

## **2007 Oswego County Mock Trial Tournament in Full Swing**

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Submitted by: Thomas Benedetto, Esq.

Despite numerous school closings and weather delays last week, the Oswego County Mock Trial tournament started on schedule this morning with teams from four of the area high schools facing off in courtrooms in Oswego and Pulaski in the fictitious case of the People vs. Pat C. Macintosh. The defendant in the case is a sophomore at Big Apple State College, and is accused of stalking another student via an on-line, campus sponsored chat room.

In the trial between Sandy Creek and Central Square, presiding judge, Oswego Supreme Court Justice, Norman W. Seiter, Jr., ruled in favor of the Central Square team, who was representing the defendant, and found not guilty. In the Oswego-Hannibal match up, the presiding judge, Charles H. Cieszeski, Esq., ruled in favor of Oswego High School (prosecution), upon finding the defendant guilty.

Teams from six of the County's nine high schools are participating in the local tournament this year which is part of the New York State Bar Association's Law, Youth and Citizenship Program. The local program is sponsored by the Oswego County Bar Association with support from the Oswego City-County Youth Bureau, Oswego County BOCES and participating school districts. Teams made up of eight or more students are paired with volunteer lawyers from the Oswego County Bar Association. Students plan and prepare their case based on materials and guidelines provided by the New York State Bar Association. Details about this year's case may be found by linking from the Oswego County Bar Association's website: [www.oswego-bar.org](http://www.oswego-bar.org)

Thomas Benedetto, President of the Oswego County Bar Association and Coordinator of the local tournament said, "Today's mock trials prove how very fortunate we are in Oswego County to have so many dedicated attorneys and judges who are willing to volunteer their time to help make this student program highly successful. It was tremendous watching the students apply what they have been learning and practicing over the past several weeks. The case materials are extremely complex, and it is obvious that the students have worked very hard to prepare their cases. In addition to thanking all of the Bar Association volunteers, I would also like to thank the school officials for their support and assistance with this program, and the team advisors."

All teams competing today will advance to the next round. On Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, Oswego and Central Square will face Mexico and Pulaski, respectively. The other teams from today's event will next compete on February 26<sup>th</sup>. For more information about the program, contact Thomas Benedetto, Esq. at 349-3360.