



**2018 INTRAMURAL  
TRIAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION**

**TO SELECT THE MEMBERS OF  
LOYOLA'S 2018 / 2019**

**BYRNE TRIAL ADVOCACY TEAM**

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**Kathy Larker, plaintiff**

**v.**

**Sunshine Enterprises, Defendant**

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# GUIDELINES & RULES

## 2018 INTRAMURAL TRIAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION

### 1. *Purpose of the Competition:*

This competition is designed to select the members of the Byrne Trial Advocacy Team for the 2018 / 2019 school year. The Byrne Trial Advocacy Team consists of students who participate in a series of regional and national mock trial competitions. This fall, some team members will compete in one of two or three fall competitions. In the spring, some team members will compete in the regional rounds of the National Trial Competition, and if successful there, the final rounds to be held in Texas next March. The other students will compete in the regional rounds of the AAJ Student Trial Competition. If successful they will advance to the national finals. The top four ranked **team members** (who have not participated in the Byrne competition before) will compete for graduation honors in the annual Byrne Final Four Competition to be held in the spring.

**\*\*All team members will be required to participate in a summer boot camp intensive, summer boot camp trials and mandatory weeknight practices during the school year on Monday and Wednesday nights from 6 to 10 p.m. as well as weekend practices. There will also be a course component requiring several training sessions each semester (on one of the normally scheduled meeting times) where advanced trial advocacy skills and trial ethics will be taught.**

### 2. *Eligibility:*

All Loyola Law School day students who will be entering their second or third year or evening students entering their third or fourth year of law school ***who are in good academic standing*** are eligible to compete.

***There are no prerequisites.*** If team members have not yet taken evidence, they will be required to do so in the fall semester of their year on the team,

### 3. *Entering the Competition:*

To participate in the tryouts you must register on the Byrne Team website located at:

<http://www.lls.edu/academics/advocacyinstitute/mootcourtandadvocacyprograms/byrnetrialadvocacyteam/tryoutinformation/>

and register by submitting the **online registration form and attaching a resume and unofficial transcript**. Once you have submitted your registration materials you will be emailed a password to access the tryout packet before your scheduled round 1. Registration must be completed by **6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 18th**. If, after you have submitted a registration, you choose not to compete please contact Professor Poehls ***immediately*** at [susan.poehls@lls.edu](mailto:susan.poehls@lls.edu).

4. **Schedule:**

A detailed schedule of all relevant dates is contained on the Byrne team website.

5. **Units:**

The students who *actually participate as team members for the entire school year* will receive six pass/fail units for their participation during the entire year- three each semester. Students who were team members the previous year are entitled to **four** pass/fail units, two per semester. All units are awarded at the end of the year. ***Please note\*\*\* the Byrne Team is a full year commitment\*\*\* You may NOT drop the course after the fall add/drop deadline without losing ALL units for the year and receiving an F on your transcript.***

6. **Competition Format:**

The intramural competition will consist of two rounds. The first round will take place on your choice of one of three dates; Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup>, Monday night April 16<sup>th</sup> and Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup>. After round one, there will be a cut for round 2. The first portion of the second round will take place between May 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. During that period, all finalists will perform a 4 minute story/ opening statement and be interviewed. There will most likely be a cut made after this portion as well. The final portion of round 2 will be held on Saturday May 26<sup>th</sup> at an assigned time between 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

In Round 1, each student will perform one seven minute closing argument for *either* the plaintiff or for the defense (the student may choose). Students will compete one at a time and there will be no objections or rebuttal. Students will receive no feedback on their performance.

Judges will assign each competitor a score between 0 and 100. The top ranked competitors will be announced by Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. Those students will then advance to Round 2.

For the first part of Round 2, students will perform a 4 minute opening statement that is a **true story** about some significant event in their life told to the jurors in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. It should be an interesting story told with detail, vivid imagery and natural, sincere delivery. Students will also be interviewed by the coaches. Potential returning team members may also be assigned a task 15 minutes before their scheduled time.

In the second part of Round 2 on Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup> each student will present one seven minute closing argument. Each student will also be questioned by the panel of judges. The questions will concern issues raised by the student's closing argument. The questions will focus on arguments made, possible responses to arguments and factual questions.

At the conclusion of the final round the judges will rank the students. The top students will be invited to join the Byrne Trial Team. If one of the selected students is unable or unwilling to join the team, the next ranked alternate will be offered the position until all positions are filled.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students who are ranked in the top four positions are **not** eligible for the Byrne Trial Competition or the American Board of Trial Advocates Award at graduation **unless**

they accept their position on the team and remain on the team for the entire year.

**\*\*\*STUDENTS MAY NOT LIST THE BYRNE TEAM ON THEIR RESUME UNLESS THEY ARE OFFERED AND ACCEPT A POSITION ON THE TEAM AND REMAIN ON THE TEAM ALL YEAR. \*\*\*\***

**7. Returning Team Members:**

Students who were members of the team last year must compete for a position again this year. However, they will automatically receive a place in round 2 and will not be required to compete in round 1.

**8. Judges:**

Judges for round one will consist of team coaches, practicing attorneys in the area including former team members, prosecutors, defense lawyers and civil lawyers.

The judges for round two will consist of the team coaches, ex-team members and local attorneys with exceptional knowledge in the area of trial advocacy.

**9. Assistance:**

Once the fact pattern is released, students participating in the competition may not receive **any** instruction, advice or assistance in preparing for the competition from any member of the faculty, coach, or ex-team member, except in authorized group practice rounds.

