
Cahill Coaches Help Secure Third Consecutive First-Place Finish for BTHS Students in City-Wide Mentor Moot Court Competition

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A team of Cahill coaches mentored Brooklyn Technical High School students to a first-place finish in the city-wide Mentor Moot Court Competition for the third year in a row. The moot court competition involves a hypothetical appellate oral argument, and students are required to present both sides of the case throughout the competition.

The team successfully defended their title on December 14th, before a panel of three federal judges (Second Circuit Judge Joseph F. Bianco, E.D.N.Y. Judge Eric R. Komitee, and E.D.N.Y. Magistrate Judge Sanket J. Bulsara). On December 21, the team also prevailed in the subsequent “Champions Round” held against the first-place finishers from the Long Island region, again before a panel of three federal judges (Second Circuit Judge Richard J. Sullivan, E.D.N.Y. Magistrate Judge Taryn A. Merkl, and E.D.N.Y. Bankruptcy Judge Elizabeth S. Strong).

The hypothetical case argued was *Fordham High School v. Maya Pitt*. Petitioner Maya Pitt, a high school junior running for Senior Class President, had displayed a t-shirt with a campaign slogan (“Pitt is the ☐”) at the end of her campaign speech during a school assembly. After a brief interruption from the raucous student body during which the slogan was chanted (with the emoji replaced with the rhyming expletive), the Principal then removed Petitioner’s name from the ballot. After this, the school was graffitied with the slogan. Petitioner falsely admitted to the graffiti when questioned by school officials and was told to sign a written apology in exchange for a lesser punishment. Her admission and apology were then used as a partial basis to bring criminal charges against Petitioner, which were later dropped when the real culprit came forward. The Brooklyn Tech team represented both sides of the First and Fifth Amendment issues presented by the case throughout the rounds of the competition, beating James Madison High School in the City finals and Old Bethpage High School in the “Champions Round.”

The Cahill coaches included: Joel Kurtzberg, Ivan Torres, Shanan Essick, Mary Hornak, and Kathleen Tierney, who generously donated their time to help the students prepare. Cahill has partnered with Brooklyn Tech High School’s moot court and mock trial teams for over 20 years.

Attorneys

- Joel Kurtzberg
- Ivan Torres
- Mary Hornak
- Kathleen I. Tierney