THE ADVOCATE



Welcome to the Advocate Alumni Newsletter! Heading into this new school year, we wanted to give you all the opportunity to join our current members as we look back at the past year's successes and prepare for all of the exciting events to come. This edition of the newsletter introduces you to the new Executive Board of PTAI for the 2023-2024 school year. It also highlights our external competitions, internal competitions, and major events that the organization put on throughout the 2022-2023 school year. Enjoy!

THE ADVOCATE

A LETTER FROM THE 2022-2023 EXECUTIVE BOARD

For over twenty years, the Frank Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute has instructed countless advocates on how to think, speak, and act like trial attorneys. The 2022-23 Executive Board has been proud to continue that legacy. Each graduating member is leaving the program as a better person than when they entered. We are more confident as individuals, and PTAI has prepared us to think, speak, and act like ethical, professional, and prepared trial attorneys.

We write in this issue to thank the various members of the St. John's Law community who have paved the way for us to succeed. Within the issue, we announce the incoming Executive Board for the 2023-24 academic year, proudly describe the accomplishments of the past year, and highlight the many individuals who have volunteered time to assist us in creating a successful environment for each of us to thrive. In doing so, I would be remiss not to recognize the hard work of each member of the e-Board. At every step of the way, each member has gone above and beyond the description of their roles. We have crossed between job responsibilities, and have always lent each other a hand when needed. It is this teamwork, thoroughness, and support that we will remember most from our time serving in our respective positions.

Emerli Rodriguez, Managing Director, never overlooked a detail. Each PTAI event would not have been possible without her contributions. Ryan Fenn, Director of External Competitions, dedicated himself to the program in a way that few people can. The success of PTAI throughout the year was directly tied to his efforts. Nicholas Fajardo, Director of Internal Competitions, handled his position with a confidence incapable of emulation. He made a difficult job look easy. Christine Raso, Director of Special Events, was the best person for the job. The Peter James Johnson Competition is our marquee event and her organization, unquestioned communication skills, and dedication were the reason for its success. Kelly Madigan, Associate Director of Communications and Records, transformed our social media into our main avenue for communication along with a place where we could show appreciation for the tremendous efforts of each PTAI member. She assisted anyone who needed help, and made each member know their value. Victoria Rubino, Associate Director of Alumni Relations, was tremendously valuable in helping wherever she was needed. She prepared outstanding events on important topics and organized them with ease. Dan Smith, Associate Director of Recruitment and Outreach, brought the smile on his face to every single meeting; his energy was unmatched, and we are all proud to call him a friend. Ariston Papeo, Associate Director of Inter-Organizational Events brought his infectious energy into the role. His attitude and willingness to help made everyone's job possible. It has been a sincere pleasure to work with each of them, along with every member of the

organization as a whole.



THE ADVOCATE FALL 2022 EXTERNAL COMPETITION SEASON

In Fall 2022, PTAI sent six extremely talented teams to external competitions across the Northeast. Our Buffalo Niagara and Kelly teams advanced to the quarterfinals. Our Quinnipiac and Hofstra teams ended as finalists!

Buffalo Niagara Mock Trial Competition

Nicholas Fajardo Emily Ruchalski Ryan Fenn Jaden Thornton

Coaches: Gabe Mendoza Joanna Matuza



Ke Ky Ke Mi Co Joe

Hofstra National Medical-Legal Mock Trial Competition

Kelly Madigan Kylie Mulholland Keyrollos Ibrahim Michael Pecorella

Coaches: Joe Calabrese Erin Mullins





Quinnipiac ABA Criminal Justice Trial Advocacy Competition

Daniel Smith Matthew Oster Claire Frink Ariston Papeo

Coaches: Scott Davis Daniel Quinn



All Stars Bracket Challenge

Patrick Clancey Cole Eiber
Brendan Tighe Nana Asante
Coaches:
Marlee Galvez
Mike Maffei



