

NUS team argues its way to Jessup Moot Court contest

A team of four law students from the National University of Singapore has won the first-ever National Round for the Jessup Moot Court Competition, defeating a team from the Singapore Management University.

For three hours yesterday at the Supreme Court, the two sides duelled over a fictitious case involving a border dispute between two countries.

The case was meant to simulate a dispute in international law.

Attorney-General Sundaresh Menon, Supreme Court Justice Steven Chong and Second Solicitor-General Lionel Yee presided over the proceedings.

After two hard-fought sessions that saw the students arguing each side of the case and facing questions from the panel, the three judges unanimously awarded the victory to NUS, according to Mr Menon.

The competition was named after Philip C. Jessup, the US representative to the International Court of Justice from 1961 to 1970.

Teams from NUS have won the international Jessup competition four times

since 1982, with the last victory in 2001.

Both Mr Menon and Justice Chong participated in the contest when they were law students.

"This competition really gives students a chance to sharpen their writing, research and advocacy skills," said Mr Menon. "About one-quarter of the lawyers in the A-G Chambers are alumni of Jessup."

The National Round gave SMU – fielding a team for the first time – the chance to challenge NUS for the right to represent Singapore in the international competition.

The NUS team will now head to Washington, DC, where teams from 80 countries will compete from March 20 to 26.

Mr Keith Han, 24, a fourth-year law student at NUS, was named the best speaker yesterday.

Asked how the NUS team will prepare for the next challenge, he said: "We'll probably spend every waking hour preparing for it."

Lin Yang

100% effort
"We'll probably spend every waking hour preparing for it."

NUS LAW STUDENT KEITH HAN, who was named best speaker yesterday, on the coming Jessup Moot Court Competition