

## YLD Perspective

STEVEN D. TIBBETS

# Who Are We to Argue? Annual Marshall Moot Court Program Provides Aspiring Lawyers an Opportunity to Ply Their Craft

During each spring since 1997, the Younger Lawyers Division (YLD) has hosted the Thurgood A. Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition. This year, on March 17 and 18, 26 teams from around the country participated in the 14th annual installment of the competition. The oral argument rounds of this year's event were held in Washington, D.C., to coincide with the FBA's annual Midyear Meeting. The competition was a success, with participants and judges reporting that they enjoyed the sessions and learned a great deal. (In fact, the author of this column was left wishing that he had the superior oral advocacy skills the competitors demonstrated.)



Designed for two-person teams, the competition focused on written briefs submitted prior to the oral argument rounds and the scores assigned by judges during three rounds of oral argument competition. During the evening of Friday, March 18, the two

finalist teams, both from the University of California Hastings College of the Law, presented their cases to the "United States Supreme Court," consisting of "Justices" Hon. Andrew S. Effron of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, Younger Lawyers Division Chair Kelle Acock, Alfredo Castellanos, and FBA National President Ashley L. Belleau.

The team of Angela McIsaac and Heidi Hansen (from University of California Hastings College of the Law) was declared the winners of the overall competition. The winners for "best brief" were Joy Albrecht and Andrew Camelotto of Seton Hall University. The winner of "best overall oralist" was Chris Bagi of the University of Dayton. What is more important is that every participant in the program had the opportunity to practice his or her advocacy skills and receive feedback from experienced practitioners. In addition, each participant received a free one-year membership in the FBA.

The YLD organizers of the event—Dan Strunk, Kelly Scalise, and myself—thank all the participants for their hard work and careful preparation and for making the competition a rewarding experience for everyone involved. In addition, we especially thank those who volunteered their time and energy to serve as judges and bailiffs (during the NCAA basketball tournament no less!). We would like to thank the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, the U.S.

Court of Federal Claims, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for hosting this year's competition. Finally, we thank the tireless and dedicated staff of the FBA, without whose efforts and dedication the competition could not have taken place. Congratulations to the 2011 winners. The Younger Lawyers Division looks forward to another terrific competition in 2012!

*Steven D. Tibbets is an associate in the Washington, D.C., office of Reed Smith, where he focuses on government contracts law. He was a law clerk to Hon. Karla R. Spaulding of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, and graduated from the University of Texas School of Law (J.D.) and Purdue University (B.A.).*

### 2011 Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Competition Winners

#### Best Overall Oralist

1. Team 25, University of Dayton, Chris Bagi
2. Team 23, U.C. Hastings, Heidi Hansen
3. Team 17, St. Mary's University, Marion Reilly

#### Best Brief

1. Team 14, Seton Hall, Andrea Joy Albrecht and Andrew Camelotto
2. Team 23, U.C. Hastings, Angela McIsaac and Heidi Hansen
3. Team 16, St. John's University, Cameron Fee and Tracy Keeton

#### Team Champions

1. Team 23, U.C. Hastings, Angela McIsaac and Heidi Hansen
2. Team 24, U.C. Hastings, Taryn Hunter and Dakotah Benjamin
3. Team 1, Baylor University, Reagan Vernon and Pamela Sieja
4. Team 25, University of Dayton, Chris Bagi and Leslie Allen

#### Final Round Best Oralist

Team 24, U.C. Hastings, Taryn Hunter

*Photos from the competition are on page 22.*