STU LAW MOCK TRIAL AND MOOT COURT TEAMS EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Over the last several years, the Moot Court, International Moot Court, and Mock Trial Teams from St. Thomas University have begun to show that STU law students can compete successfully against (and defeat) top competitors from across the country. Moot Court teams compete in appellate arguments and are required to submit well written, researched briefs. Mock trial teams compete in various aspects of trial presentation. The STU law teams’ recent successes demonstrate the growth of these programs and commitment to continued success. The teams coached by Professor Kang, Adjunct Professor Klein and Judge Gersten, assisted by other dedicated faculty members, and with the untiring efforts of the student-members have proven to be formidable opponents in very competitive competitions. Participation in these types of activities is especially helpful to students who desire to pursue advocacy or litigation-centered careers. Employers often look favorably on these kinds of activities, and they often serve as a great mechanism to network with practitioners and judges.

We are pleased to announce the St. Thomas University School of Law Mock Trial Team was a semi-finalist team in the Michigan State University College of Law National Trial Advocacy Competition held the weekend of October 23, 2010. More than 26 teams from across the nation competed, trying a first degree murder case. Law students Veronica LaCasa and Aron Gibson represented the Prosecution, while Courtney Deblis and Bryan Paschal represented the Defense.

The St. Thomas Mock Trial Team defeated teams from prestigious law schools such as Baylor, Loyola, Fordham University (the previous year’s winner), and Houston (last year’s finalist), and finished as a semi-finalist.

In addition to winning the semi-finalist trophy, the highlight of the weekend was when Courtney Deblis earned top honors and a trophy for conducting the "Best Cross Examination." Ms. Deblis’ cross examination was chosen by the judges as the best of over 300 cross examinations performed.

Mike Mayer and Tara Kawass, Assistant Public Defenders at the Miami Office of the Public Defender, and Judge David M. Gersten, faculty advisor and judge on the Third District Court of Appeal, coached the team.

The St. Thomas University School of Law Moot Court Team recently participated in the Wechsler national competition in Washington, D.C. The team consisting of Jorge Fors, Sharon Glenn, Shanna Valentine, and their tirelessly dedicated student-coach, Rafael de la Grana was able to advance to the quarterfinals, its best showing to date in the Wechsler competition. According to Team Coach, Professor John Kang, the arguments by Mr. Fors, Ms. Glenn and Ms. Valentine “brimmed with intelligence and … the team represented our school with class, wit, and charm.”

The St. Thomas University School of Law Moot Court Team won best brief against a highly competitive field, beating out the likes of the University of Virginia School of Law. The brief, in accordance with the Wechsler rules, was written and researched without any assistance of any kind from any faculty member or lawyer or judge. Our success demonstrates that our students think better, write better, and research better than the best from other top schools across the country.
The team was assisted in preparation for their oral argument, not only by Coach Professor Kang but also by Adjunct Professor Howard Blumberg and Professors Ira Nathenson and Amy Ronner.

The International Moot Court Team will undertake its first competition this year in January at the International Criminal Law Network at Pace Law School. We look forward to their success.

**CAREER SERVICES OFFICE PRESENTS DEAN RAY’S JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES**

Dean Ray will discuss what employers are looking for, how to build a record and skill set that will make you marketable, and how to present yourself. This event will take place Thursday, November 4, 2010, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Monday, November 8, 2010, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in Room 1. Students are encouraged to attend one session or the other, whichever is more convenient. Lunch or dinner (as appropriate) will be provided.

**STU LAW ALUMNUS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER OF FEDERAL BAR ASSOCIATION**

Brett Alan Barfield, a 1999 graduate of St. Thomas University School of Law, was inducted recently as the President of the South Florida Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. The induction ceremony took place at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida, on September 23, 2010. The event was attended by a significant number of Florida’s legal leaders. Dean Ray, other STU faculty, and a number of law student representatives were included in the attendees. Mr. Barfield is a partner in the nationally recognized firm of Holland & Knight. He has long been recognized as a leader in the south Florida legal community. His practice at Holland & Knight centers on representing clients in diverse complex business, class actions, construction, and other disputes. Mr. Barfield also has extensive experience representing international petitioners under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Mr. Barfield has long been a supporter of STU law school. Interestingly, Mr. Barfield continues a tradition of STU law leadership of the South Florida Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. Although he is the first alumnus to hold the position of president, both Professor Amy Ronner and Professor Gary Kravitz, previously served as president. Mr. Barfield’s success is yet another example of how STU law graduates continue to become leaders in the legal community. We extend our congratulations to Mr. Barfield.

**EXERCISE YOUR CIVIC RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The right to vote is one of those things that is easy to take for granted. As future lawyers and community leaders, the right to vote also includes a responsibility to keep informed and engaged in the process. As you read and study the law, it should become evident to you that the political process (for all its strengths and weaknesses) is at the heart of legal reform. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the issues and candidates and cast your vote. Florida’s elections in this cycle are particularly tight, and your vote will count. Most voting precincts will be open tomorrow from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. Check the Website of your county supervisor of elections for specific times. You should find time in your busy law-student schedule to exercise your civic right and let your voice be heard.

**SUMMER IN SPAIN**

For students interested in participating in the Summer in Spain program, there will be two informational meetings: on November 5th at 1:30 p.m. in Room 2 and November 16th at 12:15 p.m. in Room 4. You also can contact Mariela Torres or go online at www.stu.edu/lawsummerinspain to get additional information regarding the Summer in Spain Program.

**DEADLINES**

**DONOR SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Applications or nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m., November 5, 2010.

**PRO BONO**

December graduates must turn in completed Pro Bono hours by November 29, 2010.