



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Lincoln County students receive award for mock trial competition

For immediate release

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Students from Guyan Valley Middle School in Lincoln County visited the West Virginia Supreme Court on Friday, May 27, and received an award as the 2016 winners of the West Virginia Law Adventure competition. They received the award from Supreme Court Clerk Rory Perry, who also told the 32 students in sixth through eighth grades about the history of the court.

The Supreme Court’s West Virginia Law Adventure program requires participating classes to write their own mock trial scripts based on one of three criminal case scenarios, which change each year. The scenarios are written by the Young Lawyers Section of the West Virginia State Bar. Each participating class must act out its script in front of a judicial officer – a magistrate, family court judge, or circuit court judge – before sending its entry. Students’ trips to the local courthouses and Supreme Court are paid for by a grant from the West Virginia Bar Foundation.

Joni Shortridge, a special education teacher at Guyan Valley, said this was the first year she has participated in the program and would definitely do it again.

“They were excited, they learned and I learned. This was an enrichment-based class where we could have done a number of different activities. This is what the students chose to do,” said Ms. Shortridge.

Rodney Baker, an attorney with Steptoe and Johnson and a Lincoln County school board member, helped the class by explaining the law and how to apply it to their mock trial.

“We went from three or four kids being engaged the first time we met to the entire class being enthusiastic and interested,” Mr. Baker said. “What these kids came up with on their own, that is leadership and creativity at its best.”

The program is open to all students in grades 5-12, with potential winners in different grade categories and a category for mixed grades. In 2016 there is only one winner because multiple schools could not complete the process due to scheduling issues.

West Virginia Law Adventure is supported by the West Virginia Department of Education.

West Virginia Law Adventure is one of several civics projects of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia. Others include Robes to Schools, National Center for State Courts "*Justice Case Files*" Graphic Novels, and LAWS (Legal Advancement of West Virginia Students).

To learn more about the Court's civics projects visit <http://www.courtswv.gov/public-resources/student-resources/index.html> or contact Kandi Greter, Public Education Coordinator, at Kandi.greter@courtswv.gov or 304-340-2755.

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