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UM'S LAW STUDENT TRIAL TEAM TAKES THIRD IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

MISSOULA --

Months of arguing paid off for members of The University of Montana law school's Maroon Trial Team who met opposing counsel in a West Palm Beach, Fla., courtroom this spring.

The maroon team brought home a national third place title, having proved themselves better litigators than counterparts from 100 U.S. law schools. UM’s was the smallest accredited law school represented at the competition.

The winning started at the regional Student Trial Advocacy Competition in Salt Lake City in late February. The team won all five rounds to become one of two teams to advance to the national tournament in March, where the best of 175 teams met in court.

UM’s team continued its winning streak by beating Drake University of Iowa, Benjamin Cardozo School of Law of Yeshiva University in New York City and Franklin Pierce College of New Hampshire. The team suffered its only season loss by a single point to Florida's Stetson University College of Law in the quarterfinals. Stetson claimed the national championship for the fourth year in a row.

Lawyers for the winning team were second-year students John Jensen of Missoula and Michael Siravo of Warwick, R.I. Their expert witness was Gina Stumberg, a second-year student from Bozeman. Bill Clarke, a first-year student from Auburn, Wash., was the lay witness. Coaches are Professor Greg Munro and Associate Professor Cynthia Ford.

"Much of the team’s success stems from heavy support of trial lawyers," Munro said.
The Anaconda law firm of Knight, Dahood, McLean and Everett, the Montana Trial Lawyers and Montana Defense Trial Lawyers support UM's maroon and silver trial teams. Several trial lawyer teams from across the state tried cases against the teams this year or sat on the bench in training trials. Participating jurists included U.S. Magistrate Richard Anderson of Billings.


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