AMTA REGIONAL TOURNAMENT 2009

EWU fielded two teams in the American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) Pacific Northwest Regional Mock Trial Tournament at the University of Portland, February 13-15, 2009. Although our teams did not qualify for nationals, they both came close missing by one win each. Each of our Mock Trial teams finished with records of 4 wins and 4 losses- better records than Arizona State University, Central Washington University, Portland State's second team, Reed College, Stanford's second team, University of Portland, Weber State, and WSU's 3rd team. Notably teams from the state of Washington won 5 of the 8 national bids, and teams from Eastern Washington won 4 of the 8 bids. We were competitive, just missing nationals.

EWU team 1341 won an honorable mention for the Tony Burkhardt Memorial Spirit of AMTA award which is a peer award for sportsmanship. This was especially meaningful, as Tony's mother, Suzanne Kirkpatrick presented the award this year. This year AMTA changed the awards system. There is no longer a 1st-8th place, but 8 equal bids to nationals. The former 1st place traveling trophy, which is a serious piece of hardware (it weighs about 30 pounds), was rededicated as the Tony Burkhardt Memorial Spirit of AMTA award. The award is traveling with the winners this year, the University of Washington.

EWU team 1341, consisting of Bryanna Drescher, Jill Hogberg, Patrick Rooks, Preston McCollam, Kirby Blacker, Jenna Johansson, and Colleen Olson, finished with a record of 4 wins and 4 losses. In the first round, Team 1341 faced Central Washington University and EWU both ballots. In the second round, Team 1341 lost a close round to WSU (losing one ballot by one point-the difference between nationals and not). Next Team 1341 faced Gonzaga's number one team and lost (I saw this round and it appeared much closer than scores suggested). Last Team 1341 faced a fine WSU team that qualified for nationals, and EWU beat this WSU team on both ballots, going out on a high note. Bryanna Drescher won a best attorney award, and Jenna Johansson won a best witness award. Team 1341 was coached primarily by Gabrielle Roth-Pitner and Noel Pitner.

EWU Team 1342, consisting of Lydia Anderson, Chris Hoxie, Scott Traver, Joseph Edwards, Michael Astel, Peter Astel, Angie Crawford, and BJ Edwards, also finished with a record of 4 wins and 4 losses. In the first round, Team 1342 split with the University of Portland's team winning one ballot and losing one(by two points, again a one ballot difference between nationals and not going). In the second round, Team 1342 faced Gonzaga's 3 team and again split the ballots winning one and losing one. Next, Team 1342 faced Gonzaga's second team and lost both ballots(losing one ballot by only 6 points). Team 1342 finished with two wins against Central Washington University. Team 1342 was primarily coached by Jim Headley.

EWU Mock Trial teams performed very well.

On a related note, this was the last year that the regional will be held at the University of Portland. There is some discussion about EWU hosting the regional next year with Gonzaga School of Law as a possibility.

Jim Headley