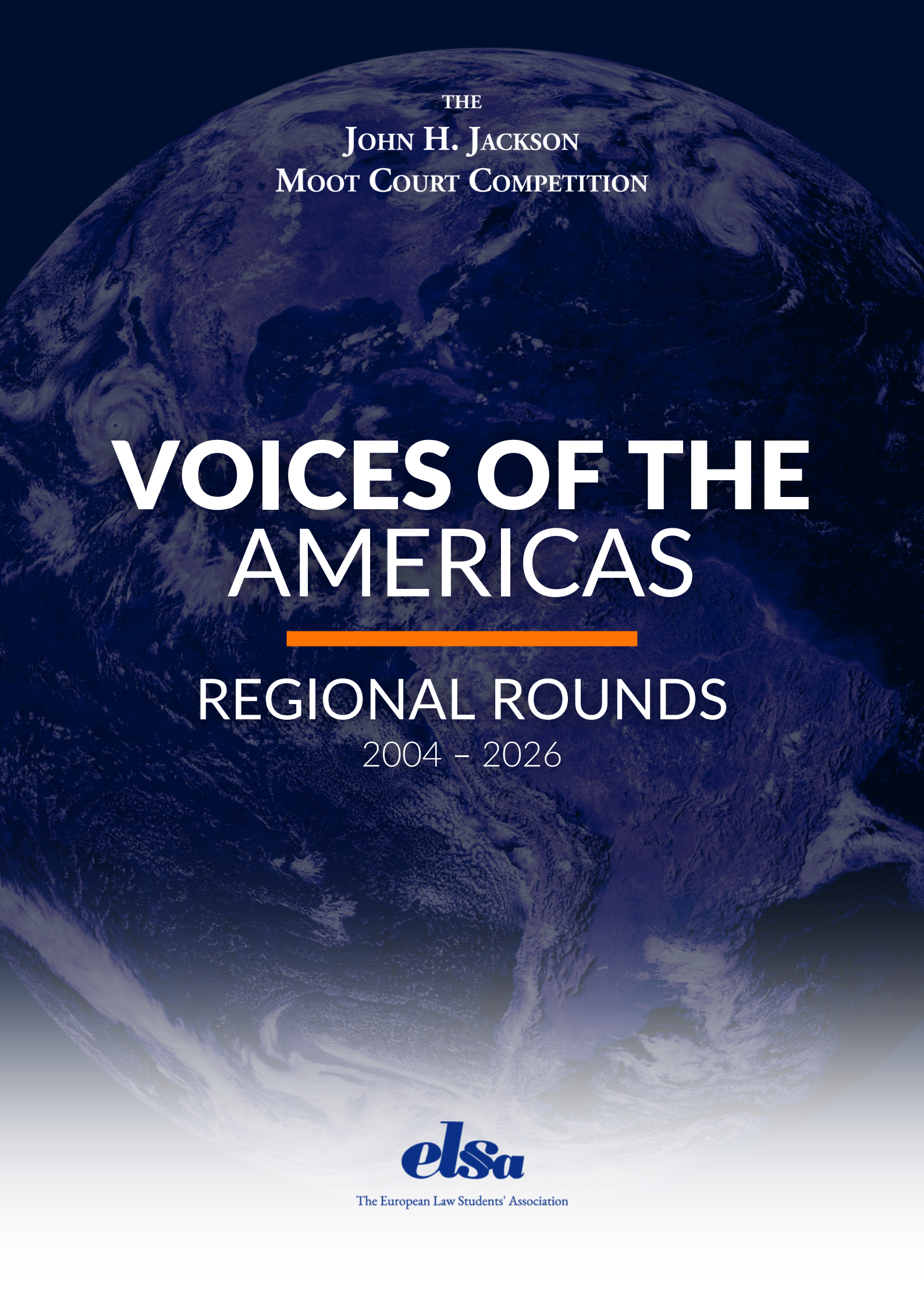


THE
JOHN H. JACKSON
MOOT COURT COMPETITION

VOICES OF THE AMERICAS

REGIONAL ROUNDS

2004 – 2026

elsa

The European Law Students' Association

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Juan Pablo Moya Hoyos
Marisa Goldstein
The WTO Representatives

For almost a quarter of a century, the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition has stood as one of the most important capacity-building initiatives in international trade law. Across twenty-four editions, it has touched the lives of countless young legal professionals from around the world, serving as a gateway into a field that shapes global trade and governance. For many participants, it has been more than a competition — it has been a defining moment: the experience that confirmed a vocation, opened a door, or introduced them to the colleagues and mentors who would go on to shape their careers.

Last year we began a systematic effort to track the professional and academic trajectories of Jackson Moot alumni region-by-region starting with the African Regional Round. This year, we move across the Atlantic to the Americas. This publication features 28 alumni from across the Region, representing the diversity of legal traditions, languages, and jurisdictions that make the All-Americas Regional Round so distinctive, spanning South America, Central America, the Caribbean, and North America.

It also includes testimonies from universities that have hosted past Editions of the All-Americas Regional Round, among them institutions in Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Perú, and the United States, whose contributions have been instrumental in building what the competition is today.

We have also included the testimony of a prominent sponsor of the Round — Georgetown University Law Center — which supports the legacy of Prof. Jackson by sponsoring scholarships to its LLM programme for eligible Jackson Moot alumni.

The testimonies gathered in this publication are powerful examples of what the Jackson Moot does for the professional trajectories of those who take on its challenge. The alumni featured here have gone on to build remarkable careers: as partners and associates at leading international law firms, as trade negotiators and government officials, as arbitration practitioners and academics, and as colleagues within international organizations including the WTO itself. Time and again, they point to the same benefits of participation in the Jackson Moot; the skills acquired under pressure,

the networks built across borders, the confidence gained in front of a panel of judges — as the foundation on which their careers were built. The Jackson Moot did not simply complement their legal education; for many, it launched it in an entirely new direction.

We are also aware that choosing to participate in the Jackson Moot is not always an easy decision in light of the significant time and financial commitments involved. While the ability to travel and meet other students from around their region and the world is one of the main attractions of the Jackson Moot, the question of whether they will be able to fund participation weighs heavily on many prospective students. For this reason, this edition of the testimonials project includes a dedicated section on funding and financial support, drawing on the actual experiences of the alumni featured in this publication. Their stories illustrate a wide range of approaches — from university grants and law firm sponsorships to personal fundraising campaigns — and demonstrate that although there is no single path to making participation possible there are often options available. The testimonials all share a common conclusion: that the investment, however it was financed, was unequivocally worth it. Not one of the alumni featured in this publication looks back on the financial commitment with regret. To the contrary, they describe it as one of the best professional investments of their careers.

If you are a prospective student weighing whether to participate, we invite you to read these pages. We hope that the stories herein about the careers built, the friendships formed, and the doors that opened in ways that could not have been predicted at the time, will lead you to the conclusion that taking part in the Jackson Moot is a worthwhile endeavour.

We hope this publication inspires you to take on the global challenge of the Jackson Moot, and that one day, your own story will find its place in these pages.



Inês Ribeiro

Head of Organising Committee
24th Edition of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition
Vice President in charge of Competitions
International Board of ELSA 2025/2026

Over the years, this Competition has grown into a vibrant community that has brought together hundreds of talented students, dedicated coaches, distinguished panellists, and committed organisers from across the Americas. Through their passion and dedication, they have helped shape a Regional Round that continues to leave a lasting mark on the field of international trade law.

The All-Americas Regional Round holds a unique place within the history of the Competition. Present since the earliest Editions of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition, it has accompanied the Competition through every stage of its development in the Americas. From separate North American and Latin American Regional Rounds to the creation of a unified All-Americas Regional Round, its history reflects not only the growth of the Competition but also the dedication of the countless students, organisers, coaches, and partners who have shaped its legacy over the years

The All-Americas Regional Round is also distinguished by the diversity it brings together. It serves as a meeting point for participants representing a wide range of legal traditions, cultures, and perspectives from across the continent.

At the same time, it bears the name of Professor John H. Jackson, whose scholarship and vision fundamentally shaped the modern understanding of international trade law and continues to inspire generations of students and practitioners around the world. For a Regional Round that unites participants from throughout the Americas, his legacy carries particular significance.

This booklet is a tribute to the individuals and institutions that have built this legacy. It celebrates the achievements of the participants who challenged themselves through the Competition, the organisers whose dedication made each edition possible, and the broader community that has supported the continued growth of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition throughout the Americas.

As we look back on this journey, we take pride in how far the All-Americas Regional Round has come while confidently looking ahead to future generations who will continue to shape its future. May the spirit of excellence, collaboration, and international understanding that has defined this Regional Round from its earliest days continue to inspire all who become part of its enduring legacy.

Inês Ribeiro

REFLECTIONS FROM A LONGSTANDING SUPPORTER

Jennifer Hillman
Professor
Georgetown University Law Center



At Georgetown Law, a big part of our mission is rooted in public law and the belief that progress comes from bringing smart, driven people together in a space where they can learn from each other and share different perspectives.

We were fortunate to have Professor John H. Jackson at Georgetown Law from 1998 to 2014. He's widely known for helping shape the framework that became the World Trade Organization, including its dispute settlement system. He also played a central role in founding the Institute of International Economic Law (IIEL) in 1999, which continues to be an important resource for students and professionals interested in international trade law.

