

# MBA NEWS



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## **NEWTON SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL WINS MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION'S 2008 HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

BOSTON, Mass.— For the first time ever, Newton South High School was today named state champion of the Massachusetts Bar Association's High School Mock Trial competition. The finals were held at Faneuil Hall in Boston.

Newton South advances to the National High School Mock Trial competition in Wilmington, Del., in May. A portion of the trip will be funded by a donation from the MBA's philanthropic partner, the Massachusetts Bar Foundation.

"It's overwhelming. It was a lot of hard work," said Newton South senior Marty Loew of the win, adding that he plans to pursue business, not law, as a career.

Newton South and Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School in South Hadley competed during a two-hour mock trial in Faneuil Hall's Great Hall. Newton South represented the defendant in a sexual harassment case, a fictitious computer gaming company, while Pioneer Valley represented the plaintiff, a high school student intern. Superior Court Justice Howard Whitehead presided with assistance from Superior Court Justice Barbara Dortch-Okara and District Court Justice Barbara Pearson.

Even though Newton South took the state championship, Whitehead said Pioneer Valley would have prevailed in a court of law on at least one of the two charges claimed in the lawsuit – gender discrimination due to a hostile work environment.

Both teams impressed the judges, who commended them on their skills. "This is outstanding. I am really bowled over every time I see these performances," said Dortch-Okara. She told the students, "If you want to compare yourselves to some practicing attorneys, you can do that."

The Mock Trial Program began its 23rd year in January. More than 100 high school teams from 16 regions across the state competed for three months in simulated courtroom situations where they assumed the roles of lawyers, defendants and witnesses in the hypothetical case.

"The MBA's Mock Trial Program has been hugely successful," MBA President David W. White Jr. said. "The goal has remained to provide each student a chance to grow as an individual – to grow as someone who is able to work with and support others, as an informed citizen who understands our legal system, and as future leaders, who will use those skills to improve the lives of others in their communities."

The Mock Trial Program is administered by the MBA, and made possible by the international law firm of Brown, Rudnick, Berlack, Israels LLP through its Center for the Public Interest in Boston, which has contributed \$25,000 per year to the program since 1998.

For more information on the MBA Mock Trial Program or upcoming competitions, visit [www.massbar.org/mock](http://www.massbar.org/mock), or contact Elizabeth O'Neil, director of Public and Community Services, at (617) 338-0560 or [oneil@massbar.org](mailto:oneil@massbar.org).

*Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.*