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Boston College Law School

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Client Counseling Competition

1/31/03--Boston College Law School is pleased to announce that the teams of Heather Pierce and Joan Savage, and Patrick Jackson and Ellen King, were the winners at the finals of the internal Client Counseling competition, held on Thursday, January 30. The Law School will be sending the two teams into the Regional competition, which will be held here on the BC Law campus this year.

view photos of winners

The Client Counseling Competition provides an opportunity for law students to develop valuable skill in interacting with and proposing solutions for clients. The competition simulates an office environment "consultation" in which the attorneys meet their client for the first time. Each team of two attorneys attempts to obtain the legally relevant information from the background factual context and then supplies the client with a preliminary summary of the client's legal position and the client's possible actions.

The purpose of the competition is to promote greater knowledge and interest among law students in the preventative law and counseling functions of law practice and to encourage students to develop interviewing, planning and analytical skills in the lawyer-client relationship through an enjoyable and positive process. The competition simulates a law office consultation situation in which law students, acting as attorneys are presented with a typical client matter. They must conduct an interview with a person playing the role of client and then explain how they would proceed with the hypothetical situation. Each situation poses both legal and ethical dilemmas with which the attorneys must deal. All relevant background will be provided to the competitors.

This year's subject matter was criminal law. Judges for the finals were Lynn Barenberg, LICSW, from the BC Law Legal Assistance Bureau; Gary Gill-Austern, alumnus and past winner of the CC competition, and a partner at Nutter, McClennan; Josephine Ross, a visiting clinical professor at BC Law; and Peter Russell, Assistant Attorney General, Massachusetts.