Given that history, sponsoring the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition feels like a natural fit for Georgetown Law. It gives us an opportunity to connect with talented students from around the world and bring them to campus. While they're here, they get exposure to our curriculum, faculty, and the broader network. At the same time, Georgetown benefits from having these motivated, high-performing students become part of our community.

The Competition itself plays an important role in preparing students for the next step in their professional lives.

Participants take on complex cases from both sides, as complainants and respondents. while strengthening their research, writing, and oral advocacy skills
For many, this is their first exposure to trade law, and their willingness to take on such a demanding new subject says a lot about their curiosity, discipline, and ability to adapt.

These students already bring impressive experience and potential, but what stands out is how much they push themselves - not just to compete, but to understand their own limits and grow beyond them.

Georgetown recognizes the level of talent and effort this requires. Each year, two students are awarded a 50% scholarship to pursue an LL.M., giving them the chance to continue their development with access to top faculty, courses, and professional opportunities. We've seen many of these students go on to roles at the WTO, leading international law firms, and other global institutions, where they are directly involved in trade and policy work.

Supporting initiatives like this competition is one way Georgetown Law continues to contribute to the field and help prepare the next generation of professionals.





ABOUT ELSA

The European Law Students' Association

The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) is the world's largest independent, non-profit, non-political association run by and for law students and young lawyers. Present in 41 countries and more than 350 law faculties, ELSA has been connecting and empowering future legal professionals for over 45 years through opportunities for legal education, professional development, and international cooperation.

The vision of ELSA is: ***"A just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity."***

Contributing to legal education and promoting Human Rights awareness are among the central aims of the association. Through various academically focused projects and events, ELSA provides opportunities for law students and young lawyers to apply theory in practice.

elsa
The European Law Students' Association

ABOUT WTO

The World Trade Organization

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organisation responsible for regulating and facilitating trade between nations. Established in 1995, it provides a rules-based framework for international trade and serves as a forum where governments negotiate trade agreements and resolve trade disputes.

At the heart of the WTO are its Agreements, negotiated and signed by the vast majority of the world's trading nations and ratified by their respective parliaments. Today, the WTO's 166 members account for approximately 98% of global trade. Through its work, the organisation aims to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably, and freely as possible, supporting producers, exporters, importers, and consumers worldwide.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION



THE JOHN H. JACKSON MOOT COURT COMPETITION

The John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition on WTO Law is a simulation of a WTO dispute settlement Panel with written submissions and regional rounds where oral arguments simulate Panel hearings. It is organised by the European Law Students Association (ELSA) and is the world's largest and most preeminent simulation of WTO dispute settlement proceedings.

The competition attracts hundreds of the best students from nearly 100 law schools across six continents. Regional Rounds take place in Europe, South and West Asia, East Asia and Oceania, the Americas, and Africa. The top teams from each regional round proceed to the Final Oral Round in Geneva.

In 2026, this Final Oral Round is being co-hosted by the Graduate Institute and the WTO.

The two-tier structure ensures that all teams participate in their respective regional qualifying rounds, with the best teams from each region proceeding to Geneva to argue in the world finals at the WTO headquarters.

First organised in 2002 as the ELSA Moot Court Competition, its 24th Edition is currently underway . The Competition was renamed in memory of Professor John Jackson whose contributions to international trade law were matched only by his devotion to his students and to legal education.

THE JOHN H. JACKSON MOOT COURT COMPETITION AIMS:

1. To encourage law students to develop their legal skills.
2. To enhance knowledge of international trade law and WTO dispute settlement procedures.
3. To enhance the capacity for meaningful engagement in multilateral trade in the long term.



STAGES OF THE COMPETITION

The John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition is divided into three phases:

1

Written Rounds

Teams prepare Written Submissions on behalf of both sides of the dispute – the Complainant and the Respondent.

2

Regional Rounds

Teams present their Oral Pleadings and are scored on their oral advocacy skills in cooperation with our national and local chapters as well as Universities all over the world. Per edition, we have six Regional Rounds.

3

Final Oral Round

The best 24 teams plead before trade law experts. Traditionally, the Final Oral Round is held at the World Trade Organization in Geneva, Switzerland.

THE AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUND

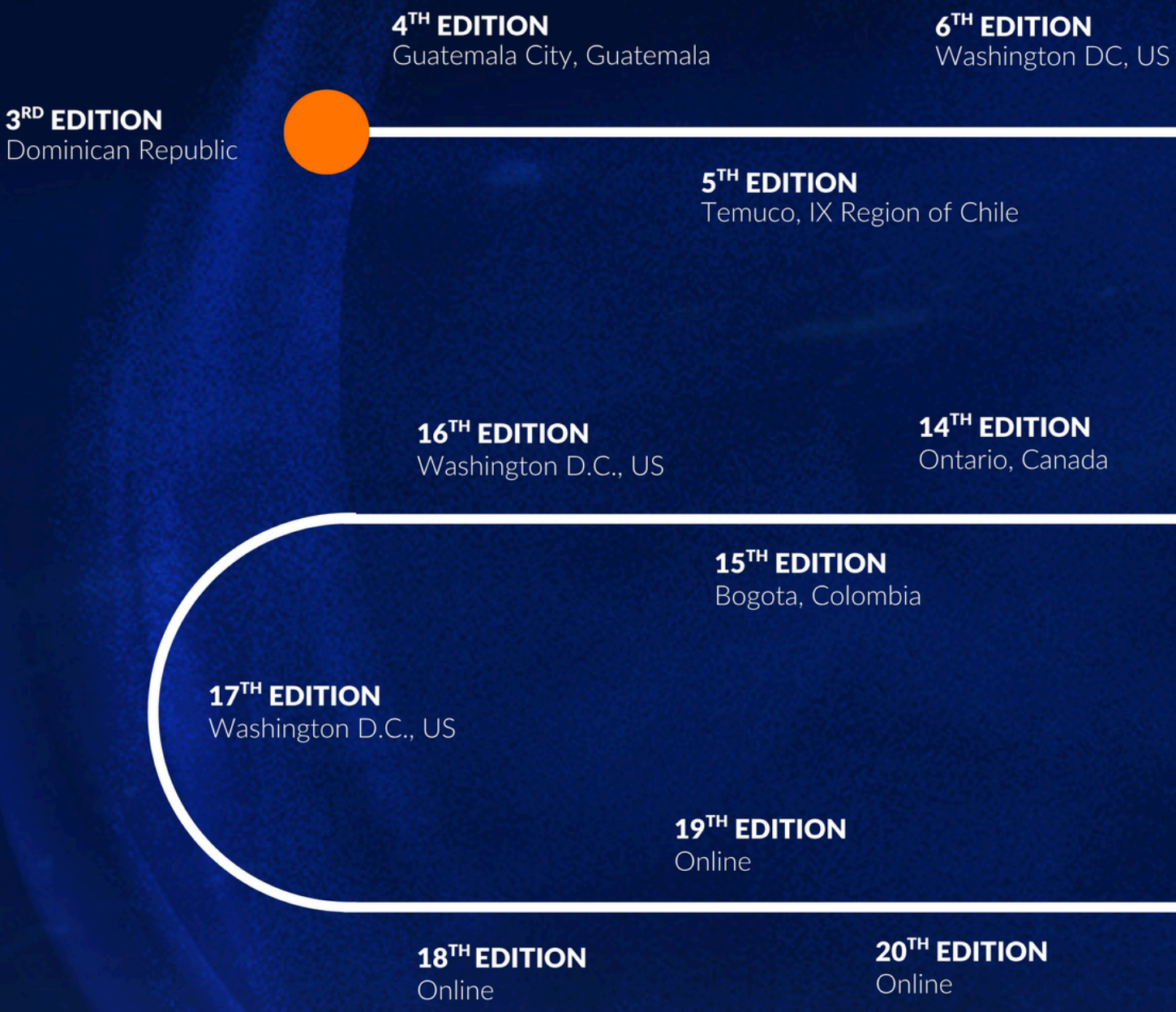
The Americas Regional Rounds began in 2004 as a Latin America Round held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The Round grew to cover teams coming from South, Central, and North America. In the 6th edition of the Competition, then known as EMC², the North American Regional Round was introduced, with its inaugural Edition taking place in Washington, D.C., at the Georgetown University Law Center.

The North American and Latin American Regional Rounds continued to be held separately for several years. In the 10th Edition of the Competition, the two regional rounds were merged, giving rise to the first All-Americas Regional Round and bringing together teams from across the Western Hemisphere.

Teams from the Americas and the Caribbean have historically done well in the global rounds, with winners coming from Harvard University, University of Ottawa, Universidad de los Andes, and Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.



