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OF ERIE COUNTY

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November 8, 2016

Dear Educator:

The Bar Association of Erie County is pleased to present its 36th Annual High School Mock Trial Tournament, held in conjunction with the New York State Bar Association's Law, Youth and Citizenship Committee and the New York Bar Foundation.

School Eligibility/Responsibilities

Any high school located in Erie or Niagara Counties is eligible to enter into the Tournament a team of at least six students enrolled in that school in any grade 9 through 12. *Schools are encouraged to carry more students than the minimum number required, in case of illness or other conflicts that may preclude student participation and necessitate a team to withdraw from the Tournament.* The team must be headed by at least one teacher-coach designated by its sponsoring school.

Selection of team members (consisting of at least three attorneys and three witnesses) and the coach or coaches is the responsibility of the school, as is transportation to and from the competition site(s). If a school chooses to limit student participation for reasons of supervision or safety, this should be accomplished through an equitable "try-out" system, not through disallowing participation by students in one or more entire grades.

Contest Format/Schedule

The High School Mock Trial Tournament will begin with two preliminary rounds, in which each team will compete once as the prosecution and once as the defendant. No fewer than the top 16 teams will proceed to subsequent playoff rounds, which will be single-elimination. Lawyers or judges will preside over the enactments in each contest round.

Most of the competition rounds in this year's Tournament are tentatively scheduled to take place during the weekends of January 28-29, February 4-5, February 11-12, March 4-5, and March 11-12, 2017. Additional information concerning this year's Tournament schedule and venues will be forthcoming for those schools that decide to enter a team.

Bar Association Assistance

An attorney member of the Bar Association of Erie County will be assigned to a team, if necessary and if possible, to serve as the team's attorney advisor. He or she will be available to assist the teacher-coach(es) and team members in preparing for their trial enactments. A mandatory orientation session will take place on **Monday, December 5, 2016**, at the Bar Association offices at 438 Main Street, 6th Floor, in Buffalo at 4:00 p.m. Attendance by at least one coach, attorney advisor, or designated representative for each team is required.

November 8, 2016

Page Two

Mock Trial Materials

Each school entering the Tournament will receive materials containing: (1) a statement of the facts of the 2017 hypothetical case; (2) a set of witness statements; (3) a discussion of the rules of evidence and relevant legal sources; and (4) a description of the rules, policies, and procedures that govern the Tournament. These materials may be found at www.nysba.org in late November or in early December.

Awards

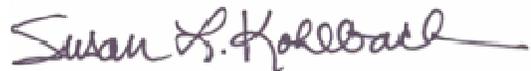
Members of each participating team will receive a commemorative certificate acknowledging their involvement in the 2017 Tournament. The winner will also have the opportunity to display a trophy in its school for the year. In addition, the winning team will be invited to attend the Bar Association's Law Day Luncheon in the spring to be recognized for its achievements, and will be able to compete in April or May 2017 in a regional tournament to determine the Western New York representative at the New York Statewide Mock Trial Tournament Finals, which will take place in Albany in May 2017.

Team Registration and Deadline

An entry form and rules are enclosed. A school that desires to field a team in the Tournament must return its completed entry form and signed copy of the rules to the attention of Susan L. Kohlbacher at the Bar Association of Erie County, 438 Main Street, Sixth Floor, Buffalo, New York 14202, so that they are received no later than **Friday, December 2, 2016**. Late entries will not be accepted. You are encouraged to submit your form early to ensure your team's participation.

We look forward to your participation in another exciting, educational and valuable experience for all. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Craig Bucki, the Tournament Chair, at (716) 847-5495, or via e-mail at cbucki@phillipslytle.com.

