



# CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION

EDUCATING TOMORROW'S CITIZENS

**For Immediate Release  
December 5, 2008  
Contact: Lisa Cleri Reale  
323-350-3596**

## **CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL LOS ANGELES COUNTY MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION**

**Chaminade Middle School – Winner, Junior Division Award  
Gabrielino High School – Winner, Senior Division Award**

**Garvey Intermediate – Runner-Up, Junior Division  
Monroe High School – Runner-Up, Senior Division**

**Los Angeles, CA...**Last night in two LA County courtrooms packed with observers and guests, teams from four schools argued their final cases in the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Los Angeles County Mock Trial Competition Finals. The finalists were Gabrielino High School, San Gabriel and Monroe High School, North Hills in the Senior Division and Chaminade Middle School, Chatsworth and Garvey Intermediate, Rosemead in the Junior Division. The students from these teams were among over 2,000 students from 73 high schools and 28 middle schools who have competed in the County Mock Trials this year with earlier competition rounds taking place over the last several weeks. Students participate as lawyers, witnesses, court clerks and bailiffs. Last night's Judges for the finals were LA Superior Court Judge Ron Rose and LA Superior Court Commissioner Alan Rubin.

In 1980, Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) introduced the Mock Trial program, already popular in LA County, to all the counties in California making it a statewide academic competition in which junior and senior high schools compete at the county, state and national level. Student teams study a hypothetical criminal case, conduct legal research and receive guidance from volunteer attorneys in courtroom procedures and trial preparations. The program was created to help students acquire a working knowledge of our judicial system, develop analytical abilities and communication skills while gaining increased self-confidence and an understanding of their obligations and responsibilities as participating members of our society.

Each year, a new hypothetical criminal case is introduced based on an important issue facing America's youth. This year's case, *People v. Lane*, is the trial of Leslie Lane who is charged with arson and incitement of others to riot. The issue involves First Amendment freedom of speech and expression relating to Lane's performance at a rally.

*“It is especially important that we teach our students why Democracy matters. This is a concept that needs to be owned by every new generation,”* said Jonathan Estrin, President, CRF as he congratulated all of the Mock Trial participants.

George Carney, a retired math teacher, coached the winning Gabrielino Team. He has been involved in the Mock Trial program for almost 20 years.

*“This particular team has been with me since they were freshmen and they are all seniors this year. That shows tremendous dedication and passion despite some real bumpy roadblocks over the years. This is an absolutely wonderful program.”*

Last night’s Team Awards were presented by Joe Calabrese, Chairman of CRF’s Board of Directors. In addition to the Team Awards, individual Prosecution and Defense Awards were announced. The Prosecution Awards were presented by Sharon Matsumoto, Assistant District Attorney, Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office and the Defense Awards were presented by Michael Judge, the Los Angeles County Public Defender. A complete list of the individual awards is attached.

**The Constitutional Rights Foundation** seeks to instill in our nation's youth a deeper understanding of citizenship through values expressed in our Constitution and its Bill of Rights, and educate them to become active and responsible participants in our society. CRF is dedicated to assuring our country's future by investing in our youth today.

For more information, please visit [www.crf-usa.org](http://www.crf-usa.org)