TIMELINE
THE AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUNDS



TIMELINE

THE AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUNDS

8TH EDITION
Ottawa, Canada
São Paulo, Brazil

7TH EDITION
Washington DC, US
Bogotá, Colombia

9TH EDITION
Washington D.C., US
Mexico City, Mexico

10TH EDITION
US

12TH EDITION
Washington D.C., US

13TH EDITION
Washington D.C., US

11TH EDITION
San José, Costa Rica

21ST EDITION
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

23RD EDITION
Quito, Ecuador

24TH EDITION
Lima, Peru

22ND EDITION
Bogotá, Colombia

GEOGRAPHICAL REACH

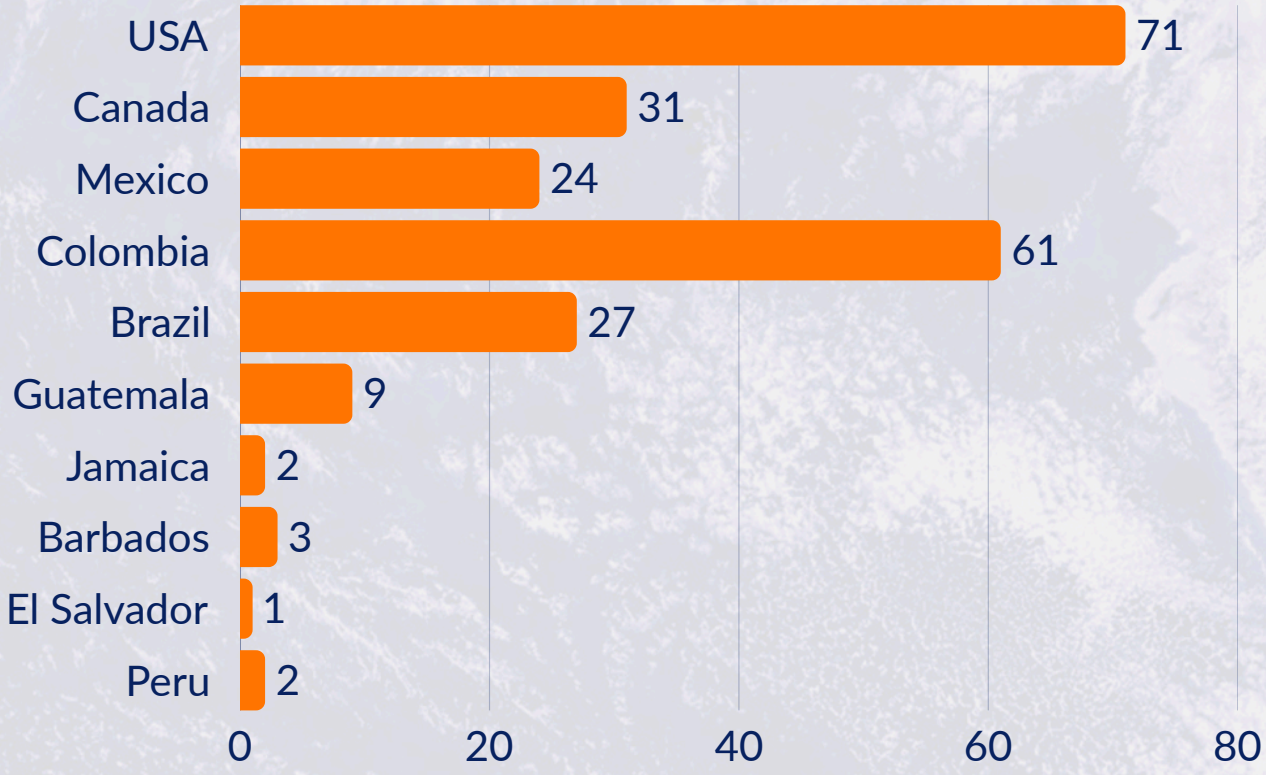
OF THE AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUNDS

10

COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED

43

UNIVERSITIES
REPRESENTED



OVER-ALL NUMBER OF TEAMS PER COUNTRY ACROSS THE 22 EDITIONS

AMERICAS TEAMS IN THE FINAL ORAL ROUND

OF THE JOHN H. JACKSON MOOT COURT COMPETITION

85

TEAMS **QUALIFYING** TO THE FINAL ORAL ROUND

6

AMERICAS TEAMS **WINNING** THE FINAL ORAL ROUND

7

AMERICAS TEAMS FINISHING AS THE **RUNNER-UP**

5

AMERICAS TEAMS WINNING THE **BEST ORATOR OF THE GRAND FINAL**

7

AMERICAS TEAMS WINNING THE **BEST OVERALL WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS**

TEAM PARTICIPATION
ACROSS AMERICA

In the 24th Edition, teams from 5 different countries participated in the All-Americas Regional Round, held in the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú from the 24th to the 27th of March 2026.



22

EDITIONS
OF THE AMERICAS
REGIONAL ROUNDS

235

TEAMS COMPETED
OVER THE YEARS

REFLECTIONS FROM PREVIOUS ORGANISERS OF THE ALL-AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUNDS

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DEL PERÚ

HOST OF THE 24TH EDITION OF THE ALL-AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUND



Victor Saco
Docente
Departamento Académico de Derecho
Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú
WTO Chair

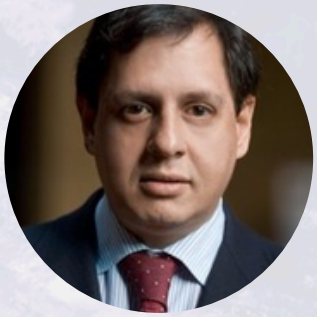
In 2026, and for the first time in its history, the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru - PUCP hosted the Jackson Moot, in its All-Americas Round. It was also the second time that PUCP was able to participate in qualifying rounds (the first time was in the Dominican Republic more than 20 years ago). Since PUCP holds a WTO Chair, we felt it was an obligation to bring the competition to Peru and make it better known, which worked: two Peruvian universities participated, students from two other universities participated as Time Keepers. It is highly likely that 4 Peruvian teams will participate in a future Jackson Moot and we hope that in less than 6 years there will be a Peruvian champion university in Geneva.

From an academic point of view, having 10 universities litigating with high quality was an extremely beneficial experience for all students. All of them mastered WTO law at a level far above that of the classroom (a level that professors would like to have in the classroom). Although it is a stimulating competition at an academic level, it is also hopeful at the level of development. The knowledge that more young people know about WTO law and its implications allows us to continue dreaming of a world guided by rules - and not by power - that benefits the middle and small economies.

We are very happy to have organized the rounds, we have achieved more than we expect at all levels: academic and human. And we will continue to promote the competition among Peruvian and regional students. Finally, on a personal level it was rewarding. 20 years ago, of the team of 4 people from the PUCP who presented the memorials, only 2 were able to travel to the Dominican Republic, due to lack of economic resources we made a draw and I could not travel. Twenty years later I was able to experience the competition live and I enjoyed it as if I were a participant.

UNIVERSIDAD ANDINA SIMÓN BOLÍVAR SEDE ECUADOR

Michel Levi, JD
Organizer; 23rd Edition of the All-Americas Regional Round
Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar
WTO Chair Ecuador



Organizing the 23rd Edition of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition was a highly rewarding and enriching experience for the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Ecuador, as well as for the Ecuadorian academic community specializing in international trade dispute settlement.

Welcoming teams from universities across the Americas and coordinating the competition in accordance with the rules established by ELSA, under the guidance of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enabled us to gain first-hand insight into the organisation of a global academic simulation of the highest standard. At the same time, the experience inspired us to strengthen national initiatives aimed at training teams capable of participating successfully in future editions of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition.

As organisers, we faced significant challenges in ensuring that the competition upheld the high standards established in previous editions. Beyond its academic success, however, we particularly value the spirit of camaraderie and cooperation fostered through the social events held during the competition, which brought together participants, panelists and organisers in a shared atmosphere of celebration and regional integration.

The John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition is undoubtedly a memorable academic experience and an essential initiative for the training of future specialists in international trade law. We wish the competition continued success for many years to come.

UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES



René Urueña
Professor of Law | Universidad de los Andes
WTO Chair
Max Planck Law Fellow

The School of Law of Universidad de los Andes has been proud to organize and host the regional rounds of the Jackson Moot. For Los Andes, this experience has been an opportunity to bring to Bogotá one of the most demanding and formative spaces in international trade law, to connect students with leading scholars and practitioners, and to create a community of rigorous legal argument around the multilateral trading system.

Hosting the regional round allowed the School to reaffirm its commitment to global legal education, practical training, and the construction of bridges between Latin America and the wider world of WTO law. It also gave our students, professors, alumni, and institutional partners a shared occasion to see how legal education can become a catalyst for professional vocation, regional dialogue, and international cooperation. This experience is closely connected with the work of the WTO Chair at Universidad de los Andes. The Chair seeks to strengthen teaching, research, and public debate on international trade law and the multilateral trading system in Colombia and Latin America. In that sense, the regional rounds and the Chair share a common mission: to build capacity, widen access, and cultivate a new generation of lawyers capable of engaging seriously and creatively with international trade law.

The impact of this collaboration can be seen in the trajectories of those who have passed through the regional round. Many former participants, coaches, and panellists have gone on to contribute to the scholarly and pedagogical work of the WTO Chair. They have also developed notable careers in international trade law, in public institutions, law firms, international organizations, academia, and civil society. Their paths show that the competition is not only a moot court, but also a formative community that opens doors, creates networks, and helps shape professional identities. Universidad de los Andes has greatly benefited from its collaboration with and participation in the Jackson Moot. We look forward to continuing this collaboration and to supporting the next generations of students, scholars, and practitioners in international trade law.

UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES

Izabella Vergara
Juan Pablo Gómez
Simón Hernández
Organisers of the 22nd Edition





Organizing and hosting the All-Americas Regional Round of the 22nd edition of the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition (hereinafter the "JHJMCC") was both a challenging and immensely rewarding experience. As organizers, we quickly realized that hosting an international academic competition of this magnitude and prestige required much more than a solid understanding of international trade law and the technical aspects of the JHJMCC itself. It demanded careful planning, effective coordination, adaptability and a commitment to creating an enriching experience for participants, panellists, coaches and sponsors alike.

