Mock trial award winner plans to graduate to real courtrooms

David DeSchepper, of St. John, proved once again that he is an invaluable member of Lewis University’s Mock Trial Team during the Yale Mock Trial Invitational last month.

A senior at the Illinois university studying English and political science, DeSchepper led his team of eight in arguing and performing their case. In addition, he was awarded the Outstanding Attorney Award for the fifth consecutive tournament this school year.

“Attorneys are judged in direct examination, cross examination, and an Opening or Closing statement. Witnesses are judged on how believable they are at portraying their witness, which requires quite a bit of talent in acting,” DeSchepper, 22, explained of the mock trial format.

Lewis University placed seventh in the tournament, beating out top schools like Harvard and Penn State.

“It was really something! Out there we were a ‘no name’ school going up against the big names like Harvard and Penn State, but we held our own—and won!” DeSchepper said.

“There’s a huge sense of accomplishment, both individually and collectively, when we can walk out of a classroom at Yale and turn to each other and say, ‘WE just beat Harvard’.”

Upon graduating this year, DeSchepper will attend the Loyola Chicago School of Law. He hopes to find a career in civil litigation, working as a plaintiff's lawyer.

“I want to focus on municipal liability. The chance to help shape laws and procedures used and followed by the police and local governments is what draws me to the field,” he said.
DeSchepper and his team competed at the Windy City Challenge hosted by Northwestern University last weekend, and will head to the Hoosier Challenge at Indiana University this weekend.

“My confidence in presenting and speaking in public has grown tremendously. Working with a team and competing at the level that we do is great overall,” he said. “I'm glad that what I do with the team helps put Lewis's name out there and brings in more attention to the program and the university.”

“I'm glad to go out with a bang and set the bar that much higher for the next group of mockers, just as my coaches and friends have done for me when they graduated,” he added.