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University of Ottawa law students help local teens prepare for moot court challenge

Posted on Wednesday November 30th, 2011 by [Nadia Gervais](http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/author/ngerv/) (<http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/author/ngerv/>), under: [Article](http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/) (<http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/>), [News](http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/news/) (<http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/news/>), [Student Stories](http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/student-stories/) (<http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/student-stories/>), [volunteering](http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/volunteering/) (<http://www.gazette.uottawa.ca/en/category/article/volunteering/>).



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Patricia Atallah and three of her colleagues in the law program, Aymen Sellami, Hussein Hassan and Roy Khoury (from left to right) will serve as monitors for a moot court competition organized by the Clinique juridique Juripop, a non-profit legal-aid clinic. The competition will see two high-school teams of about 10 students argue opposite sides of a case heard by the Supreme Court.

Thanks to volunteers from Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC), including third-year civil law student Patricia Atallah, teenagers from the National Capital Region are getting a taste of what it's like to practise law, from researching and preparing a case to arguing it in court.

Patricia and three of her colleagues in the law program will serve as monitors for a moot court competition organized by the [Clinique juridique Juripop](http://www.juripop.org/) (<http://www.juripop.org/>), a non-profit legal-aid clinic. The competition will see two high-school teams of about 10 students (from *Polyvalente de l'Érablière* and *Polyvalente Nicolas-Gatineau*) argue opposite sides of a case heard by the Supreme Court. "We really want this come across as the actual case," says Patricia. "So we'll have people playing regular witnesses, expert witnesses, lawyers and, of course, those accused."

The four uOttawa students, who've been split between the two teams representing their respective high school, are responsible for teaching the 16- and 17-year-olds how to argue a criminal-law case. "It's interesting because I'll be passing along what I've

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learned in the classroom and during my internships to the students in the competition," adds Patricia, who's determined to see her team win the case. "I'm very lucky to have been chosen to work with them."









A Court of Quebec judge will use criteria like grammatical proficiency, quality of the written submission and speaking skills to determine the winners, who then go on to represent the region in the national final.

The University of Ottawa has been affiliated for more than 10 years now with Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC), whose aim is to offer legal aid to persons who don't have the financial means to access such services. The volunteer students are matched with community organizations or with legal professionals and give an average of three hours a week to provide "access to justice to underrepresented and disadvantaged individuals, groups and organizations."

"I decided to sign up because I think it's terrible that certain people can't get access to legal services," explains Patricia. "I find it incredible to be able to help by sharing the knowledge I've gained, so I said to myself, 'Why not?'"

Patricia in fact encourages all students to join PBSC. "It's a good way not only to get experience through research or through our contact with people, but also to make a difference in the community," says the volunteer, whose goal is to one day practise business law. "Volunteering is always a good thing, and most lawyers do."

To learn more about PBSC, visit the organization's [website \(http://www.probono.uottawa.ca/en/pro-bono/full-page-content/what-is-pro-bono-students-canada.html\)](http://www.probono.uottawa.ca/en/pro-bono/full-page-content/what-is-pro-bono-students-canada.html).

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Monday, January 23, 2012
11:00 AM (20120123T110000)
(20120126T160000)

Opera Productions: Mozart's "Don Giovanni" I of IV

(http://www.uottawa.ca/calendar/?day=26&month=1&year=2012&type=0&event=32258&method=uo_event&filter=0)
Thursday, January 26, 2012
07:00 PM (20120126T190000)
(20120126T213000)

Opera Productions: Mozart's Don Giovanni (II of IV)

(http://www.uottawa.ca/calendar/?day=27&month=1&year=2012&type=0&event=32259&method=uo_event&filter=0)
Friday, January 27, 2012
07:00 PM (20120127T190000)
(20120127T213000)

Opera Productions: Mozart's Don Giovanni (III of IV)

(http://www.uottawa.ca/calendar/?day=28&month=1&year=2012&type=0&event=32260&method=uo_event&filter=0)
Saturday, January 28, 2012
07:00 PM (20120128T190000)
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