

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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District Court hosts Chicago Public Schools sophomores participating in mock trial

CHICAGO, Ill. - On Friday, January 20, 2017, the District Court for the Northern District of Illinois hosted sophomore students from six Chicago Public Schools (CPS) high schools with Pre-law programs, who competed in an annual Sophomore Mock Trial Competition. After months of study and preparation, students were provided a set of case facts and then in district court courtrooms put on a mock trial before federal judges and attorneys, who acted as judges and provided feedback and suggestions.

After the conclusion of the mock trials, Chief Judge Rubén Castillo addressed the student participants in the James Benton Parsons Ceremonial Courtroom at the Dirksen U.S. Courthouse.

"We are inspired by your talent, enthusiasm and the zealous advocacy you demonstrated today. Whether or not you go on to pursue a career in law or law enforcement, we welcome you today and in the future. We hope that you will remember that this is your courthouse," said Chief Judge Castillo.

"It was an amazing experience meeting Judge Castillo. It inspired me to hear about his story growing up," said Oscar Estrada, a sophomore at Jones College Prep.

Chief Judge Castillo, District Judge Sara Ellis and Magistrate Judge Sheila Finnegan were among the volunteers who served as judges for the mock trials.

Participating high schools included Farragut Career Academy, Hancock High School, Jones College Preparatory, Mather High School, Raby High School, and Wells Community Academy.

CPS high schools with Career and Technical Education (CTE) offerings provide college-prep education as well as technical skills. Pre-law is one of twelve CTE tracks and seeks to introduce students to various careers in the fields of law and law enforcement through hands-on, experiential programs and activities.

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Above: Student participants from Farragut Career Academy