**10. Training Video:**

*It is strongly recommended that all competitors watch the video on the tryout website of Professor Poehls' group training session. In that video, she discusses advice on how to draft and perform a successful closing argument for tryouts.*

**11. Questions:**

Any questions should be sent to Professor Susan Poehls' at [susan.poehls@lls.edu](mailto:susan.poehls@lls.edu). If an answer is deemed appropriate, it will be emailed to all competitors.

**13. Conduct during Trials:**

During the competition, no competitor may be present in the courtrooms except while their case is in progress. No podiums will be provided. **No notes may be used** during closing argument. No spectators may attend. Judges will **not** critique your performance and score sheets will **not** be provided to the competitors. Any hand drawn or computer generated (not professionally made) exhibits may be used in closing arguments. Easels will be provided. No props are allowed.

**Dress as though you were going to Federal court.**

**14. *Mandatory informational meeting:***

All participants were required to attend the informational meeting that was held or view a tape of that meeting. If you were unable to attend the meeting and wish to compete, please watch the video. The link to the video is on the tryout webpage at:

<http://www.lls.edu/academics/advocacyinstitute/mootcourtandadvocacyprograms/byrnetrialadvocacyteam/tryoutinformation/>.

See you there, and Good Luck!

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## WHAT DOES THE BYRNE TRIAL TEAM DO?

We are a team of hard-working, well trained advocates who compete in regional and national trial advocacy tournaments and are consistently ranked as one of the best law school trial advocacy teams in the nation. We are ranked #6 in the top Trial Advocacy Programs in the country by US News and World Report and have won the regionals of the National Trial Competition tournament ( the nation's most prestigious tournament) in 23 of the last 29 years.

## WHAT WILL I LEARN AS A MEMBER OF THE BYRNE TEAM?

You will learn to be an effective trial lawyer. A dedicated team of experienced lawyers will train you to handle every aspect of a jury trial. You will learn how to evaluate a case and develop a case theory. You will be taught how to draft and deliver effective opening statements, direct examinations, cross examinations and closing arguments. You will master the rules of evidence and learn how to make a persuasive legal argument to a judge. You will learn how to be an ethical and zealous advocate who wins in the courtroom.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A TEAM MEMBER?

**Talent and a lot of hard work.** During preparation periods (before competitions) students will meet two weeknights each week from approximately 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and on weekends. In addition to this in-class time, students will require additional outside preparation. As tournaments approach- additional practices are added. The busiest months for team members are October, November, January, February and March, and spring is definitely more demanding than the fall. Spring practices generally begin for some team members the week between Christmas and New Years ( before classes resume.) If needed, practices may also be held during spring break. Travel may be required in October or November, February, March and/or April.

Team members must work closely with coaches and visiting judges. The process is an intense one, based largely on performance, critique and revision. All team members must be able to deal well with constructive criticism and work well with others. Most importantly, students must be competitive and willing to do the work that it takes to win.

## CAN I DO *BOTH* LAW REVIEW AND BYRNE?

Yes, *providing* you are organized, a good multi-tasker, efficient and not afraid of hard work. Many Byrne team members have also been members of one of the Law Reviews, and have also served as editors while members of the Byrne team. They will tell you it wasn't easy, and they had to make many sacrifices in other areas (very understanding and supportive family members and friends) but they made it work.

## **WHAT DO WE GET WHEN WE WIN?**

First, the incredible satisfaction in knowing that you probably have more trial experience than most partners in the large law firms...but on the less practical side-trophies, cups, bowls, plaques, graduation awards, potential scholarship money, and recognition by some of the top trial lawyer organizations (AAJ, ABOTA, IATL, American College of Trial Lawyers). If you win a national championship- you'll also get one of those fabulous banners that you see on campus.

## **WILL THIS HELP ME FIND A JOB?**

While we can't guarantee that being on the Byrne team will **always** lead to a job, we can guarantee it will **definitely help** you in the process. With our well-known record of success, the Byrne team has a strong regional and national reputation among law firms, District Attorney Offices and Public Defender Offices. Many of these employers give actual "bonus points" in their application process for former team members. In addition, Byrne team alumni can be found in each of these offices, many large law firms and some even have their **own** successful firms (some of whom routinely hire Byrne team members when they have openings). Team membership will provide great resume value, as well as a wealth of trial experience and war stories to talk about during interviews and call backs. More importantly- it will give you the confidence and sense of accomplishment that will make you a great prospect for any employer.

## **WILL I GET UNITS FOR BEING ON THE BYRNE TEAM?**

Absolutely. All team members who remain on the team for the entire year receive six pass/fail units for their work. (Four for returning team members)

## **WILL IT REQUIRE ME TO SACRIFICE TOO MUCH OF MY FREE TIME?**

If you have to ask, you probably should consider some other activity. We need a total commitment...the kind of commitment it takes to win a national championship.

## **WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE BYRNE PROGRAM?**

We have two goals. The first is to train our students to be effective trial lawyers. The second is to win national championships.

## **WHAT WILL THE JUDGES BE LOOKING FOR?**

The judges will be instructed to look for RAW TALENT. Competitors will be scored on their demeanor, courtroom presence, voice, organization, creativity, use of language, appearance and persuasiveness. In the question and answer portion, the judges will be looking at the competitor's ability to think quickly on their feet, poise under pressure and their ability to respond appropriately. If you think you have the talent, drive, sense of humor and dedication; if you love winning and hate losing; and if you are ready to give us your very best effort-come and try out.