Team alumnus Miguel Palmeiro '09, who opened his own litigation practice upon graduation, became a coach and sponsor of the team because, "Serving as a role model to students keeps you in check for your day job. It's a reminder of why you went to law school in the first place, to do right by others."

Professor and incoming National Trial Team Director Mark Graber notes that numerous alumni give up weekends and evenings to instruct students, "instruction that not only improves the team, but builds connections for future employment." For some, it's an opportunity to engage with the school beyond monetary donations.

Moreover, for alumni like Palmeiro, who followed the passion that comes with learning the art of advocacy through a competitive team, it's an addiction. "I litigate at work, I read about trial tactics on vacation, and on the weekends I'm bored if I can't go in to help teach at practice trials."

Since 1999, when the National Trial Team began collecting statistics, they have participated in over 88 competitions, won 18, and brought home 17 individual awards and honors. The Team has competed 12 times in the prestigious Tournament of Champions, with nine top-four finishes, and one National Championship title.

"The more successful we got, the more competitions we were invited to attend, which has been great as a visual indicator of our success," remarks Deise. "But what I value is the professionalism these men and women take with them beyond graduation."

Marc DeSimone '04, adjunct professor and assistant public defender in the Appellate

Division of the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, feels that Maryland Carey Law "is committed to excellence by teaching young lawyers to do the right things in the right way. It shows in our clinical opportunities and trial teams alike." Since becoming the first-ever alumni coach for the National Moot Court Team in 2006, he has instructed four

teams that advanced to the National Championships. "For some teams it's just that, a competition, where elbows might get thrown for the win," says DeSimone. "But the difference is my students can hold their heads up high knowing they conducted themselves well as ambassadors of this school."