Georgetown Federal White Collar Crime Invitational

Victorina Rubino Krista Apostle Camille Perbost Emily Trumble

Coaches:
Pat Brand
Gene Guarino

Joseph P. Kelly Jr. Criminal Trial Advocacy Competition

Amanda Zoda Lauren Shoemake

Coach:
Jana McNulty





THE ADVOCATE **SPRING 2023 EXTERNAL COMPETITION SEASON**

TYLA

Kelly Madigan Cole Eiber Naya Brown-Yohay

> Coaches: Joe Calabrese Erin Mullins

Queens District Attorney's Office Mock Trial Competition

John Di Leo Nana Asante Krista Apostle Natalie Mishkin

Coaches: Gene Guarino Melissa Beach



In our Spring 2023 external competition season, PTAI sent eight extremely talented teams to external competitions across the Northeast. Our QDA and Capital City Teams were quarterfinalists. Our Trials and Tribulations team was a semi-finalist. One of our TYLA teams ended as finalists!

TYLA

Rebecca Goldberg Camille Perbost Jaden Thornton



Coaches: Gabe Mendoza Joanna Matuza



American Association for Justice Student Trial Advocacy Competition

Joshua Halilei Suzanne Hom Jordan Kavanaugh Robert Nikont

> Coaches: Burt Ryan Emily Santoro

Capitol City Challenge

Daniel Smith Patrick Clancey Christine Raso Keyrollos Ibrahim

Coaches: Scott Davis Mark Luccarelli



John L. Costello National Criminal Law Trial **Advocacy Competition**

Michael Pecorella Victoria Rubino

> Coach: Brian Hughes





Trials and Tribulations

Ariston Papeo Kylie Mulholland Rvan Fenn Nicholas Fajardo

Coaches: Marlee Galvez Mike Maffei





South Texas Mock Trial Challenge

Amanda Zoda Matthew Oster Emily Ruchalski Michael Pecorella

> Coaches: Brian Hughes Jana McNulty



THE ADVOCATE 2022-2023 INDIVIDUAL AWARDS



Patrick Clancey



Michael Pecorella



Krista Apostle



Matthew Oster



Ariston Papeo



THE ADVOCATE SPARACIO INTERNAL CRIMINAL MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION



This past Fall, PTAI hosted its annual Charles M. Sparacio Criminal Internal Competition! The competition, where nine talented teams went head-to-head, took place from October 28 through October 30.

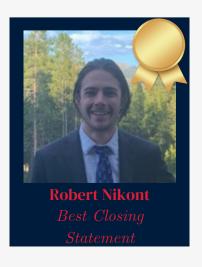
The winning team was Jordan Kavanaugh (top right) and Natalie Mishkin (top right), coached by Carly Stapleton '04! Mary Johnson (top left) and Joel Cardoz (top left), who were coached by Jared Brady '22 and Chelsea McGee '22, took home second place! All the students who competed worked tirelessly for weeks with their coaches to put on their best cases.

If you or anyone you know is interested in coaching, we would love to have you! Please reach out to our Internals Director, Natalie Mishkin at natalie.mishkin21@stjohns.edu.

INDIVIDUAL AWARD WINNERS











PETER JAMES JOHNSON '49 CIVIL RIGHTS MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION



Starting on October 27th,
St. John's welcomed 14
mock trial teams from across
the country for our annual
Peter J. Johnson National
Civil Rights Trial
Competition.

The competition was named in the honor of Peter J.
Johnson '49, a St. John's alum, WWII veteran, police officer, worker's rights activist, and respected corporate attorney whose life and career is a lesson in using a legal education for the greater good.

Congratulations to NYU
School of Law, the
competition champions of
the trial and South Texas
College of Law, the finalists.



BRIAN PETERSON MEMORIAL 1L MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION



FINALISTS

Erin Fader

John Adinolfi

Stephanie LaPlante

Alex Blandeburgo

Coaches:

Camille Perbost

In the Spring, PTAI hosted another successful Brian Peterson Memorial First-Year Trial Competition! 16 1L teams competed on March 24 - March 26. Each team was coached by 2-3 2L and 3L members of PTAI. Each and every student spent hours writing statements, drafting examinations, and practicing their oral advocacy.

Julio Almonte

CHAMPIONS Times Hwang

Harmonia Peet

Agustin Bujanda

Coaches: Amanda Zoda

Claire Frink

All the hard work paid off as each team brought their A game! All the 2L and 3L coaches were very proud of their teams and gained priceless coaching experience. The future of PTAI looks bright!

