



**JAMES MONTOYA
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
34TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
500 E. SAN ANTONIO AVE., SUITE 201
EL PASO, TX 79901**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2025

EL PASO HIGH SCHOOL TO REPRESENT CITY IN STATE MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION

EL PASO, TEXAS - A team of students from El Paso High School will proudly represent the Borderland at the state level after being named the Region 19 Mock Trial Champion last weekend.

El Paso HS was one of nine schools competing in the Region 19 Mock Trial Competition, which was held Jan. 24-25 in the Enrique Moreno County Courthouse in Downtown El Paso.

In the months leading up to the competition, more than 100 students from participating schools were provided a case with a suspect, witnesses, and evidence. The students had to pore over the facts and build up the prosecution and defense angles complete with questions for witnesses and objections. They also had to prepare opening and closing statements and become versed in legal statutes that pertained to their arguments. Some of the students had to learn how to testify as a witness for either the prosecution or the defense.

Each team competed in three rounds before a 3-person panel composed of active judges and attorneys in El Paso's legal community, who graciously volunteered their Friday evening and Saturday to participate.

In the final round, El Paso High and Northwest Early College High School argued their cases before Judges Lyda Ness Garcia of the 383rd District Court, Sam Medrano of the 409th District Court, and Linda S. Perez of County Criminal Court at Law #1. El Paso High School won in a split decision.

Also recognized during the competition were several students for their outstanding work as advocates, witnesses, and artists. In a tie, Lilia Yanez of Americas High School and Joshua Ramos of Austin High School were named Best Advocate, Fernanda Miranda of Valle Verde Early College High School was named Best Witness, and Skylar Fooladi of Franklin won Best Classroom Artist for her sketch of the court proceedings during the competition.

The El Paso High School Mock Trial Team and Ms. Fooladi will compete in the 46th Annual Texas High School Mock Trial Competition in Dallas on March 7-8.

“The District Attorney’s Office was very pleased to have hosted this year’s competition in conjunction with our longstanding partnership with the El Paso Young Lawyers Association,” DA James Montoya said. “The hard work all of the teams put into their practice and preparation was evident and I am certain that El Paso High will represent our community with excellence. I want to thank all the judges and coaches for volunteering their time and we look forward to expanding the number of teams, attorneys, and judges participating in next year’s competition.”

For more information on the competition, please contact Stephanie Valle, the D.A.’s Special Projects Administrator, at s.valle@epcounty.com.