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# Community Foundation

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of St. Clair County

## **St. Clair County Bar Association Mock Trial announces their new endowment fund**

**July 18, 2016 – St. Clair County, MI** – The St. Clair County Bar Association recently created the St. Clair County Bar Mock Trial Fund to help support the special programs, projects and operations of Mock Trial.

The Mock Trial program in St. Clair County began in 2006 when Judge Cynthia Platzer and John Livesay gathered community members, teachers, principals and attorneys who all shared a vision of creating a program for local high school students that would give them the opportunity to develop crucial professional skills.

Kevin Rudolph, an Anchor Bay High School alumni, said, “Beyond gaining knowledge of and respect for the justice system, the program taught me professional skills I still use today: the skills of public speaking, persuasive argumentation, accountability, and working with a team - just to name a few.”

In 2016, over 124 students participated on 16 teams from 10 St. Clair County high schools. Mock Trial has been called the academic version of a football player’s homecoming game. Students learn valuable lessons about how to think on their toes, to work as a team, to make a persuasive and compelling argument, and to have confidence while doing so.

Mock Trial is open to any high school who wishes to participate. Typically, between 9 to 11 schools throughout St. Clair County participate each year, involving over 100 students annually. More than 70 volunteers from the community, attorneys, judges, court staff and local police departments all work to put on this one day event for the students.

“The testimonials from the students, teachers, and lawyers give a good understanding of the incredible life-changing critical thinking skills our program provides for our local high school students. Year after year the St. Clair County Bar membership devotes countless hours as well as funding to provide to every high school in our County the opportunity to compete and to learn about our system of jurisprudence,” said Hon. Cynthia S. Platzer, Mock Trial Program Chair.

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The State Bar of Michigan honored the St. Clair County Bar Association Mock Trial Program with the Kimberly Cahill Bar Leadership Award in 2015. The Award is presented to “the best of the best” in the State of Michigan for promotion the ideal of professionalism in responding to a compelling legal need within the community. Mock Trial has over a decade long commitment to provide a forum for developing critical thinking skills, respect for legal processes, sportsmanship, leadership and professionalism to local students throughout the county via the Mock Trial Competition.

Jackie Hanton, Community Foundation vice president, said, “Mock Trial is a great opportunity for high school students to grow and develop their public speaking skills and test their higher level thinking skills. I am very pleased that we have established an endowment fund at the Foundation so that future generations of students will have resources available to support Mock Trial.”

The Community Foundation of St. Clair County is one of the oldest foundations in Michigan, formed in 1944, and is the largest foundation in Michigan’s Thumb Region.

[www.stclairfoundation.org](http://www.stclairfoundation.org)

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