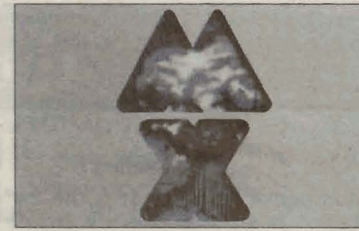


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Wheaton welcomes 133 new citizens

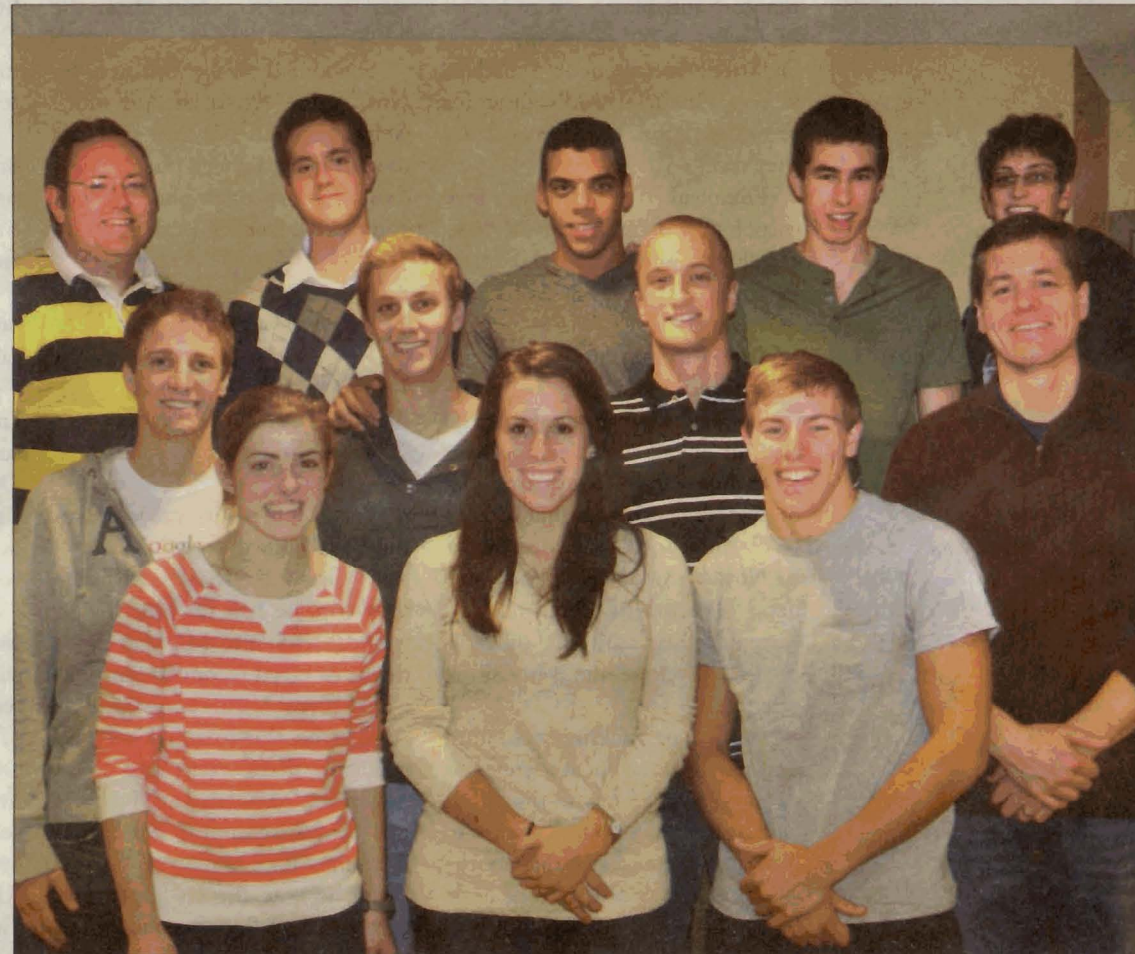
Angelo Campos
News Editor

Oct. 28 was a significant day for 133 people. As many students gathered with their families over Family Weekend, 133 people from 38 countries gathered in Barrows Auditorium to become U.S. citizens.

