

11-18-2009

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Recommended Citation

"Golden Gate Law Takes First Place at ABA & SFTLA Mock Trial Competitions" (2009). *Press Releases*. Paper 43.
<http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/pressreleases/43>

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For Immediate Release:

November 18, 2009

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Golden Gate Law Takes First Place at ABA & SFTLA Mock Trial Competitions

(SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.)—Golden Gate University School of Law has won two mock trial competitions in a single week.

Guided by renowned Professor and Litigation Program Director Bernard Segal, Golden Gate took first place at the 2009 American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law San Francisco Regional Student Trial Advocacy Competition, held at the Phillip Burton Federal Building October 31-November 1. And, on November 7, Golden Gate won the 2009 San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association Mock Trial Competition at the Federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

In the ABA contest, teammates Amy Erb, Scott Prosser, Lindsey Scott, and Anitra Zobeck went undefeated in four rounds and prevailed over the University of San Francisco School of Law, UC Hastings College of the Law, UC Berkeley School of Law, and the University of Oregon School of Law. Golden Gate will compete with the other seven regional champion teams in the National Finals in Washington, DC, in January.

"What makes this victory particularly sweet is that we had just one month to prepare--much less time than the other schools," Professor Segal says. "What's more, three of the four team members were 2Ls, not 3Ls, and the team members had not yet completed the Trial Advocacy course."

Duncan Lemmon (JD 96), an associate at Connor & Bishop and former student of Segal's, coached the team. "This was great, real-world experience for the students," he says. "It was a three-hour jury trial; no different than what happens in real life, just a truncated version. Our students picked up on weaknesses demonstrated by their opponents and presented their evidence and arguments very well."

"This was one of the most intense, yet rewarding experiences of my life," says team member Scott Prosser. "We practiced four days a week for five hours a night after attending classes during the day. The time that our coach, Duncan Lemmon, spent with us is a testament not only to his pride in his alma mater, but to Professor Segal's zeal for the art of litigation, which has turned countless students into successful trial lawyers who are grateful for the instruction they received and are willing to give back." Adds ABA team competitor Lindsey Scott: "I cannot wait to go to Washington, DC to show that the Golden Gate University Litigation Program is a force to be reckoned with."

Best of the Bay

In the San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association competition, held at the Federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Golden Gate beat the three other Bay Area ABA-accredited law schools, Berkeley, Hastings, and USF. The team members were Dan Devoy, Dana Glassel, Erik Knuppel,

and Sam Luzadas, coached by alumnus Brian Soriano (JD 96), a partner with Goldstein, Gellman, Melbostad, Gibson & Harris, LLP and an adjunct professor at Golden Gate Law.

"After losing in the finals by a small margin in 2008, our students were determined to win the SFTLA competition in 2009," Soriano says. "Real Superior Court judges presided over the trials, and they described our team members as 'outstanding,' which was no exaggeration. Professor Bernie Segal has put together a winning recipe for training future litigators and trial lawyers."

About Golden Gate University School of Law

Founded in 1901, Golden Gate University School of Law offers a variety of programs for beginning law students and practicing lawyers, including day and evening JD and graduate law degree programs; award-winning clinics; the innovative Honors Lawyering Program; and renowned annual symposia. The School of Law is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and a member of the Association of American Law Schools. Graduates qualify to take the bar exam in all 50 states and in the District of Columbia. For more information about the School of Law, visit www.ggu.edu/law.

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Note to Editors: For photos, please contact Jill Goetz at 415-442-6636 or jgoetz@ggu.edu.