Beyond the academic component, organizing the All-Americas Regional Round of the 22nd edition of the JHJMCC, allowed us to develop skills in planning cultural and social activities that complemented the competition. We worked to create opportunities for participants to engage with the local culture, interact with peers from across the region and build meaningful professional and personal connections. These experiences reminded us that the value of the JHJMCC extends far beyond the pleadings and legal arguments. It is also a platform for cultural exchange, networking and the creation of lasting friendships among future international lawyers and policy makers.

Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the experience was witnessing the enthusiasm, dedication and camaraderie displayed by all those involved. Seeing participants challenge themselves intellectually while simultaneously building relationships with colleagues from different countries reinforced the unique role that the competition plays in fostering an international community of trade law scholars and practitioners.

We are grateful for the opportunity to have been part of this journey and remain inspired by the connections, memories and lessons that emerged from it.

The experience left us with a profound appreciation for the collaborative spirit that defines the JHJMCC and with friendships and professional relationships that will undoubtedly endure for many years to come.

UNIVERSIDAD DE GUADALAJARA



Dr. Edna Ramirez-Robles
Professor International Trade Law
National Researchers' System (I)
Dean of International Affairs School
Organiser of the 21st Edition

Hosting the 21st Edition of the All-Americas Regional Round of the Jackson Moot at the University of Guadalajara, Centro Universitario de la Costa (CUCosta) in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico was an extraordinarily rewarding professional and academic experience. Bringing together around forty talented law students and coaches, fifteen distinguished judges — including a Senior Counsellor from the WTO Secretariat, two former Members of the WTO Appellate Body, and leading partners from international law firms — as well as seven sponsors from across the Americas, transformed the event into a unique platform for academic excellence, professional networking, and intercultural exchange. The competition demonstrated the enduring relevance of the multilateral trading system and the importance of investing in the next generation of international trade lawyers.

One of the most valuable aspects of the Regional Round was witnessing the intellectual growth and enthusiasm of the participants. Students had the opportunity to engage directly with internationally recognized experts, receive constructive feedback on their advocacy skills, and deepen their understanding of WTO law and dispute settlement. Equally important were the learning opportunities for judges, coaches, sponsors, and organizers, who benefited from the exchange of perspectives from different legal traditions and jurisdictions across the Americas. The event fostered meaningful dialogue between academia and practice, reinforcing the collaborative spirit that characterizes the international trade law community.

Beyond the academic and professional dimensions, the competition also created memorable and enjoyable experiences for everyone involved.

Participants developed friendships that transcended borders, shared cultural experiences, and built professional networks that will likely endure throughout their careers. The informal interactions between rounds, social activities, and moments of camaraderie contributed to a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere that complemented the rigorous legal discussions. These human connections are often among the most lasting outcomes of the Moot Court experience.

In conclusion, hosting the Regional Round was both an honor and a privilege. The event successfully combined academic rigor, professional development, and cultural exchange, creating a meaningful experience for all participants. It reaffirmed the value of the Jackson Moot as a premier educational initiative in international trade law and highlighted the important role that universities, international organizations, legal practitioners, and sponsors play in fostering future leaders of the global trading system.

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW



Padideh Ala'i
Professor of Law
Director, International & Comparative Legal Studies
Director, Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Program
Director,Trade, Investment & Development Program
American University, Washington College of Law

We hosted for several years - about four or five times - starting around 2011. It was a wonderful experience gathering these brilliant students together at our law school. Washington DC benefits from a very deep trade expert community so we had brilliant judges for all the sessions.

We started with hosting first only the north American round and then, when the Latin American and North American rounds were merged, we hosted an All-Americas round but keeping separate finals for the two regions.

The opportunity for participants to meet each other was very important as they got to expand their network by meeting trade practitioners from all of the Americas. The students learnt as much from each other as they did from the competition and the judges. Organizing the regional round takes a lot of work, energy and coordination.

PARTICIPANTS' TESTIMONIALS

CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA





Naiana Magrini
University of Minas Gerais, Brazil
2015 (14th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Naiana is currently a Senior Associate at Grinberg Cordovil Advogados, where she practices international trade and competition law. She advises clients on trade remedies, tariff modifications, compliance, and antitrust matters. Her practice includes representing both domestic industries and importers/exporters in complex trade investigations, as well as preparing legal and economic analyses on international trade issues. She holds an LLB from the Federal University of Minas Gerais, where she was awarded a CNPq research scholarship and participated in a research project focused on the role of the WTO in the international legal system. She also holds a master's degree in International Relations from the University of São Paulo, where she graduated with top academic performance and was awarded a CAPES merit-based scholarship.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"My motivation to participate stemmed from a strong interest in international trade law and the functioning of the multilateral trading system. The competition provided a unique opportunity to engage deeply with WTO law while developing practical skills in legal argumentation and oral advocacy in a highly international and competitive environment. The experience was transformative. It strengthened my analytical thinking, enhanced my ability to structure complex legal arguments, and improved my performance under pressure. It also solidified my interest in pursuing a career in international trade law. Participating in Jackson was a very important experience in my academic and professional development."

"It provided rigorous training in WTO law and dispute settlement, while also fostering essential skills such as legal research, written submissions, and oral advocacy. Engaging with teams from different jurisdictions and legal traditions broadened my perspective on international law and strengthened my ability to approach complex legal issues from a comparative standpoint. The impact of the moot extended well beyond the competition itself. It played a decisive role in shaping my academic and professional path. My participation in the competition was supported through a combination of institutional support and personal funding. This included contributions from the university and additional resources to cover travel, enabling my team to compete in the Final Oral Round."



Lucas Pires
Fundação Getúlio Vargas School of Law of São Paulo, Brazil
2010 (9th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Lucas is currently a senior legal counsel, Trade Compliance at Medline, the largest provider of medical surgical products and supply chain solutions in the US. Prior to that, he was a senior associate in international Trade at King & Spalding, and before that at Alston & Bird, in Washington DC. Lucas has been an international trade and compliance lawyer for 15 years, focusing on customs, trade policy, legal risk management, international regulatory frameworks, and strategic support to business teams in multinational settings. Lucas holds a Master of International Business and Economic Law from Georgetown University Law Center (with a WTO certificate), a Master in Business Economics and a Law degree from FGV School of São Paulo, Brazil.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I was drawn to the Jackson Moot because it offered a unique opportunity to immerse myself in WTO law and network with academic and professional experts. The competition combined rigorous legal analysis with advocacy, oral skills, teamwork, and exposure to an international professional community. The experience helped shape how I approach trade and legal matters: with structure, precision, and an awareness of broader institutional and policy considerations."

"Participating in the Jackson Moot was a formative experience in my legal education. It required a level of discipline and depth of analysis that went well beyond traditional coursework, particularly in written advocacy and oral argument. These skills have remained directly relevant throughout my career. My involvement with the Moot continued after my participation as a team member, as I later acted as a coach for FGV, which won the Latin American Round in one of the years."

"My participation costs were covered partly by the university and sponsors, and partly by personal funds."



Andrea Sarmiento
Universidad de los Andes, Colombia
2018 (17th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Andrea is currently a Legal Associate for the Colombia and Peru Forest Programme at the Center for Climate Crime Analysis (CCCA), where she conducts legal research on environmental crime, corporate climate accountability, and analyzes due diligence obligations across jurisdictions. Her professional journey has included internships at the OHCHR for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as in the Colombian National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State. Andrea holds a law degree from the Universidad de los Andes (2019) and an Advanced LLM in European and International Human Rights Law from Leiden University in the Netherlands (2022).

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"Participating in the Jackson Moot was a uniquely formative experience — my first encounter, as a law student, with the challenge of arguing a legal case before a highly qualified panel of experts in international trade law. The competition gave me a rigorous understanding of the legal framework governing international trade and the intricate workings of the WTO system. I sharpened my legal skills, learned to dissect each element of an argument with precision, and developed a deep appreciation for the importance of building submissions and claims on solid, well-sourced legal foundations."

"This experience allowed me to understand the practical application of the rules of international trade law and how they shape real cases that affect the daily lives of consumers. That understanding of law as something with direct human consequences has informed my professional path ever since, from my work on corporate accountability and environmental crime to my engagement with international human rights mechanisms. Lastly, this experience also underscored the critical role of teamwork as reaching the level of legal argumentation the competition demands was only possible through close collaboration with my teammates.

"Our team participated in the Final Oral Round in Geneva where flights and accommodation costs were covered partially by Universidad de los Andes and own funds."

Miguel Torres
Universidad Javeriana, Colombia
2012 (11th Edition)



PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Miguel Torres Caro is a Managing Director at Delphos in London, where he leads capital markets and project finance transactions across Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. He previously worked at Shearman & Sterling in New York, Norton Rose Fulbright in London, and two leading Colombian law firms. He holds an LLM from the University of Chicago Law School, and an LLB from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I signed up for the Jackson Moot because I wanted an experience that would push me and develop my quick thinking, oral advocacy, and ability to build legal arguments under real pressure. The competition delivered far more than I expected. The months of intense preparation alongside my teammates and coaches taught me that hard work is always rewarded, and the discipline I built during that process has stayed with me ever since. It made me more goal oriented, gave me the confidence to pursue things I might not have otherwise considered, and set the tone for everything that followed in my career."

"The Jackson Moot taught me something beautiful about competition and human nature. I learned something from every person I encountered, whether teammates, coaches, or rivals. As we advanced through the rounds, the teams we had faced earlier became friends who rallied behind us and helped us prepare for the next hearing. Many of those people became lifelong friends I still stay in touch with today, all of whom have gone on to do great things. That, more than anything else, is what I value most from the experience. It enriched me as a person, which naturally translates into everything I do in my career."

