Vis Arbitration Moot Teams

What is the Vis?

Following the success of this year’s moot arbitration teams, we have decided to begin publishing a newsletter in order to keep the Loyola Community apprised of Loyola’s Willem C. Vis Moot Arbitration Team.

You will notice that there are two teams this year. As you may know, the goal of the Vis Moot is to foster the study of international commercial law and arbitration for resolution of international business disputes. In 2004 the creators of the Vis Moot began the Vis Moot East in Hong Kong in order to accommodate the growing number of participants in the moot. Since the Vis Moot’s inception 1993, the number of participating schools has grown from 11 in 9 countries to its current number of 137 schools representing 42 countries.

This spring, Loyola University Chicago was able to send four team members to Hong Kong as well as Vienna. The result was the most successful year of competition that the school has experienced in its 5 years of participating in the moot. Its total of 7 awards was more than any participating school. Both teams advanced to the Finals Rounds of the competition, marking the first time that the school has advanced past the preliminary rounds of arguments.

And the Winner Is...

The Vis Moot awards teams for their briefs and their oral arguments. Additionally, individuals are recognized for their high oral argument scores.

Every year the most participants are judged by scholars, professors and arbitrators from across the globe. In the previous years, Loyola participants have been judged by some of the same scholars whom they are citing to in their arguments. This year was no different. The Vienna team argued in front of Mr. Noah Rubins who had written a very influential article on one of the issues, as well as Professor Dr. Robert Koch, a well-known CISG scholar. Additionally, the Hong Kong team was judged by the renowned Fali Nariman. Mr. Nariman is the President of the Bar Association of India, and the Vice Chair of the International Court of Arbitration of the ICC.

Despite the potential for intimidation by such famous arbitrators, the Loyola team was one of the most successful teams in both Hong Kong and Vienna.
Hundreds gather for the Finals Banquet in Vienna

Perhaps one of the most impressive events of the moot every year is the Awards Banquet. In the previous years, the banquet has been held at the famous Rathaus (Town Hall) in Vienna. In 2004 the moot finally outgrew the grand ballroom and was moved to the impressive Reed Messe Congress Center.

Nearly a thousand participants, coaches, arbitrators and professors gathered for the formal dinner during the Final Argument and the Awards Ceremony. Pictures cannot even begin to show the magnitude of the Willem C. Vis Moot. During the dinner, students and coaches nervously waited for the brief and individual awards to be announced.

Team Basel Visits Chicago

On Thursday March 11, Loyola hosted the arbitration moot team from Basel. The Switzerland-based law school also made stops in Florida and the New England area in preparation of the Vis Moot.

Robert Parker, John Calhoun, and coaches from both teams participated as arbitrators.

Benediktushaus — Another win for Loyola

The Vienna team learned that Vienna's charm cannot be measured by stars. After spending its first years in Vienna at the 4-star hotel, Romischer Kaiser, Loyola moved to the Benediktushaus, a guesthouse in the Abbey of St. Benedict.

The old hotel was no match for the charm, hospitality and great location that the guesthouse provided.

Located in the heart of Vienna, the guesthouse was within short-walking distance to two important buildings: the Juridicum (where the competitions took place) and Ma Pitom.

The new home to Loyola University Chicago was a great success.

Those Who Work Hard, Can Play Hard

While the moot is a wonderful educational opportunity, the goal of its creators is to ensure that the participants also have a socially rewarding experience. The students have a unique opportunity to not only experience the beautiful city of Vienna but also mingle with students from all over the world. Over 800 students participate in some way or another in the moot. These students come from over 40 different countries of the world.

Every night throughout the moot, students, coaches and arbitrators flock to the Official Bar of the Moot, Ma Pitom. We are happy to say that Professor Moses visited Ma Pitom for the first time in 2004.

The Moot Alumni Association helps ensure that every student experiences the social aspects of the moot. A Welcoming party was held at the Palais Eschenbach, while the closing party was held at the Titanic.