INDIVIDUAL AWARD **WINNERS**















On November 9, 2022, Associate Director of Alumni Relations, Victoria Rubino, moderated PTAI's annual McKenna Forum. This year's topic was "Crisis in the Courtroom: The Opioid Epidemic." PTAI was joined by three guest speakers:

Michael Maffei, Assistant US Attorney, US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of NY

Pavithra Angara, Deputy Attorney General Professional Boards Prosecution Division of Law, NJ Attorney General's Office

Brian DeVito, Deputy Attorney General Government and Healthcare Fraud Division of Law, NJ Attorney General's Office

ADVOCATES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

On April 20, 2023, Ms. Rubino hosted our other annual alumni event, Advocates in the Spotlight. The event involved conversations with PTAI alumni discussing how their experience in PTAI affected their career and helped them become better trial attorneys. The three alumni featured at the event were:

Judge Eugene M. Guarino, Criminal Court of the City of New York

> Jasmine M. Johnson, Fried Frank

Caitlyn C. O'Neill, Kaufman Dolowich Voluck





St. John's Law

THE ADVOCATE 2022-2023 EXECUTIVE BOARD





Emerli Rodriguez



Nicholas Fajardo



Victoria Rubino



Daniel Smith



Ryan Fenn



Christine Raso



Kelly Madigan



Ariston Papeo



St. John's Law

THE ADVOCATE 2023-2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD



Krista Apostle



Robert Nikont



Natalie Mishkin



Cole Eiber



Naya Brown-Yohay



Emily Trumble



John Di Leo



Nana Asante



Joel Cardoz



The Executive Board is tremendously thankful to all of the people who have supported us throughout the year and who have made the 2022-23 school year one of our most successful.

Firstly, all of PTAI would like to acknowledge our Head Mock Trial Coach:

Brian Hughes '07:

The heart and soul of the PTAI program, Brian has been a teacher to each of us, a coach to many, a judge to some, and a friend to all of the board when we need one most. From tryouts to competition planning to coaching, Brian provides extremely valuable institutional knowledge to our student leaders. We are thankful for his guidance throughout the year.

None of the aforementioned events could have been possible without the assistance of the faculty and staff at St. John's Law.

For their contributions to the success of the program, PTAI is thankful to;

Maria Rivero
Dean Michael Simons
Dean Christine Lazaro
Dean Nancy Brady
Iris Diaz
Theresa Duggan
Claire Policino
Anthony Zaccarelli
Joanne Danielle
Claire McKeever
Julio Ortiz



The Executive Board is additionally thankful to our coaches, who have consistently dedicated long hours when we need it most, and who consistently teach us skills that extend far beyond the courtroom. Coaches are the individuals who are responsible for perpetuating the legacy of PTAI, and we want to ensure that each coach is appropriately recognized.

For their contribution as coaches, the Board is thankful to:

Melissa Beach '08

Jared Brady '22:

Patrick Brand '11

Judge Joseph Calabrese '71

Scott Davis

Maree Galvez '16:

Chelsea Gavin

Judge Gene Guarino '99

Mark Lucarelli '19

Gabe Mendoza

Mike Maffei '10

Joanna Matuza '17

Jana McNulty

Kaitlin McTauge '12

Erin Mullins '18

Matt Phillips '20

Dan Quinn '18

Burt Ryan

Emily Santoro '19

Carly Stapleton '04

Brenna Strype '14

Sam Tighe

Hillary Quinn '20

Allison Smalley '18

Chelsea McGee '22

Victoria Mosca '18

Paul Magel '14

Meghan McLoughlin '20



The incoming Executive Board is very excited for the upcoming year and would love for as many alumni as possible to participate. Some of our events where alumni participation is crucial to its success are listed below. Please reach out if you have an interest in coaching and/or evaluating!

SPARACIO INTERNAL CRIMINAL MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION October 13-15 PETER JAMES
JOHNSON '49 CIVIL
RIGHTS MOCK TRIAL
COMPETITION
October 26-29



SOCIAL MEDIA



EMAIL ptaiexternal@gmail.com



FACEBOOK Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute



LINKEDIN Polestino Trial Advocacy Institute



INSTAGRAM @sjlptai