"Our participation was made possible through funding from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and the support of private sponsors, which helped us cover travel and participation costs."



Marina Takitani

Fundação Getulio Vargas School of Law of São Paulo, Brazil
2014 (13th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Marina is a Brazilian-qualified lawyer specializing in international trade law, with a particular focus on trade remedies, WTO law, and international economic regulation. She is currently a partner at Nasser Sociedade de Advogados, a boutique law firm in São Paulo, where she advises clients on trade remedies investigations across Latin America, as well as on international contracts, regulatory matters, and dispute resolution.

Marina holds an LLM in International Business and Economic Law from Georgetown University Law Center, where she also earned a Certificate in WTO & International Trade Studies. Marina pursued her LLB at Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV Direito SP), with a minor in International Relations, and also pursued a master's degree in economics at the same university. During her LLM, she was a fellow at the Institute of International Economic Law (IIEL) and received the CALI Excellence for the Future Award in Dispute Settlement in International Trade. Marina interned at the World Trade Organization's Legal Affairs Division in Geneva, where she gained practical experience with WTO dispute settlement, and also at the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the WTO, where she supported the dispute settlement and trade remedies teams.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

“At the time I joined the Moot, I was still exploring different areas of law and had a growing interest in international law, although it still felt largely theoretical. The Jackson Moot provided my first opportunity to engage with WTO law in a practical setting, working on complex legal issues and developing structured arguments in a simulated dispute settlement environment. What particularly motivated me was the combination of intellectual rigor and international exchange. Engaging with students from diverse legal backgrounds and working collaboratively within my team made the experience both challenging and rewarding. By the end of the competition, I had developed a clear interest in pursuing international trade law as a career.”

“The Jackson Moot marked a turning point in my academic and professional trajectory. It provided my first in-depth, practical exposure to WTO law and significantly shaped the way I approach legal reasoning. The skills developed during the competition continue to be directly relevant to my professional practice.”

“My team's participation in the Moot was made possible through a combination of institutional support from my university and additional fundraising efforts. The university covered the registration fees and provided coaching support, which was essential to our preparation. In parallel, our team engaged in fundraising initiatives, reaching out to law firms with an interest in international trade law that might be willing to support our participation. We also organized an online fundraising campaign, which allowed family and friends to contribute. Through these combined efforts, we were able to cover most of the costs associated with participating in the competition.”



Daniela Carvajal Galeano
Universidad de Los Andes, Colombia
2017 (16th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Daniela is a Colombian lawyer with over seven years of experience in project finance, infrastructure, and energy transactions across Latin America. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Law with a minor in Economics (cum laude) from Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá), and a Diploma in Corporate Finance from CESA. Daniela is currently completing an MBA with a Finance focus at SDA Bocconi School of Management in Milan, Italy (Class of 2026).
In her most recent role as a Senior Legal Executive at VGMobility, Daniela led the negotiation and execution of a green loan and cross-currency swap exceeding USD 200 million with a French Bank, as well as the purchase of 101 electric buses for Bogotá's public transportation system. Prior to that, she was a Senior Associate at Dentons Cárdenas & Cárdenas, advising on major infrastructure and transport finance projects, and an Associate at Chalela Abogados.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"From early on in my legal studies, I was drawn to the intersection of law, numbers, and business. Trade law felt like a natural fit, it sits precisely at that crossroads, combining rigorous legal reasoning with real-world economic implications. The Jackson Moot was, in that sense, an obvious choice: it offered the chance to engage with WTO dispute settlement not as an abstract academic exercise, but as a practical, high-stakes simulation. What truly captivated me was the hands-on dimension of the competition, the idea of stepping into the shoes of a real counsel, building arguments under pressure, and defending a position before experienced practitioners. That practical edge and the intense teamwork made the experience unlike anything I had encountered in the classroom."

"Looking back at my career, the Jackson Moot stands out as the single most formative experience of my professional journey. It was the first time I had to do more than understand a legal problem. I had to represent a party, advocate for their interests, and apply not only technical knowledge but also argumentation and public speaking skills under genuine scrutiny."

"Grappling with complex WTO concepts such as balance of payments provisions and tariff-rate quotas pushed me to develop a depth of analysis I had never been required to reach before. The process of building a moot submission taught me a discipline that I carry into every transaction I work on today."

"At the same time, the experience was a profound exercise in humility. The level of the panelists, the quality of the feedback, and the critical rigor of the process made clear just how much there was still to learn, and how valuable that awareness is. The moot shaped my ability to remain composed, precise, and persuasive in high-pressure environments, which has proven essential in my different roles. But beyond the professional and intellectual growth, what I treasure most is the team. The intensity of the preparation process, the late nights, the endless rounds of arguments, the moments of doubt and determination shared together, turned my teammates into something much more than colleagues. They became family. That bond, built under pressure and sustained by a shared purpose, is something I carry with me just as much as any legal skill the competition gave me. I am deeply grateful for what that competition gave me, and I would encourage every law student with an interest in international trade to seize the opportunity without hesitation."

"My participation in the Jackson Moot was made possible through a combination of support. Universidad de los Andes provided institutional backing, which covered the costs associated with the competition. I was also fortunate enough to count on the generous support of my parents, who helped ensure I could fully commit to the experience without financial constraints."



Alberto Madero
Universidad Javeriana, Colombia
2008 (7th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Alberto Madero Rincón is the founding partner of Madero Asociados, a boutique dispute resolution firm based in Barranquilla and Bogotá, Colombia. He is admitted to practice in both Colombia and New York. Over a 15-year international career, he has led high-stakes arbitration proceedings, structured major energy and infrastructure projects, advised governments in trade negotiations, and served as Dean of the School of Law, Political Science, and International Relations at Universidad del Norte (Colombia).

His most prominent role was as arbitration manager at Refinería de Cartagena (Reficar), where he led the litigation strategy in one of the largest international arbitrations in Colombian history — an ICC proceeding seated in New York that concluded with a favourable award exceeding USD 1 billion. He has also represented clients and states before international tribunals and domestic courts, worked at King & Spalding's New York and Houston offices, and participated in the negotiation of Colombia's free trade agreements with South Korea, Israel, Japan, Costa Rica, and the Pacific Alliance. He holds an LLM from Harvard Law School (Colfuturo and Colombia-Harvard Fund scholar), a master's in International Economic Law from the University of Barcelona, and a law degree from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"When I signed up for the Jackson Moot, I was a law student who had been told — implicitly and explicitly — that a Colombian law degree was a ticket to practicing law in Colombia, and only in Colombia. The competition broke that assumption entirely. For the first time, I was not preparing a case under the Civil Code or the Colombian Commercial Statute. I was arguing before a panel of international trade experts, engaging with the texts of WTO agreements, and competing alongside students from across the Americas and the world. That experience planted a seed: the idea that the practice of law is not a local affair, but a global one — and that the skills to succeed on that stage can be learned, if one is willing to push far beyond their comfort zone."

"Participating in the Jackson Moot gave me something no trade law course could have: the experience of performing under pressure, in English, before seasoned practitioners who expected rigor, clarity, and intellectual courage."

"It taught me that international law is not an abstract discipline reserved for diplomats — it is a living practice, argued in real rooms with real consequences. That lesson stayed with me. Years later, when I joined Colombia's negotiating team for free trade agreements and later appeared before WTO dispute settlement bodies on behalf of the Colombian state, I was drawing on instincts first developed during the competition."

"The Jackson also fundamentally reshaped how I think about legal education. After returning to academia as a professor and eventually as Dean of the School of Law, Political Science, and International Relations at Universidad del Norte, one of my first priorities was to create a dedicated program to finance and expand student participation in international moot court competitions — including the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition. I wanted every student who walked through our doors to have the same opportunity I had: to discover, early and firsthand, that the practice of law is not confined to a single jurisdiction. Competitions like the Jackson are where students get to prove that to themselves, before the professional world demands it of them."

"My participation in the Jackson Moot was made possible through a combination of institutional support and personal investment. I received financial assistance from two institutions: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, which I represented in the competition, and Prietocarrizosa — the Colombian law firm where I was working as a trainee lawyer at the time. I also contributed my own personal funds to cover the remaining costs. The fact that I had to piece together support from multiple sources made the experience feel even more meaningful — it was a deliberate choice, not a given, and that made me determined to make the most of every moment of the competition."



Gabriela Sandino
Universidad de los Andes, Colombia
2018 (17th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Gabriela is a Colombian-qualified lawyer with a master's degree in public administration from Columbia University (SIPA). She has over six years of professional experience working in top-tier international arbitration law firms in Europe, as well as with United Nations agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, where she has contributed to legal and institutional work within multilateral frameworks. She is currently working as a legal consultant for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) providing legal support on institutional, contractual, and operational matters within the context of international cooperation and migration governance. She is also engaged in a side initiative focused on future legal advisory work for developing countries, particularly in contract negotiations related to equitable natural resource extraction and sustainable investment frameworks.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"During law school, I had a strong interest in pursuing a career in public international law. I observed that participation in international moot court competitions such as the Jessup opened significant professional opportunities for many peers. When I learned about the Jackson Moot Court Competition, which shared a similar focus on international legal reasoning and advocacy, I decided to participate."

