

September 9, 2008

Dear students, parents, and educators:

I am proud to announce that the University of Pittsburgh Mock Trial Team, in concert with the University Honors College, is hosting the fifth annual High School Mock Trial Tournament. The tournament will take place on Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009. There will be two rounds of competition on each day, four rounds total. All rounds take on Pitt's Oakland campus, in our signature building, the Cathedral of Learning.

In each round, your team will either be prosecution or defense (determined beforehand). You will then present your side of the case, and will be evaluated by local attorneys, judges, law students, and Pitt Mock Trial members. Competing attorneys are scored based on presentation skills and knowledge of the law; witnesses are scored on credibility and knowledge of their affidavit. For your convenience, a sample scoring ballot is included.

Every team will perform each side of the case twice. After the first round and in all subsequent rounds, pairings will be assigned through power matching: that is, based on a team's performance in the preceding round(s). The tournament will follow the Rules of Evidence, Procedure, and case law of the Pennsylvania State Tournament, and will use this year's case given by the PA Bar. The tournament has been cleared with the Pennsylvania Bar Association and participation will not affect a team's eligibility to participate in official competitions.

We hold the tournament in January to best help your school's preparation for county, district, and ultimately state competitions. In past years, we have hosted the eventual Pennsylvania state champion team; thus, this tournament serves as an excellent opportunity to compete against some of the region's finest talent.

This year's tournament will again have optional team workshops scheduled for the breaks between rounds. These workshops would be led by experienced Pitt Mock Trial members and focus on fundamental procedure and understanding of the law. If you have any suggestions for aspects that could be reviewed in a workshop, feel free to contact me.

Spectators are welcome, but space is limited in several of the competition rooms.

Attached is further information regarding how to register, cost, a schedule, and so on. If you have questions, please contact me at [pittmocktrial@gmail.com](mailto:pittmocktrial@gmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

Phil LaRue  
Tournament Director  
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*Enc: Registration information, ballot, registration form*