

Nottingham Trent University of UK wins mediation competition

Paris, 15 February 2010

Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom won the first prize in the 5th ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition hosted by ICC, with the University of New South Wales in Australia taking second place. Osgoode Hall School of Law in Canada came in third.

The annual moot mediation competition is organized by ICC's Amicable Dispute Resolution (ADR) Department and is a one-of-a-kind event that gathers teams from law schools and mediation experts from around the world.

The seven mock cases in the contest concerned international commercial disputes, ranging from intellectual property to distribution problems and complex commercial issues related to the organization of a charity concert.

A new attendance record was set this year, with 44 law schools from 18 countries and almost 100 professionals participating. Thirty-five nationalities were represented in the contest.

The aim of the competition is to train lawyers to better meet the dispute resolution needs of today's cross-cultural market. It gives students an opportunity to test their problem-solving skills in a moot international mediation. Professional mediators with a diverse range of expertise participate as volunteer mediators and judges.

"The ICC International Commercial Mediation Competition is the largest of its kind anywhere in the world and is a practical demonstration of the ICC's commitment to this field of dispute resolution," said Jason Fry, Secretary General of the ICC International Court of Arbitration and Director of ICC Dispute Resolution Services:

"Mediation is an effective response to the business community's call for quicker and more cost-effective methods of dispute resolution," Mr Fry added. "To thrive it needs a common knowledge and skills base. An event such as this lays the right foundations for the future. We are enormously grateful to the dispute resolution professionals and sponsors who contributed to this event to make it such a success, and impressed by the enthusiasm and skill of the students who participated in it."

Consisting of two parts – written and oral advocacy – the competition divides teams into requesting and responding parties in mock mediation sessions. Team members are required to act out the role of counsel and client before a mediator and two judges. Competitors must apply ICC's Amicable Dispute Resolution (ADR) Rules to solve problems devised by a special drafting committee of international mediation experts during three days of preliminary rounds and two days of final rounds.

The first prize won by Nottingham Trent University comes with a €1,500 cheque; one year subscriptions to the ICC International Court of Arbitration Bulletin, the CI Arb "International Journal of Arbitration, Mediation and Dispute Management"; a copy of the book "Settling Your Case Through Mediation: A Strategic Guide for Corporate Counsel" by Gary P. Poon; and a copy of the book "Mediation Representation – Advocating in a Problem-Solving Process" by Harold I. Abramson for each student.

The prize also includes internships with the ICC Dispute Resolution Department and with the Paris offices of Lovells, Orrick, and Clifford Chance.

The competition was followed by a one-day conference co-organized by ICC and two sections of the American Bar Association, and aimed at helping legal and business professionals take advantage of mediation as a form of dispute resolution. The conference provided practical information on topics such as the business value of mediation, comparison of risk limitation in mediation – as opposed to other forms of dispute resolution – and implementation of mediation policy. Participants were given insight into mediation strategy and learned how to implement mediation policy and prepare for mediation.

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