FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Har-Ber, Parkview Finalists in Annual Mock Trial**

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS (March 7, 2016) – Har-Ber High School of Springdale was named winner of the The Arkansas Bar Association’s annual Mock Trial State Tournament on Saturday.

Har-Ber faced two-time champion Parkview in the final round.

“It was an honor to have such a great opponent,” said Har-Ber coach Ta-Neisha Marshall. “Our students practiced like the only acceptable outcome was nationals. They are ready to represent our state at the national tournament and eager to see this program on the national scale.”

The Har-Ber team members were: Caroline Eastep, Jacob McDaniel, Anna Cook, Sheridan Ellis, Joel Edmonson, Chase Morgan, Ethan Martinez, Mary Benchoff and Kegan Anderson, lead by Teacher/Coach Ta-Neisha Marshall.

“I was struck by our large number of high-performing teams,” said Barrett Moore, Mock Trial committee chair and local attorney, noting that 27 teams competed this year. “Many rounds turned on a narrow margin.  The students always impress me, and this year was no exception.”

The case topic for the competition was voter tampering, with the prosecution aiming to prove a high school teacher wrongly used his influence to sway the votes of his students. All teams needed to play both prosecution and defense, including preparing witnesses and preparing for cross-examination of the opposing team’s witnesses.

“The Har-Ber team fought hard, responding fluidly to well-prepared witnesses and thoughtful objections,” said Moore.  “The teams were also collegial and respectful, following the finest traditions of the bar.”

The national Mock Trial competition will be held this May in Boise, Idaho. The Har-Ber students have six weeks to prepare, compared to six months for the state competition.

“The students will have to work hard to be ready, but they are well-versed in rules and exceptions now, so the time will be spent applying law to the new case instead of learning procedures,” said Marshall.

The Mock Trial Committee and members of the Northwest Arkansas Bar will assist Har-Ber in preparing for the national competition.  A member of the Mock Trial committee will travel with the Har-Ber team and coach to Boise.

Parents and teachers who are interested in bringing the Mock Trial program to their school are encouraged to contact the Arkansas Bar Association. The ArkBar can provide curriculum plans for in-school classes as well as material for establishing a Mock Trial team as an extra-curricular activity. Only six students and a teacher-sponsor are needed for a team.

**About Arkansas Bar Association**

The Arkansas Bar Association is a voluntary, statewide organization with 5,000 members. Among its purposes are the advancement of the administration of justice and the fostering among its members of high ideals of integrity, learning and public service.

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