

MOCK TRIAL TEAM HEADS TO NATIONALS

(May 10, 2006 – Concord, NH) New Hampshire High School Mock Trial Champion Bishop Guertin will head to Oklahoma City next week to compete in the 23rd annual national championship to be held May 11 – 14.

Bishop Guertin will compete with 43 other teams for the national title. Teams from 39 states as well as Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and South Korea will participate.

This year's case takes place at a rodeo in which one of the competitors is accused of second-degree murder after allegedly tampering with a fellow competitor's reins, which ultimately caused her death after being bucked from her horse.

Eight team members are making the trip in addition to teacher coach Brian J. Jackson and attorney coach Shane A. McLaughlin. The students are David Bono, Stephen Bottari, Gregory Palmer, Kevin Preskenis, Jackie Silva, Natalie Talbot, Anne Tousignant-Miller & Nathan Wigfield.

The National High School Mock Trial Championship provides students the opportunity to model the roles of attorneys and witnesses. During mock trial rounds, the judges evaluate the students based on their familiarity of the case and the formulation of their arguments. Students earn points for each phase of the trial – opening, direct and cross examination, closing argument and how well their witnesses respond.

“The students have worked extremely hard to be given the opportunity to represent their state in this championship,” said 2006 Host Director Renée Hildebrant of Oklahoma City. “We look forward to welcoming more than 1,000 visitors to Oklahoma.”

In addition to their time in the courtroom, the students will participate in various social events while in Oklahoma City. The students will gather for a western-themed opening reception and pin exchange on Thursday evening. The following night, they will watch the Oklahoma RedHawks baseball team take on the Sacramento River Cats at the AT&T Bricktown Ballpark. One student will have the chance to throw out the first pitch. The awards banquet, which is when the national champion and other award winners will be announced, will take place on Saturday evening.

Hundreds of attorneys and judges from across the country are volunteering to staff the event and judge the mock trials.

The major sponsors of this year's championship are the Oklahoma Bar Association, OBA Young Lawyers Division and Oklahoma Bar Foundation. More information about the event can be found at www.okbar.org/nationalmocktrial.