"The experience proved transformative. It was my first exposure to structured international legal advocacy in a competitive environment and taught me the importance of teamwork, discipline, and strategic legal thinking. Most importantly, it strengthened my ability to think critically under pressure and to approach legal problems with greater depth and precision. It also challenged my expectations, as despite extensive preparation, our team did not advance to the quarter-finals. This outcome was a valuable lesson in resilience and adaptability, and it taught me that professional growth is not always linear. In the end, what matters most is not only the result, but the journey itself, the people you meet along the way, the relationships you build, and the perspective you gain, all of which shape you far beyond the competition."

“The Jackson Moot Court Competition played a pivotal role in shaping my professional trajectory. Through the competition, I was fortunate to be coached by an exceptional mentor, who at the time worked with Colombia's national defence agency representing the State before international arbitration tribunals. Under his guidance, I began working as an intern, which marked my entry into the field of international arbitration.”

“This experience opened the door to a professional path I had long aspired to pursue, initially envisioning a career in international economic law and institutions such as the WTO. While my path evolved differently than originally imagined, the foundation built through the moot court experience led to diverse opportunities across Paris, London, Milan, and now New York. I attribute much of my professional development and international exposure to the Jackson Moot Court Competition and the mentorship I received through it.”

“My university, Universidad de los Andes, covered the costs of flights and accommodation for the competition. However, participants were responsible for covering their own daily expenses during the competition.



Mateo Ferrero

Universidad de los Andes, Colombia
2007 (6th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Mateo Ferrero is a Counsellor in the Trade and Environment Division of the World Trade Organization (WTO), where he works on issues at the intersection of trade, environmental policy, and technical barriers to trade. His responsibilities include supporting the work of the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, the Committee on Trade and Environment, and several environmental initiatives led by WTO Members. He also regularly delivers capacity-building activities for developing countries on standards and regulations, as well as on environmental and sustainability policies affecting international trade.

Previously, Mateo worked on WTO dispute settlement, advising panels and the Appellate Body in disputes concerning a broad range of trade issues, including environmental measures, trade remedies, technical regulations, government support policies in the renewable energy sector, and export restrictions. He holds a law degree from Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia, and an LLM in International Economic Law from the University of Barcelona, Spain.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"My motivation to participate in the Jackson Moot stemmed from a growing interest in the intersection of law and economics, which I developed after completing an exchange year focused on EU law. The competition offered an ideal opportunity to deepen my understanding of international economic law and to engage more seriously with the legal disciplines governing global trade. I was also keen to improve my oral advocacy skills in English, a language that is not my mother tongue. The experience ultimately shaped me in ways that went well beyond the legal questions at issue. Participating in both the regional and Final Oral Round allowed me to meet students from around the world who shared an interest in trade law and international affairs. The friendships, exchanges, and professional connections that emerged from that experience remain among the most valuable and memorable aspects of my participation."

"My participation in the Jackson Moot completely altered my professional trajectory. During my early years at university, I expected to specialize in an area of domestic law and had not imagined that I would eventually build a career in international trade law. The competition opened the door to an entirely new world: WTO law and practice, not only as a fascinating field of study, but also as a professional community. It gave me the confidence and curiosity to pursue further studies in international economic law at different universities, where I had the privilege of learning from professors and practitioners with deep expertise in the field."

"The Jackson Moot also introduced me to a remarkable network of people who shaped my academic and professional journey. Many of the professors, coaches, peers, and practitioners I met through the competition later became friends, mentors, and colleagues. Looking back, the competition was not simply an extracurricular activity; it was the experience that helped me discover a field, a community, and ultimately a career path that I continue to find deeply meaningful."

"We were able to cover the costs of our participation thanks to the generous support of a Colombian law firm that believed in encouraging young students with an emerging interest in international trade law, even though we were only beginning to develop expertise in the field. Their financial support was essential, but so was their encouragement and confidence in our team. Both proved crucial throughout our Jackson Moot journey."



Santiago Wills
Universidad de los Andes, Colombia
2007 (6th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Ambassador Santiago Wills is a trade diplomat and international economic lawyer with extensive experience in multilateral trade negotiations and international economic governance. He currently serves as Director of the Council and Trade Negotiations Committee Division at the World Trade Organization (WTO), responsible for the WTO Governing Bodies (Ministerial Conference, General Council, Dispute Settlement Body, and Trade Negotiations Committee). Before joining the WTO Secretariat, he served as the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Colombia to the WTO in Geneva, where he represented Colombia across a broad range of trade policy discussions and negotiations. In that capacity he served as Chairman of the Fisheries Subsidies negotiations, which he brought to a successful conclusion after 20 years of stalemate, with the adoption by Trade Ministers of the multilateral Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies in June 2022.

Prior to this, Amb. Wills worked in the private sector, leading the Trade and Investment Protection practice in a recognized Colombian law firm, and held other positions within the Colombian government related to trade policy and international economic affairs, including work on trade negotiations, dispute settlement, and international regulatory cooperation. He has also been actively involved in academic and policy discussions concerning international trade and global governance. He holds a law degree from the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia and an LLM in International Economic Law and Policy from the University of Barcelona, Spain. In 2025, Amb. Wills was recognized by the World Economic Forum as a highly influential Young Global Leader.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I decided to participate in the Jackson Moot because I was increasingly interested in public international law issues and the role that international trade plays in shaping economic relations between countries."

"At the time, WTO Law was still a relatively unfamiliar field for many students in Colombia, and the competition presented a unique opportunity to engage directly with highly complex legal and policy questions in an international setting."

"The experience had a lasting impact on me, both personally and professionally. Beyond the academic component, the competition exposed me to a truly international community of students, practitioners, and professors who shared a passion for international economic law, many of whom remain close friends and colleagues today."

"Participating in the Jackson Moot played a defining role in my professional development. Before the competition, I had only a general interest in international law and limited exposure to WTO law as a specialized discipline. The competition introduced me to the intellectual rigor and practical relevance of international trade law and policy, and it allowed me to improve my advocacy skills. It also gave me a renewed sense of the importance of international trade as an engine of economic growth and the value of the multilateral trading system. This deepened my interest in pursuing a career in this field, not only to tackle legal issues but also to design and develop public policy.

"Equally important was the network and sense of community that came with the experience. The friendships and professional connections that resulted from our participation have been lasting and have helped me develop my career further."

"Our participation was made possible through financial support from external sponsors, particularly from a very generous Law Firm in Colombia, and the institutional backing from our university. I will be forever grateful to them."



Valeria Tiffer
Universidad de Costa Rica, Costa Rica
2012 (11th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Valeria studied law at the University of Costa Rica, where she explored her interest for international law through moot court competitions that became defining chapters of her studies. In parallel to her classes, she worked in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and later in a Central American firm. Her interest in international economic law led her to Harvard Law School, where, under the guidance of Professor Mark Wu, she pursued an LLM and focused on trade law and investment. After graduating, she joined the WTO's Appellate Body Secretariat, solidifying her trade law dreams as she worked closely with Appellate Body members on complex disputes.

After four enriching years at the WTO, she joined the International Trade Centre (ITC) as an export strategy consultant. There, she advised governments on how to improve their export support services. She then went on to complete an MBA at Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business, focusing on business in emerging markets, international trade and technology. She currently works as an independent trade consultant in Geneva, Switzerland.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

“Growing up in Costa Rica, I saw how open trade and investment policies transformed a small country into a regional success story. That curiosity about economic development drew me toward trade law and, eventually, to this competition. I had already experienced what moot courts could do for legal reasoning and advocacy, so I was thrilled to participate in one entirely dedicated to trade law. I competed in 2012 representing the University of Costa Rica and the following year helped organize the Americas Round in my country. The experience sharpened my skills, introduced me to the WTO, and connected me to a global community of trade law practitioners and scholars whose influence has guided my career.”

“Participating in the moot court was a true crash course in WTO law, allowing me to dive deep into the substance of international trade rules. It was also a powerful school for skills development, both my analytical thinking and communication skills.”

"Beyond this, it made me part of a global community: my teammates remain some of my closest friends from law school, my roommate at Harvard was a friend I met through the competition, and the judges I encountered later became my bosses and mentors. Even now, living in Geneva, those connections continue to resurface in meaningful ways."

"On a personal level, the competition was a turning point for me. It was my third time participating in a moot court and after years of practicing my oral advocacy - a skill that did not come naturally to me - it all paid off when I won an award for my oral presentation (which was given to me by former Appellate Body Member Ricardo Ramirez, who I later worked with at the Appellate Body!). This moment taught me that perseverance and consistent practice can overcome anything. Overall, the experience solidified my passion for international trade, leading me to write my thesis in the field and guiding my academic and professional path ever since."

"The University of Costa Rica provided part of the funding."



Andrés Paniagua
Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Guatemala
2014 (13th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Andrés currently serves as a Legal Expert and the Manager of the Central American Mechanism for the Settlement of Trade Disputes at the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration - SIECA. Andrés has participated in the settlement of interstate disputes.

Andrés interned at the Permanent Mission of Guatemala before the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has been a lecturer at multiple events and for multiple institutions, such as the Central American Parliament, the University of Chile, the American Bar Association, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System. He has regularly taught elective courses on international economic policy and regional integration at Universidad Francisco Marroquin, in Guatemala. He will begin an LLM at the World Trade Institute, Bern University starting September 2026.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

“I believe my motivation to pursue a career on trade began quite early. Perhaps my first exposure to international trade came during my middle school breaks, when I would help my father at his small printing business. I remember coming across the term "F.O.B. – Free on Board" on an invoice, which sparked my curiosity. My father's stories about how Guatemalan and Central American trade policy allowed his business to grow and operate more efficiently deepened my interest in the field. Years later, I had a hard time deciding between law and economics as the subject matter of my graduate studies. In the Jackson Moot, I found an opportunity to explore a field which merged both interests. I was fascinated by the complexity and practical implications of international trade law as a way to foster social development. After participating, I decided to dedicate my career to international trade and economic law, in general. It can be said the Jackson Moot shaped my career profoundly.”

