

**A Note from the President:**

With the end of the first semester comes a great amount of success for the Illinois Trial Team, both on an individual and team level. In November our Orange and Blue teams attended the Case Western Reserve Invitational in Cleveland, while our Bears team attended the University of Iowa Cornshucker Challenge in Iowa City. All three teams did exceptionally well at these tournaments. A special congratulations to Amyna Visram, who won an Outstanding Attorney Award as an Orange Plaintiff Opener, and to Ian Vitalis, who won an Outstanding Attorney Award as a Blue Defense Opener!

In December all three teams attended the University of St. Francis's Midwest Invitational. At this tournament the Illinois teams made an incredible showing. On team Orange Hannah Oswald won an Outstanding Attorney Award for her role as the Plaintiff Closer and Bianca Ciarrioni won an Outstanding Witness Award for her role as Special Agent Carey Connor. On team Blue Ian Vitalis once again won an Outstanding Attorney Award for his role as a Defense Opener, Katy Karayannis won an Outstanding Witness Award for her role as CEO Hayden Hathaway, and Claire Mellish

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won an Outstanding Witness Award for her role as dive-master Reggie Rodgers. Congratulations Hannah, Bianca, Ian, Katy, and Claire!

And in an incredible finish, team Blue took first place and team Orange placed closely behind them in third place! Congratulations to both teams, as well as Bears for an impressive improvement!

Winter Break marks the last few weeks before the Illini Invitational, hosted on our campus during the weekend of January 19-20. We will be welcoming teams from all across the country for a great weekend of mock trialing. If anyone is interested in judging please contact our tournament chair, Amyna Visram, at [visram1@illinois.edu](mailto:visram1@illinois.edu).

Once again feel free to email me at [anders75@illinois.edu](mailto:anders75@illinois.edu) with any questions, comments, or concerns. Happy Holidays to everyone and we'll see you next year!

Alison



Blue 1<sup>st</sup> Place at University of St. Francis's Midwest Invitational

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Orange 3<sup>rd</sup> Place at University of St. Francis's Midwest Invitational

### **Mockers of the Month:**

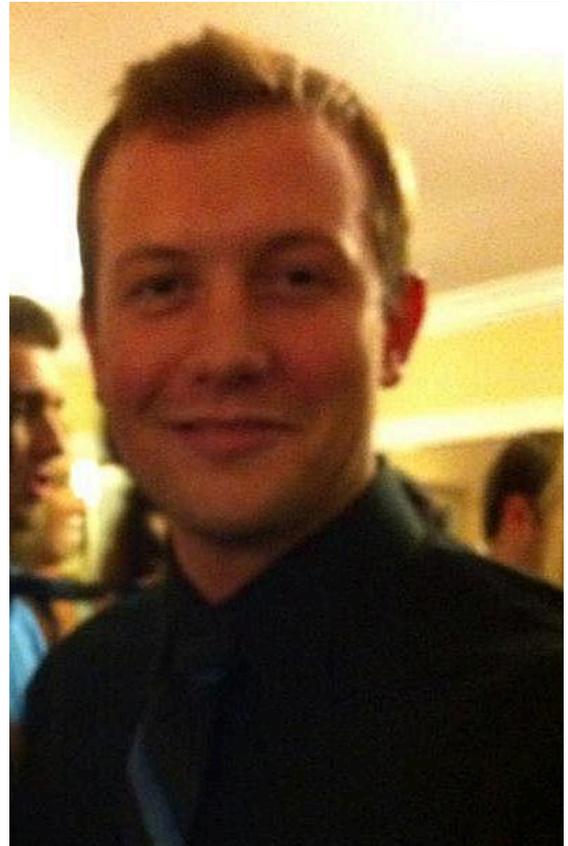
We would also like to introduce you to our November and December Mockers of the month Hannah Oswald and Brandon Black.

I am proud to recognize Hannah Oswald as the Mocker of the Month for November. I could not think of someone who is more deserving than Hannah for this honor. As the closer for the plaintiff on Orange she has worked incredibly hard taking time to not only perfect her closing but also to work on her other material too. It has been inspiring to see Hannah want to listen to criticism, receive it, and then immediately understand what she needs to do to get better. She never ceases to want to get better which is the most refreshing characteristic a team could ask for. Not only does she shine in the courtroom but she also shines in practices also, always willing to ask more questions and help anyone who needs help. This being her first year doing mock trial, her natural speaking ability has shone throughout the whole team and I cannot wait to see how good Hannah will be in the years to come. I love watching her add spirit and skill to Orange and I can only see her getting better from here. Congratulations Hannah! -Allison Barnes

Hi my name is Hannah. I'm a freshman majoring in Economics but I'm considering a double major in either philosophy or political science. I really love mock trial. Even though it is a lot of hard work, it's great to see everyone work together and bond as a team. Mock trial is definitely a group effort and I feel lucky to be a part of such an amazing organization. My captains and coaches have taught me so much and my co-counsels have set a great example for me. I'm very impressed by the amount of dedication and talent on the team. My favorite part of mock trial is watching talented witnesses and attorneys fight on cross. It's really entertaining to watch them struggle to make their points while remaining composed. Overall, I think we have a fantastic team and I can't wait to see where this season takes us.



My name is Brandon Black. I am a junior majoring in political science. This is my first year participating in mock trial and it has been a great experience. I have learned a lot this year and shared in a lot of great times with the other people on the team. The mock trial team at Illinois is full of great people. Everyone has been very helpful and we have had a lot of fun so far this year. I am looking forward to the rest of our season and competing at the remaining tournaments.



While Brandon has only been on the team for less than a year now, he has an incredible presence in the courtroom that makes him a natural at mock trial. As both a Defense Attorney and Agent Carey Connor of the United States Coast Guard he commands the room in a professional yet likable way and consistently improves at each tournament. Brandon is the type of person who goes above and beyond what anyone asks of him, always there to do whatever the team needs. He is a great teammate, a hard worker, and one of the nicest guys I know. I am so glad to have him on my co-counsel and on Blue. Congrats, Brandon! -Alison Anderson

### **Featured Member:**

And now a few words about our technology chair and his position!

The Trial Team's technology chair, Jesse Kearns, started the year off facing a new problem: with the UIUC NetFiles web hosting service ending this December, the team's website would become homeless. Taking this as an opportunity to improve, the team decided to build a brand-new website. Aside from the technology chair's normal duties, which include managing the team's social media and email account, Jesse took on the responsibility of designing, creating and updating the new website. The bulk of the work was done this past summer in anticipation of Quad Day and team try-outs, when site traffic was likely to be heaviest, information about the team needed to be accessible.



The website itself is PHP-based and was build and maintained using WordPress. This was a significant improvement over the old website, which was implemented using HTML. In plain English, this means that the new website is much more flexible than the old one - the old website used static pages, meaning that the information did not change much over time. However, the new website allows the team to easily update the site with new information, news about the team, photos and awards, among other cool things like interactive Google Maps. While the website is fully functional and easy to use, Jesse still regularly updates the website whenever he is not busy juggling his duties as captain of Bears. Be sure to check out [illinoistrialteam.com](http://illinoistrialteam.com) soon for regular news about the team!

Lastly, but still very important, our Illini Invitational Tournament is just around the corner, January 19-20. We are always looking for volunteers to judge and help in any way that you can. We host many schools and teams from around the country. Parents are welcome at these tournaments and can watch during rounds. If anyone has any questions about the Illini Invitation please email our tournament chair at [visram1@illinois.edu](mailto:visram1@illinois.edu).

Thank you for your time!

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