Beautiful art and architecture, Austrian beer and wine, tequila with orange and cinnamon, Wienerschnitzel, fine music, late-night dancing, Viennese coffee and chocolate, and street vendors selling what is affectionately known as "street meat" and were all part of the wonderful Vienna experience.
A Family Affair

The Loyola teams did not suffer from a lack of support in either Hong Kong or Vienna. Already backed by two student coaches, Professor Moses and Dean Gaspardo, the teams also brought a secret weapon: family.

Nicknamed "the facilitator," the Hong Kong team was also backed by Ben Katz. Mr. Katz had the pleasure of escorting the 6 ladies throughout Hong Kong, and rooting for them during their successful competition. We are happy to announce that Student-Coach, Sara LaBuda is now engaged to her long-time boyfriend. Best wishes to the happy couple!

In Vienna, family came first...well, almost. Kate Doyle and Keri Baker were joined by their parents, while Lucas Rothaar was accompanied by his parents and his siblings.

Finding herself without the companionship of any family members on the trip, Mary Kate Halpin adopted Professor Moses as her mother for the week. "Mom," was happy to oblige.

The family support clearly worked, as Loyola advanced to the Finals Rounds for the first time! To think, it only came at the expense of one mother's broken arm!

Chicago students benefit from CIDRA's Mini Moot

Each spring before the competition, the Chicago International Dispute Resolution Association (CIDRA) helps prepare the Chicago-area schools for the Willem C. Vis Moot. This year, Loyola, John Marshall and Chicago-Kent all participated in the event. There is no winner declared at the event, however, the experience that each competitor receives is invaluable.

Loyola Moot Alumnus, Alex Jeglic, helped organize this year’s event. "As a past participant and coach of Loyola’s Team, I can truly say that the CIDRA Mini-Moot best prepares the students for the pressure and anxiety that the students are sure to face in the competition." Both Loyola and John Marshall advanced to the Finals Rounds of the 11th Vis Moot.

A Whole New World—a student's experience in Hong Kong

Alexis Reed, Lauren Bauser, Jacquie Trussell, Sarah LaBuda (coach), Benjamin Katz (team facilitator), Dean Jean Gaspardo (coach) and I flew on a plane for fourteen hours and arrived in Hong Kong a week before the competition. At that time, I had no idea of the amazing experience that was to come. As soon as we arrived, we were engulfed by unique smells, huge buildings and gracious people. At first, the new culture and surroundings seemed overwhelming, but after a few days Hong Kong began to feel like home. Before the competition, the team embarked on many adventures in Hong Kong including hiking across Lamma Island, High Tea at the Peninsula Hotel, and spending St. Patrick's Day at an Irish Bar in Hong Kong Island. After the team had thoroughly ventured through Hong Kong, we were mentally prepared to focus on the competition.

This arbitration competition was definitely one of the best experiences of my life. When I signed up to take Professor Moses' international arbitration class, I never imagined that I would have such an incredible experience.

-Melissa King

Hong Kong was a wonderful backdrop to the arguments. We met interesting people from every part of the world, and I will cherish every moment of the entire trip.

-Alexis Reed
The Fellowship of the Moot

The successes of this year's teams was in no small part aided by the increased number of students competing in the moot. Loyola participation was made possible by the generous contributions of donors, which totaled more than $9000.

The following donors provided fellowships for each of the Hong Kong team members.


John H. Calhoun. Mr. Calhoun is a member of CIDRA and has twice participated as an arbitrator in Vienna. His son, Mick, is a graduate of the law school.

Cezar M. Froelich received his BS from Loyola University Chicago in 1967, and his JD in 1970. Mr. Froelich is a founding partner of the law firm of Shefsky & Froelich Ltd. concentrating in corporate, securities and finance law.

Peter B. Carey (JD '69). Mr. Carey is no stranger to the Vis Moot. His daughter, Ellie, was a member of Loyola's first Vis Moot team, and he has participated as an arbitrator on previous occasions. Mr. Carey visited Vienna in 2004, providing some helpful advice to the team.

Additionally, Loyola recent graduates who are Vis Moot Alumni combined to contribute $1500 to help fund the trip to Hong Kong.

For a complete description of the competition and the class, visit: www.luc.edu/law/academics/courses/641.shtml