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Dean Logan's Blog

RWU Makes Quarterfinals, Falls to Eventual Champ William & Mary in National Admiralty Competition

Posted by David Logan on 05/02/2014 at 12:59 PM

RWU has a robust moot court program that runs all year with students competing internally (the Esther Clark Competition, judged by the [RI Supreme Court](#)) and externally, as extramural teams travel to a broad array of national competitions, like the championship we won last month in the [National Religious Liberty Competition](#), sponsored by George Washington Law School). Given that [Marine Affairs](#) is a center of excellence at RWU, we are especially proud of our track record of success in the John Y. Brown Admiralty Competition, coming in second last year <http://law.rwu.edu/blog/rwu-team-snags-%E2%80%9Cbest-brief%E2%80%9D-award-and-2-overall-national-admiralty-law-competition>, and winning a couple years earlier.

This year the RWU teams performed well at the national competition, held in New Orleans. Thomas Bennett, Adam Deitz, and Marc Fialkoff, ably supported by Amanda Lawton, Casey O'Brien, and Patrick O'Connor, turned back Houston, George Washington, and Tulane, before losing a close quarterfinal to eventual champ William & Mary. Here is a picture of the team with their coach, Professor Bob Falvey, and below that some reflections from Mark Fialkoff.



"I think it was Judge Stephen Higginson, a Judge on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals who was also a judge for the championship round, said it best about this type of competition, "These are your colleagues and the future of the maritime bar. These are the people you will be arguing against, working with and becoming the scholars of the field." Having participated in this competition, it has been a great experience.

First and foremost, none of us could have done this without the help and support of our coaches, Professors Jonathan Gutoff and Bob Falvey. From the numerous practices and bringing in professors, alumni, and practitioners to moot with us to helping us sharpen our arguments and oral advocacy skills, their experience was invaluable.

We had the privilege to argue in front of practitioners such as the former senior counsel for Shell, the former president of the Maritime Law Association, and local maritime attorneys. To argue in the courtrooms of the Eastern District of Louisiana made the experience even more real. Even though we didn't make it to the finals, we had the opportunity to sit in the en-banc court room in the Fifth Circuit Courthouse to listen to our colleagues argue the finals, of what was a hotly contested competition in all the rounds.

We also had the great pleasure of continuing a tradition where Roger Williams meets with Richmond to have an annual dinner where we set aside the competition and get to enjoy the company and the local cuisine of New Orleans. This year was no different and the bonds made at dinner ranged from catching up with John Paul Jones and finding common interests, including ring tones, made the experience even more memorable.

Arguing in the Admiralty moot court competition was truly a unique experience. Unlike other moot court competitions, the people who argue in this field are not merely interested in maritime law, we are the future of this field and will be seeing each other again, except this time, it will be in the courtrooms, boardrooms, and classrooms in this area."

Here is a photo of the team on the go in New Orleans.