"The John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition allowed me to develop critical skills for an international lawyer or an official working in the international policy-making arena. It also entailed the opportunity to build significant relations with fellow professionals, which has proved essential for a career in the field. Beyond acquiring knowledge on trade law, the Jackson Moot offers manifold opportunities for personal and professional development"

"Among the key skills acquired, I could highlight the ability to carry out more sophisticated legal analyses, as well as refined drafting and oratory skills. Beyond this, the Jackson Moot truly fosters teamwork and cooperation, providing students with the ability to operate in high stakes environments as they advance in their careers. As to the relationships built throughout the competition, they have led to important projects, including a regional moot court, lectures on dispute settlement and publications, among other things."

"I received financial support through Universidad Francisco Marroquín's Moot Courts Programme, covering airfares and travel expenses."



Rocio Monzón
Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Guatemala
2013 (12th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Rocio is a Senior Associate at Eversheds Sutherland in New York, where she is part of the Litigation practice group. Her work focuses on complex international disputes, with a focus on investor-state arbitration and commercial arbitration. Rocio is also an Adjunct Professor at Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala, where she teaches Private International Law, and serves as a Board Member of MAIA, a non-profit organization dedicated to the education of Indigenous girls in Guatemala. Prior to moving to the United States, Rocio worked at the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration and the CAFTA-DR Secretariat for Environmental Matters, and served as coach for the Jackson Moot and as Director of the Moot Court Programme at Universidad Francisco Marroquín.

Rocio earned her law degree magna cum laude from Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala and later obtained an LLM from Harvard University. She is admitted to practice law in New York and Guatemala.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"Moot courts played a decisive role in shaping me as a law student and guiding me toward my passion for international law and dispute resolution. Before joining the Jackson Moot team, I had already participated in two international moots, but it was through this competition that everything truly clicked. Enrolling in a new WTO law course — through which the Jackson Moot team would be selected — led me to one of the most influential mentors in my academic journey, Professor Miguel Villamizar. His guidance opened my eyes to the complexity and relevance of international economic law and inspired me to think critically about the global trade system."

"The experience shaped me in lasting ways. It challenged me academically, strengthened my confidence, and helped me develop soft skills I continue to rely on today, including critical thinking, advocacy, teamwork, and a client-focused mindset."

"Just as importantly, the Jackson Moot made me feel part of a global community united by a shared belief in the power of law and trade to connect people and make the world a better place. Participating in the Jackson Moot encouraged me to dream bigger. It became a true stepping stone in my professional and academic journey, shaping the decisions I made after graduating from law school. Through this experience, I confirmed my desire to specialize in international law and dispute resolution. It gave me the confidence to pursue opportunities aligned with that passion — first by applying to a position at an international organization, and later through my choice of courses during my master's degree. Following this path ultimately led me to join an international arbitration team at a law firm in New York. The skills I developed during the Jackson Moot have become some of my greatest professional strengths, which I continue to rely on in my practice today."

"Beyond the professional impact, the Jackson Moot broadened my perspective and deepened my appreciation for different cultures and backgrounds. Engaging with participants and mentors from around the world helped me better understand both our differences and our shared experiences. In many ways, the Jackson Moot opened the world to me — and reminded me how closely connected we all are."

"Last but not least, the Jackson Moot gave me friendships I cherish to this day. Built through shared effort and a common passion, these connections have remained a lasting highlight of my experience."

"My university covered all costs as part of their Moot Court Programme."



Javier Comparini-Cuetto
Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Guatemala
2013 (12th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Javier is a Guatemalan lawyer from Universidad Francisco Marroquín with an LLM from Harvard Law School. He currently works as a legal counsel at the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague, Netherlands. He provides administrative and legal support to tribunals and other adjudicators in cases administered by the PCA, in which he also acts as secretary to tribunals and sole arbitrators.

Previously, he worked at a dispute resolution law firm in Guatemala, Legalsa, as an associate in the litigation and arbitration practice. He advised and represented clients in investment and contractual arbitrations, as well as in constitutional litigation. Additionally, he served as coach for the Jackson Moot and the International Criminal Court Moot and as the Director of the Moot Court Programme at Universidad Francisco Marroquín. He was also a lecturer on arbitration and constitutional law and acted as a member of the Re-Thinking Law School Project, which redesigned and implemented an innovative law school programme for the civil law tradition.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

“The Jackson Moot put me in touch with people, tools, and experiences that defined who I became professionally and academically. My university coaches gave me the ability to think and argue independently, and the coach — Juan Pablo Moya, who came after our former coach, Miguel Villamizar, was hired by no other than the WTO — taught me something harder to articulate: what it looks like to push people past the limits they set for themselves, with genuine belief in their capabilities and empathy for their personal paths.”

“His motivational talk when he came all the way to Guatemala to visit us is something I still carry. That combination changed how I saw moot courts entirely and eventually led me, along with other colleagues who felt the same, to get seriously involved. We devised a new coaching system (and saw our teams excel and even win!), helped build and institutionalize a moot court program, and eventually became its Directors.

I stepped away a few years ago, but the program is still running, still passing things forward more than a decade later. The moot itself is unlike anything else I have encountered in regard to the level of technical precision it demands, the calibre of the teams, and the fact that even in the preliminary rounds, you find yourself across the room from some of the most respected names in the field. The preparation to get there thus gave me a skill set I still draw on daily. My public speaking stopped being monotonous. I learned to read law in its finest but also beyond its text and its reach into economics, politics, and other areas, shifting how I engage with law ever since. But what mattered most to me was what I learned as a team, what a shared goal demands, what sacrifice looks like when everyone around you is giving the same, and how a group of people can rebuild each other."

"Although we didn't move very far in the Final Oral Round, it did not take long to see that winning is just one more thing the Jackson Moot can give you. The moot set me on a path of no return."

"Our university covered the costs and expenses for the Americas Regional Round and the Final Oral Round in Geneva."



Daniela Gómez Altamirano
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico
2007 (5th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Daniela Gómez Altamirano is a Private Sector Specialist with the World Bank Group's Trade, Competition and Business Global Practice. She is based in the Vienna office, where she supports governments in designing and implementing legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms to attract, retain, and maximize the benefits of foreign direct investment.

Prior to joining the World Bank in 2014, Daniela worked at the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the World Trade Organization in Geneva and at the European Commission in Brussels, where she focused on international trade dispute settlement. She also practiced law at Berwin Leighton Paisner LLP in Brussels, advising governments on customs procedures and trade-related regulatory matters. She further had the privilege of serving as Editorial Assistant to Prof. John H. Jackson for the *Journal of International Economic Law* at Georgetown University. Daniela is a licensed lawyer with postgraduate degrees from Harvard University (Kennedy School) and the University of Barcelona (IELPO). She is currently a PhD candidate at Leiden University, where her research focuses on the integration of sustainable development in international investment law. She has taught international law at the National Autonomous University of Mexico and served as a guest lecturer at KU Leuven.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I was drawn to the competition by my early interest in international law and a desire to experience how it operates in practice. The moot court offered a rare opportunity to simulate real dispute settlement in international trade law, bringing the subject to life beyond textbooks. It was also a meaningful space to connect with like-minded students from around the world and to engage with practitioners working in the field. Beyond the substance, the experience was deeply formative."

“It helped me develop advocacy, research, and teamwork skills that are not always emphasized in traditional legal education, particularly within the civil law tradition. More importantly, it strengthened my confidence and reinforced my commitment to pursuing a career in international economic law. Participation in the Jackson Moot fundamentally shaped my professional journey. When I first became interested in pursuing a career in international law, it felt almost out of reach given the limited opportunities and intense competition in the field. The moot court changed that perspective entirely — it showed me that such a path was not only possible, but tangible. It also opened the door to a network of peers, practitioners, and mentors, which proved essential in securing internships and later professional opportunities. Through the competition, I learned about the IELPO master's program in Barcelona, which became the next defining step in my academic path and further anchored my specialization in international economic law.”

“Since then, nearly every step in my career has been connected, directly or indirectly, to the moot court and the community around it. Many of my colleagues, supervisors, and collaborators have been former participants, coaches, or judges, creating a strong sense of continuity and shared experience. Participation in the moot is widely recognized as a mark of excellence — an informal certification of strong analytical, advocacy, and teamwork skills. Beyond the professional sphere, it has also shaped my personal life, opening opportunities to live and work in multiple countries and to build a truly international career. What once felt like a distant aspiration became a reality, in large part thanks to the foundations laid during the moot.”

Daniela financed her participation in the competition through a combination of personal funds and university support.