Very truly yours,



SUSAN L. KOHLBACHER
Director of Programs & Events

Enclosures

cc: Craig R. Bucki, Esq., Mock Trial Chair and Co-Chair of the Young Lawyers' Committee



**New York State Bar Association
Statewide High School Mock Trial Tournament
2017 Official Entry Form**



PLEASE PRINT

School: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Teacher Coach: _____ Co-Coach (if applicable) _____

School Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Home No.: _____ Cell No. _____ Email: _____

Names of student team members: (Schools are encouraged to carry more than the minimum six (6) students on their team. Please list additional team members on reverse side.) Note: the New York Bar Foundation will pay for a total of nine students per team to participate in the State finals in Albany in May. *Please print clearly or type the names of each student.*

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

Our attorney advisor is _____ confirmed not confirmed (please check one)

Attorney address: _____ Phone: _____

Fax No. _____ Email address: _____

Please note that the attorney advisor must be an attorney licensed to practice in New York State and approved by the Bar Association of Erie County.

We do not have an attorney advisor. Please assign one to our team.

We, the undersigned, take responsibility for the entry of the mock trial team from the high school listed above. We understand that the tournament is open to all 9th to 12th graders in our school. We are also responsible for giving a 48-hour notice to our County Coordinator if our team is unable to participate in the trial.

Signature of Teacher Coach

Date

Signature of Principal

Date

(Registration form will not be accepted unless both signatures are present.)

Return completed entry form to:

Bar Association of Erie County
Attn: Susan L. Kohlbacher
438 Main Street, Sixth Floor, Buffalo, New York 14202
Fax: 852-7641 or email to: skohlbacher@eriebar.org

Deadline: Friday, December 2, 2016

*Bar Association of Erie County
2017 High School Mock Trial Tournament Rules*

1. In order for a school to field a team in the Tournament, at least one representative (a teacher-coach, an attorney advisor, or another representative) must attend the mandatory orientation meeting that will take place on Monday, December 5, 2016, at 4:00 p.m., at the Bar Association of Erie County (on the 6th Floor at 438 Main Street in Buffalo). Any conflicts with this mandatory orientation are to be reported immediately to Craig R. Bucki, Esq., at Phillips Lytle LLP (phone number (716) 847-5495), the Chair of the 2017 Tournament.
2. If a school makes its own arrangement for an attorney advisor, please indicate so on your entry form to avoid a double assignment. All assignments must be approved by the Bar Association and the advisor must be admitted to the New York State Bar. **A law school student is not permitted to serve as a team's official attorney advisor.**
3. Questions, problems, or comments about the Tournament shall be directed to the Chair.
4. All communications with the teams will be done via mail, email or fax. Status updates regarding advancement of teams and sides to be argued (prosecution/defendant) will be sent by fax/email no later than the Monday after a Saturday round of competition (except in the instance of a round that is rescheduled). Teams shall not call or email the Bar Association of Erie County for the results.
5. Complaints arising from the tournament must be in writing and directed to the Chair. No verbal or anonymous complaints will be considered. The President of the Bar Association of Erie County will be apprised of all complaints.
6. The local coordinator (Bar Association of Erie County) is the sole arbiter of all issues regarding the application of Tournament rules and procedures. The local coordinator has complete discretion to resolve any issue or controversy not covered under the New York State Bar Association's rules.
7. Teacher coaches, attorney advisors, students, parents, and spectators are expected to exhibit exemplary "sportsmanship" and civility at all times and with all those involved with the Mock Trial Tournament. Any acts of misconduct against a coordinator, Bar Association of Erie County staff member, or judge will not be tolerated and may result in the student's or team's expulsion from the tournament.
8. Each school shall assign a teacher coach or coaches to its team. High school graduates and law school students who are not teachers at a given school are not permitted to serve as teacher coaches.

This form shall be signed by the teacher coach(es) and principal and returned with the school's entry form. A school must submit a signed copy of these rules prior to the start of the Tournament in order for its team to participate. Teacher coaches and principals are expected to accept full responsibility for each team member's compliance with the rules.

Teacher Coach (Date _____)

School Principal (Date: _____)

Teacher Coach (Date _____)