

MBA NEWS



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High schools throughout the state named Elite 8 finalists in the Massachusetts Bar Association's 24th annual Mock Trial Program

BOSTON, Mass. — Eight high schools (see list below) throughout the state have been named Elite 8 finalists in the 24th annual Mock Trial Program presented by the Massachusetts Bar Association. The Elite 8 were determined after the Sweet 16 regional winners competed against each other last week.

Trials throughout this week will whittle down those eight to the Final 4, which will face off during trials held simultaneously on March 23 in Boston and Worcester. The two remaining teams will compete for the state championship at 10 a.m. March 27 in the Great Hall of Boston's Faneuil Hall. In 2008, Newton South High School won the state championship and placed 22nd overall in the national tournament.

The Mock Trial Program places high school teams in a simulated courtroom situation, where they take on the roles of prosecutors, defense attorneys and witnesses. This year's criminal case involves a murder trial in which the defendant, a veteran, raises Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as an insanity defense against the charge of first-degree murder. Local attorneys serve as both team coaches and judges of the trials.

More than 100 high schools across the state initially signed up to participate in the 2009 Mock Trial Program. The preliminary trials began at the end of January.

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.

The Elite 8 are:

- **Maimonides School, Brookline**
- **Marblehead High School**
- **Marshfield High School**
- **Massachusetts Academy of Mathematics and Science, Worcester**

- **Newton South High School**
- **Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School, South Hadley**
- **Sharon High School**
- **Westford Academy**

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.