

Mock Trial team places 11th at national tournament

Anna Morris

Assistant News Editor

At the National Mock Trial Competition in Orlando, Florida, Wheaton College's Mock Trial team placed 11th out of the top 48 mock trial teams in the nation. The competition, which was held from April 11-13, was the culminating event of the competitive mock trial season, with the original season starting with more than 500 teams.

Wheaton sent its "A Team," which consists of nine students, to nationals, and the group finished with a 6-6 final record. In addition, sophomore Ruth Joyce received an "All-American Award," meaning that she was tied for the second highest-ranking witness in the team's division, and tied for the fifth highest-ranking witness in the entire tournament.

The team competed in four rounds of competition — first against Columbia University, fol-

lowed by University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), American University and Rhoades College's B Team.

Mock Trial president sophomore Jasmine Stein said that she was particularly satisfied with the team's performance in their fourth and final round.

"There were a lot of great moments, but one of the best was coming out of our fourth round," Stein said. "Even though we did not win the round, we all felt great about the team performance — possibly our best all year — and it was definitely a high note to finish the season on."

Stein said that she was very proud that despite only having six returning members to the Mock Trial team this year, the team was able to qualify two teams for Opening Round Championship Series — a previous qualifying tournament for nationals — and return to nationals for the second year in a row.

"It is definitely significant that we have been able (to) qualify two teams for ORCS as that shows the depth of the team," Stein said. "It is also significant that this year was our second year in a row (and our first two times ever) at the

National Competition and we placed 9th and 11th respectively, and every year have had a team member receive an 'All American Award.'"

Mock Trial Coach Diane Michalak also attended the National tournament, and echoed Stein's sentiments, saying that she is proud of the way that both the A Team and the B Team competed this season, particularly because the program started only three years ago.

Stein said the team's success this year made her grateful for her team and excited for future opportunities to succeed in their next season.

"One of the best feelings ... is the energy, excitement and camaraderie we all feel when we walk out of a trial knowing that we performed well and race to hug each other," Stein said. "I do not think there is a single person on our team who is not feeling blessed and proud of the amazing things we accomplished this weekend. We are all very excited for next year and the chance to climb to even greater heights."