



Developing AMTA: Building a National Network

By Mark Smith

AMTA's Development Committee has been hard at work building partnerships with new tournament hosts, reconnecting with former competitors and alumni, and creating relationships with other organizations.

School Sponsorships

Every spring, AMTA holds over thirty tournaments between Regionals, ORCS, and Nationals. These tournaments take place from coast to coast, and each tournament hosts over two hundred competitors, not to mention coaches, judges, and spectators. Needless to say, this is a tremendous undertaking, and none of our tournaments would be possible, let alone successful, without our hosts, AMTA representatives, volunteer judges, or countless other partners who donate their time and energy.

This year, AMTA has added more schools to its list of sponsors—Quinnipiac Law School, Concordia University College of Law, University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Baylor Law School, Widener University Delaware School of Law, University of South Carolina School of Law. Finally, the Charleston School of Law graciously sponsored the National Championship Tournament hosted by Furman University.

On top of our efforts to reach out to schools, AMTA is continuing to develop relationships with other trial advocacy and legal resource organizations. AMTA is already a partner with Lexis-Nexis and offers discounts on Lexis materials to our competitors. More recently, AMTA is proud to be working with NITA, the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. NITA creates trial advocacy guides and resources for attorneys, and course materials for law school classes.

AMTA has other partnerships in the works, and we're always looking for more. If you're part of an organization who you think might be a good partner for AMTA, please contact us at AMTA.development@collegemocktrial.org.

Expanding Alumni Contact Lists

AMTA is a volunteer organization, run entirely by coaches, educators, and former competitors who love college mock trial. AMTA's volunteers, from the board of directors down to our newest AMTA representatives, give back to make sure that students can continue to compete. AMTA is turning 31 this year, which is a testament to the dedication and passion that has been passed down from coaches and alumni to students year after year since 1985. AMTA Development Committee's maintains the alumni contact list in an effort to keep this passion for college mock trial alive. The alumni contact list helps spread the word about everything mock trial related—programs that need coaches or volunteers, tournaments that need sponsors and judges, and even internship or job opportunities.

AMTA alumni are spread far and wide, and for many of us, college mock trial was the most rewarding extracurricular we participated as undergraduates. Indeed, college mock trial shaped our careers and helped build lifelong friendships. Reconnecting with AMTA through our alumni contact list is a great first step towards getting involved in a new generation of college mock trial, and ensuring that today's undergraduate students can enjoy the same experiences.

Volunteering is a rewarding experience—whether it's judging a single round or coaching an entire program, being a part of college mock trial is fun, and seeing college competitors nervously pacing the hallways, practicing their opening statements or the big moment in their cross calls back fond memories for anyone who has ever been a part of college mock trial. We highly encourage everyone to reach out and volunteer.

In order to join the AMTA alumni contact list, register [here](#).

Marketing Prior AMTA Cases

AMTA has also been adapting former cases for NITA to use. This year, NITA has purchased *State v. Dawson* and *Davis v. Happyland Toy Co.*, so former competitors and other AMTA alumni who are in law school currently or who are headed to law school soon may see these former AMTA cases as part of their coursework. We look forward to adapting more cases. Not only does this project breathe new life into cases that would otherwise be sitting on a shelf, but it is also nice to know that our former college mock trial competitors may reap the benefits by continuing to work with cases they are already familiar with.

Ways to Get Involved

With everything we do, AMTA's Development Committee wants to make sure mock trial continues to be a fun activity that can be enjoyed by as many college students as possible. For us, that means making sure that tournaments have hosts and judges, that participating schools have coaches and support, and that AMTA can continue to write cases and oversee our tournaments while keeping the cost for students and schools as low as possible. We've seen a lot of progress towards these goals in the last few years, but our work isn't done.

That's why AMTA Development is interested in your feedback and your ideas. The best way to get in contact with us is either through AMTA's website, collegemocktrial.org, or by e-mailing amta.development@collegemocktrial.org. We're looking for help with the projects we've mentioned, and we're also looking for new ideas. If you have an idea on how AMTA can grow or improve, please share it with us!

Of course, the simplest and fastest way to get involved is to donate to AMTA, which you can do through the website. Donations allow us to run tournaments and write cases, all while lowering fees for colleges and students who want to participate. Donations can be made [here](#).

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We look forward to the rest of the 2016 tournament season, and to preparing for even more mock trial in the years to come.

Editor's Note: Mark A. Smith is a member of the AMTA Development Committee and a member of the Georgia Bar Association. Mark formerly coached Georgia Tech Mock Trial, where he competed as an undergraduate, and is currently a police officer with the Atlanta Police Department.