



MEDIA ADVISORY

Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc.

DATE: May 7, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebrating Law Day 2008 in Connecticut May 9:

CCLCE to Hold High School Mock Trial Finals, Kick Off New Youth Program

The Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc. (CCLCE) will celebrate Law Day 2008 in the state with the final round of the high school mock trial competition and the announcement of participation in an innovative youth crime-prevention program. Cosponsored by the Connecticut Supreme Court, this year's Law Day events mock trial final will feature teams from Conard High School and Bethel High School.

- WHO:** Connecticut Supreme Court Justice Christine S. Vertefeuille
CCLCE Executive Director Dr. James Schmidt
Supervisory Juvenile Prosecutor Francis J. Carino, Office of the Chief State's Attorney
Conard High School Mock Trial Team
Bethel High School Mock Trial Team
- WHAT:** Connecticut's celebration of Law Day 2008 including state high school mock trial competition finals and the kick off of an innovative youth crime-prevention program, *Play by the Rules™*
- WHERE:** Supreme Court Courtroom, 231 Capitol Ave., Hartford
- WHEN:** Friday, May 9, 2008, 1:30 p.m.
- WHY:** Law Day is the U.S. celebration of the rule of law sponsored nationally by the American Bar Association; the theme for Law Day 2008 is *The Rule of Law: Foundation for Communities of Opportunities and Equity*

COMPLETE PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWS ...

PRESS RELEASE

Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc.

Celebrating Law Day 2008 in Connecticut May 9:

CCLCE to Hold High School Mock Trial Finals, Kick Off New Youth Program

HARTFORD – The Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc. (CCLCE) will celebrate Law Day 2008 in the state with the final round of the high school mock trial competition featuring teams from Conard and Bethel high schools, and the announcement of participation in an innovative youth crime-prevention program. Cosponsored by the Connecticut Supreme Court, this year's Law Day events will be held at the Supreme Court Courtroom at 231 Capitol Ave. in Hartford Friday, May 9, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Law Day is the U.S. celebration of the rule of law established in 1958 as a "day of national dedication to the principle of government under law." Sponsored nationally by the American Bar Association, the theme for Law Day 2008 is *The Rule of Law: Foundation for Communities of Opportunities and Equity*.

Connecticut's Law Day events will begin with the announcement of the CCLCE's participation in a new national education program that teaches middle-school students their state's laws through a curriculum of best practices proven to prevent youth crime. The consortium is a private, nonprofit association that promotes and conducts law-related education programs and projects in Connecticut's public and private schools, courtrooms and communities.

According to CCLCE Executive Director Dr. James Schmidt, the CCLCE is the pilot organization for the national expansion of *Play by the Rules™ (PBR)*, a program that provides additional resources for understanding democracy, and the Constitutions and judicial systems of Connecticut and the U.S.

"We provide a variety of learning opportunities through our law-related and civic-education projects," Dr. Schmidt explained, "and we are honored to be selected to take part in another -- *Play by the Rules*. As the pilot organization for *PBR*, we are receiving funding to make it possible for us to bring practical applications of law into the daily lives of local youth, empowering our middle-school students with more knowledge about Connecticut laws. Research shows education program strategies such as the *PBR* model consistently contribute positively in crime prevention."

Dr. Schmidt said costs for the CCLCE's participation in the program for adaptation, development and printing of textbooks, teacher guides and outreach materials, plus teacher training and participation in conferences, are being provided by *Play by the Rules*. Francis J. Carino, supervisory juvenile prosecutor for the Office of the Chief State's Attorney, has been responsible for much of the textbook's adaptation for Connecticut law.

More ...

Play by the Rules utilizes state-specific illustrated textbooks written in language easily understood by its target audience. Through caricature versions of state birds as textbook “mascots,” the curriculum invites student engagement through a baseball theme. Topics addressed include the rule of law, juvenile justice, crimes, weapons, alcohol and other drugs, family law, recreation law, school law, transportation, employment law, civic responsibility, technology and Internet safety.

The high school mock trial competition, coordinated by CCLCE Assistant Executive Director Beth DeLuco, will mark the culmination of weeks of preliminary rounds that resulted in the top two teams for the May 9 finals -- Conard High School and Bethel High School.

For the mock trial championship, Conard High School will represent the prosecution. Conard’s teacher coach is Chris Islaub, attorney coach is Mimi Hostetter and student team members are Lillie Catlin, Chelsea Echevarria, Rita Gilles, Nica Weisinger, Olivia Apecelli, Kathryn Gullen, Elizabeth Lynch, Emmett Gilles, Nelson Clarke, Eileen Lynch, Claire Murray and Jonah Coleman. Bethel High School’s team will represent the defense in the final round trial, with teacher coach Peter Barrett and students including Nicky Neves, James Heffner, Scott Kelly, Reid Davenport, Caitlin Daily, Alex Poulos, Jake Miner, Angelicca Heffner, Vinnay Purohit and Chris Burnes.

“The theme of Law Day this year is intended to explore the meaning of the rule of law,” said Connecticut Supreme Court Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers. “Through cosponsoring the mock trial competition and our endorsement of the *Play by the Rules* program, we are making strides along those lines for our state. I commend the CCLCE for their participation in *Play by the Rules*, which will educate middle-school students on how the law directly impacts them. It is my hope that parents, teachers and students will use *Play by the Rules* to enhance their own knowledge of the law. Law Day is an outstanding time to kick off our state’s participation in this beneficial program.”

Play by the Rules was created by the Alabama Center for Law and Civic Education (ACLCE) in 2001 and is taught as a part of the seventh-grade civics curriculum in all Alabama public schools. *PBR* is entering its seventh year and has impacted more than 400,000 students so far. The ACLCE is a nonprofit corporation located at the Cumberland School of Law on the campus of Samford University in Birmingham, AL. The organization was awarded a \$1.2 million grant from a U.S. Department of Justice Byrne Grant last year to expand the outreach of its *Play by the Rules* program to other states and jurisdictions. Through the CCLE, Connecticut middle-school students will join youth in Alabama, Texas, Nevada and the U.S. territory of Guam as program participants.

For more information on the Connecticut Law Day 2008 and the CCLCE, visit www.cclce.org, or contact Dr. Schmidt at 860.509.6184. Additional details on the Connecticut Supreme Court can be found at www.jud.ct.gov, and more on *Play by the Rules* is available at www.pbronline.org.