

Mock Trial competition named in honor of Harley

By Paisley Strellis

The Alameda County Office of Education has renamed the annual high school mock trial competition in memory of the late Piedmont attorney Philip Harley, a partner at Kazan, McClain, Lyons, Greenwood & Harley, Well known and respected for his many years of mentoring young attorneys, Harley passed away July 2 of cancer at age 61.

"Philip developed young lawyers at all the places he ever worked," said Piedmont resident Steven Kazan, Managing Partner of Kazan, McClain, Lyons, Greenwood & Harley. "The mock trial competition seemed like a perfect way to create a living tribute to Phil. It was something that he really loved."

The Alameda County mock trial competition brings together high school students to compete in arguing a criminal trial. Student teams of 10-20 students study a hypothetical case, conduct legal research and receive individual coaching by volunteer attorneys in trial preparation, courtroom protocol, courtroom procedure, analytical skills, and communication skills. Superior Court judges volunteer their time to hear the cases.

Preparation begins in the fall and culminates in grueling elimination-rounds over four weeks of competition in February. The winning team represents Alameda County at the state competition in March.

The mock trial program was established in 1986 to increase under-



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standing of our judicial system and to boost students' analytic abilities, communication skills and self-confidence in a team environment.

"We are honored to have the mock trial competition officially renamed after a lawyer known for his contribution to youth programs and social justice issues," said Sheila Jordan, Alameda County Superintendent of Schools.

Harley tried more than 100 cases to jury verdict, devoting the latter part of his career to asbestos related mesothelioma cases.

Harley often said that being a trial lawyer was a dream he had since he was young. One of the benefits of the mock trial competition is that it gives students from a variety of backgrounds across the county the opportunity to similarly envision themselves in a legal profession.