The keynote speaker, U.S. Rep. Peter Roskam, and the Hon. John Darrah, United States District Court Judge, led the ceremony, which featured representation primarily from Mexico with 42 citizens and India with 21 citizens.

In his speech addressing the new citizens, Roskam said in an article for the Daily Herald, "We look at [new citizens] and say, 'There is something unique

Mock trial raises bar for the win



Wheaton's mock trial team won their first court trial last week after writing 140 pages and completing countless hours of practice and memorization.

Allison Freet

Abigail Holmes
Staff Writer

Wheaton's mock trial team received their first victory after competing in the eighth-annual Quincy University Riverside Classic in Quincy, Ill. on Oct. 22. Competing against 14 teams from nine different schools, Wheaton finished with a 2-2 record overall, landing them a tie for seventh place.

In addition, several team members won individual awards, which is a first for the mock trial program. Co-captain sophomore McNair Nichols, and sophomore David Washko won awards for "Outstanding Attorney," and sophomore Jason Chapman won an award for "Outstanding Witness." Chapman received a perfect score of 10 and played the role of an accident reconstruction expert.

Mock trial coach Brooks Locke, a practicing attorney, said, "This tournament was a great opportunity for the team to compete and gain some experience."
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Half of the team is new this year and has never competed in mock trial before. Getting the program's first win and picking up some individual awards was very encouraging for them."

Mock trials simulate a real court case. The American Mock Trial Association writes fictitious court cases, alternating between civil and criminal cases and issues these cases to every participating school in the country. The mock trial includes a real judge, a real courthouse and the real rules of evidence, with few exceptions.

Co-captain of the team sophomore Trenton Van Oss started the mock trial team last year after being disappointed that Wheaton College didn't already have one.

"We didn't even get the team started until mid October, and most teams start in August," Van Oss said. "We had myself and one other person on the team who had experience from high school. Nobody had experience from college because we didn't have a team, and college is much different than high school. Nobody had experience with what we were actually doing."

But with a win under their belt this year, the eight members of the team are gaining experience at the college level.

In the first round of the competition, Wheaton lost two judges' votes to Lewis University, who ended up winning the overall competition. The total score that the judges give the teams is based on the scores they receive for each section of the trial. In the second round, however, Wheaton won both judge's ballots against Quincy University. Overall, the feedback from the judges was very positive.

"If you want to be a trial lawyer, it is important to have experience with the rules of evidence," Van Oss explains. "You can read them 10 times and not understand them until you do them because they are technically worded."

Preparation for mock trial can be hard, especially with certain factors such as objections, picking witnesses and general nervousness.

Van Oss said, "The difference between a good and bad team is the fact of getting flustered. You must get back on your feet and keep going."

There is a lot of practice involved in mock trial. The team writes out all of their trial materials, memorizes them and then practices by running the trial.

The mock trial team has already achieved two out of the three goals they set for

themselves this year. They had all of their trial materials written by Oct. 11th, a huge feat considering the cases are around 140 pages in length and should be more or less memorized. They also won their first trial, their second team goal, and are working on their third and long-term goal: to advance past regionals.

In order to celebrate their first win, they watched the tape of their trial with celebratory food. However, the team didn't waste any time: after watching, they immediately went through what they could improve on, emphasize more or eliminate altogether.

Van Oss explains that mock trial is beneficial to students because it is a formal debate setting that "helps aspiring lawyers to develop skills they will use in court, and helps all students with presentation skills, critical thinking and writing."

Students don't have to want to pursue law as a profession to be on the team. The team hopes to create a program that will be in place for decades and are especially looking for freshman participants.

In regard to the mock trial team's future, Van Oss hopes to build a sort of dynasty. "There is no reason Wheaton College kids shouldn't be competitive. The students who go here are smart, determined and hard working. The only difference between us and the teams who are beating us right now is the fact that they have programs that have been in existence for decades," he said.

They hope to recruit more members.

"In order to create a program that lasts, you can't graduate the whole team," Van Oss said.

The team is continuing to work hard to achieve their goals and prepare for their upcoming two-day, four-round tournament at Illinois State University on Nov. 11-12.