

MCS Mock Trial Team Has Successful Season

The Middleburgh High School mock trial team recently completed a successful season which included a trial at the Schoharie County Court.

The team was coached by first year teacher Derick Kopff. Mr. Kopff started a second career as a teacher after a distinguished career as a trial lawyer. He led the first year team to a successful season before being defeated by the Cairo-Durham mock trial team in the finals. The young team worked hard throughout the mock trial season and expects to do even better next year.

Mathew B. Tully, founding partner of Tully Rinckey PLLC, the County's Bar Association Coordinator for the 2005 Mock Trial Competition said, "It was a great competition, the teams performed very well and had lots of fun."

Middleburgh high students had the honor of arguing their case, in the Schoharie County Courthouse ceremonial courtroom in front of Judge George R. Bartlett III to a near capacity crowd. Judge Bartlett, who presides over Schoharie County, Family and Surrogate Courts. volunteered his evening and helped make the competition a realistic and memorable experience for all those involved. Judge Bartlett was very impressed with this year's Middleburgh team and thanked the community for coming out to support the young aspiring lawyers.

The mock trial competition is part of a program administered by the New York State Bar Association that promotes Citizenship and law-related education in schools throughout New York State. The mock trial competition assists educators in creating opportunities for students to become effective citizens, able to participate fully in a democratic society.

The annual Statewide High School Mock Trial Tournament the nation's largest, provides students with hands-on opportunities to further their understanding of the law, court procedures and the legal system while honing their speaking, listening, reading, and reasoning skills. County champions advance to regional competitions with six teams meeting in Albany for the statewide finals each May.