



NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA • COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
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Release: Immediately
Date: 03/21/17

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Two San Diego Teams Go to Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition *Both 1st and 2nd Place Teams Going to State*

In an unusual twist, both the first *and* second place San Diego County High School Mock Trial teams will compete in this year's statewide competition.

Scripps Ranch High School topped 28 other County High School Mock Trial teams to win the legal competition in February. It faced The Academy of Our Lady of Peace in the final competition; a competition which needed a tie breaking vote to determine the winner. As is the tradition, Scripps Ranch High School was set to solely represent San Diego County in the statewide Mock Trial competition in Riverside starting March 24th. However, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, which oversees the statewide competition informed San Diego organizers that it had 33 teams representing 33 counties at the 2017 finals and with an odd number of teams in the state finals, the Foundation randomly selected a team from a "wild card pool". The wild card team winner was: The Academy of Our Lady of Peace.

"What makes this so invitation so interesting is how closely matched these two teams were throughout our local competition. After four days of competition we had two high schools numerically tied going into the finals and at the end of that competition, scored by six different attorneys, these teams were, once again, tied. In fact, the judge presiding over the final trial had

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to break that tie. So to learn both teams get to compete in the state program is fitting and just given the way things ended. This has been such a tremendous year for the San Diego High School Mock Trial program. Our program has increased in size and therefore the competition has become more intense”, says Superior Court Judge Yvonne Campos, chair of the annual event.”

The event is organized by San Diego Superior Court, San Diego County Bar Association (SDCBA), together with the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF). Judicial officers oversee the bench trials, San Diego County lawyers volunteer their time to serve as team coaches and competition scorers.

The San Diego Bar Association’s president, Loren Firestone says the event is beneficial to students, “I’m a product of the mock trial program, and am better off because of it. Having participated in mock trial all four years of high school, one thing is for sure, whether the students go on to become lawyers or choose another career, they are better educated, and will become better citizens for having gone through the program. I couldn’t be more impressed with the teams that were a part of this year’s competition, and am thrilled the top two teams are both going to the state finals.”

The San Diego County Mock Trial program provides high school students with actual experience in courtrooms rather than learning about the rule of law from books and lectures. The student teams undertake the roles of lawyers and witnesses facing off on a hypothetical case in front of actual state and federal judges.

The last time San Diego sent two Mock Trial teams to state finals was in 2013 when Torrey Pines High School (1st place) and Westview High School (2nd place) went to the competition.