Elizabeth Zorrilla
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico
2008 (7th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Elizabeth is a Legal Officer in the Executive Office of the Secretary for Legal Affairs of the Organization of American States (OAS), where she supports the Secretary across a broad range of substantive, administrative, and logistical matters. She provides legal advice, negotiates cooperation agreements, attends high-level meetings, organizes conferences, and delivers presentations. Previously, she served as a Legal Officer at the Hague Conference on Private International Law in the Hague; as an advisor to a panelist in an antidumping proceeding under the North American Free Trade Agreement; as a legal consultant at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and as a member of the arbitration and trade practice of the Mexico City office of an international law firm. Elizabeth holds an LLB from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico, and an LLM in International Dispute Settlement from the Graduate Institute and the University of Geneva.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"My main motivation for participating was to enhance my legal research and oral advocacy skills, building on my prior experience in the Willem C. Vis Moot in Vienna, while deepening my knowledge of WTO law. The Jackson Moot was a turning point in my career and a truly transformative experience. Professionally, it solidified my interest in international economic law by giving me the opportunity to test my abilities before leading practitioners and alongside highly skilled competitors. It also enabled me to develop key skills essential to the study and practice of international law. On a personal level, I formed lasting friendships, many of which have evolved into professional relationships within the field of international law. In hindsight, the experience instilled in me important values and a level of confidence that has been instrumental in my subsequent achievements."

"We relied on three sources of financial support: our coach, who covered the registration fee and made his office's resources available to us; our families, who funded our participation in the regional rounds in the Dominican Republic; and our university, which financed our trip to the Final Oral Round in Geneva."

Ana Conover
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico
2008 (7th Edition)



PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Ana serves as Legal Counsel on one of the Case Management Teams and leads the Statistics Team at the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) where she has worked since August 2015. Prior to that, Ana worked as a consultant in the International Investment Agreements Section of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva, Switzerland (2014-2015), and as an associate at Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle in Mexico City (2011–2013). She holds degrees from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the University of Geneva (MIDS LLM), and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (LLB).

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I was motivated to participate in the Jackson Moot as a way to challenge myself beyond the traditional classroom and apply legal reasoning in a more practical setting, particularly in a language other than my mother tongue. The opportunity to connect with peers from different countries who shared an interest in international law was equally compelling. The experience ultimately strengthened skills not typically developed in regular coursework, including oral advocacy, legal writing, and the ability to collaborate effectively in a team setting."

"Participating in the Jackson Moot was a defining moment in my legal education. It provided me with my first exposure to the dynamics of international adjudication and introduced me to a global community of peers and practitioners committed to international law."

"The Jackson Moot played a decisive role in shaping my career path. It sparked a genuine interest in international law and international dispute settlement, which I later pursued both academically and professionally."

"My participation in the competition was supported through a combination of institutional support from my university and personal resources."

PARTICIPANTS' TESTIMONIALS

NORTH AMERICA





Nicholas Laneville
American University Washington College of Law, US
2016 (15th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Nicholas is a Counsel at Hogan Lovells US LLP's International Trade and Investment practice in Washington D.C. He assists clients with legal challenges involving trade remedies, customs, US trade policy, and matters under the auspices of the World Trade Organization. Nicholas represents clients before US courts, international arbitral tribunals, the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body, the US Department of Commerce, the US International Trade Commission, US Customs and Border Protection, and the United States Trade Representative. Nicholas holds a JD from American University Washington College of Law and a BA in History with a minor in Economics from Northeastern University.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I had already become interested in international trade law prior to participating in the moot — thanks almost entirely to the International Trade program in my university. So, the moot seemed like an excellent opportunity to test my interest through a practical exercise. I also was interested more broadly in litigation, so the moot likewise seemed like an opportunity to hone my writing and oral advocacy skills. The moot presented these opportunities and more. Our team worked on the case for months, expanding our understanding of the WTO agreements, WTO procedure, and mooting extensively to improve our oral presentation. Through the experience, I gained substantive and practical understanding of WTO law which has served me well in my career. In addition to that, I made lifelong friends in my teammates and learned how fun and rewarding it can be to work with the right people. In preparation for the Competition, one of my now colleagues mooted our team. I subsequently interviewed at my current firm and was hired directly into the International Trade and Investment practice. During the interview process, the Moot came up several times, and after I was hired I relied on what I'd learned during the competition on several client matters. I have no doubt that it was my Moot Court experience that earned me early assignments that related to the WTO agreements and eventually landed me on a team litigating a matter at the WTO (DS603). American University Washington College of Law thankfully covered the majority of the costs associated with participating."



Shaya Tavaf
American University Washington College of Law, US
2018 (17th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Shaya is currently a Senior Attorney with the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), part of the Office of the General Counsel at the US Department of Commerce, where she leads portfolios in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans focused on investment security, customs reform, trade facilitation, and public procurement. She has been with CLDP for seven years, beginning first as a law clerk and later serving as an Attorney Advisor on the South and Central Asia team before transitioning to the Europe portfolio. Her work focuses on helping governments align their legal and institutional frameworks with international best practices, while also supporting transparent and secure environments for trade and investment.

Shaya graduated with honors from American University Washington College of Law in 2019, where she concentrated her studies on international trade law. She also holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from Boston University, with a focus on Middle East security studies and a minor in French literature.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"After participating in American University Washington College of Law's summer abroad program in Geneva and being exposed to the WTO for the first time, I returned to Washington, D.C. determined to focus my legal studies on international trade law. WCL's renowned international law program provided the ideal environment to pursue that interest. I first learned about the Jackson Moot through my professors and decided to try out for the team. Being selected for the final team and preparing for the competition remains one of my fondest memories from law school. Although balancing the competition alongside internships and academic responsibilities was challenging, the experience was incredibly rewarding. The moot allowed me to move beyond theory and engage directly with the practical application of WTO law and dispute settlement procedures. It deepened my understanding of international trade law and strengthened my skills in legal analysis, advocacy, and teamwork."

"Participating in the Jackson Moot had a lasting impact on both my professional and academic journey. After graduating from law school and joining CLDP, I realized that our office was already supporting universities around the world through the Willem C. Vis Moot Court Competition."

"Given that my work at the time focused heavily on trade facilitation and WTO-related issues, I proposed to support universities from my portfolio countries in participating in the Jackson Moot. In 2019, through funding provided under broader trade facilitation programming, I worked with universities in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka to establish teams, recruit students, identify local and international coaches, procure materials, and sponsor participation in the competition."

"In coordination with American University Washington College of Law, we also developed an introductory online WTO law course to provide participating students with a strong academic foundation prior to the competition. This initiative marked the first time that both Afghanistan and Sri Lanka participated in the Jackson Moot. In the very first year of the program, our team from the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka won the Final Oral Round of the competition. I was equally proud of the Afghan team, which persevered despite significant political and personal challenges at home."

"Following the Taliban takeover, three of the four students from the team ultimately made it to the United States, and one went on to pursue an LLM at WCL and continues to work in the field of trade law today. After moving to CLDP's Europe team, I continued supporting participation in the competition on my portfolios and worked closely with Moldova State University and its coaches. The Moldovan team ultimately placed fourth in the Final Oral Round, and the initiative helped lay the groundwork for the establishment of a trade law course at the university, creating new opportunities for students to engage with WTO law and international trade issues."

"The costs associated with supporting the participating teams were funded through programming supported by the US Department of State's EUR/ACE Bureau. The initiative formed part of CLDP's broader trade facilitation and legal reform programming and aligned directly with our mandate to help train future trade law practitioners capable of representing their countries in WTO committees and supporting implementation of WTO obligations."



Devony Schmidt
Harvard Law School, US
2016 (15th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Devony is a senior associate in Technology M&A at Covington & Burling LLP in San Francisco, California, where she represents some of the most innovative companies on their domestic and cross-border M&A transactions in the technology and life sciences industries. She began her career at Freshfields US LLP in New York as an M&A associate, before transitioning to California. She holds a BA in Government from Harvard College (2014), a Master of Philosophy in European Politics at St. Antony's College, University of Oxford (2016), and a JD at Harvard Law School (2019).

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"Over the course of my academic career, I had focused on European politics and international legal entities; when I first learned about the Jackson Moot, I was very excited to put some of my academic studies into practice. The opportunity to dive head-first into the rich universe of WTO case law, global politics and the elaborate case prompts and materials was, without a doubt, the most fun and rewarding part of my law school experience. I will never forget the late nights with teammates, searching for the one perfect citation, and, ultimately, the feeling of winning the regional competition in Bogota, Colombia, followed by the international competition in Geneva, Switzerland. Our professor mentor became a close friend and valued advisor, and the teammates became my family."

"The Jackson Moot was the first moot I participated in during my time in law school, but certainly not the last; I learned early on how rewarding it was to be part of a determined team. Although I ultimately decided not to become a litigator myself, I find that my experience in the moot has shaped my confidence and ability in negotiations. Key lessons included the importance of knowing your materials and, crucially, the ability to think and respond to questions on the fly.

Many of the rounds involved some very challenging judges who asked thoughtful and thought-provoking questions, and becoming comfortable "preparing for the un-preparable" has been invaluable in my career. Today, I feel confident walking into negotiations."

"Both my legal reasoning and oration skills improved dramatically over the course of my participation in the Moot. When I speak to law students now and they ask what classes they should take to prepare for practice, I unequivocally recommend that they participate in moots, and, in particular, this moot – the highly technical knowledge, skills and cultural competency required are unparalleled. More than that, the team of WTO professionals is a special network that I hold near and dear to my heart. To this day, I wear my "WTO" baseball cap that I purchased at the gift shop! In a challenging global world, moots like the Jackson Moot, which bring together brilliant students and professionals from around the world, are truly incredible."

"Harvard Law School graciously provided support for the team, including travel and other relevant costs."



Dexter Woods

Georgetown University Law Center, US
2024 (23rd Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Dexter Woods graduated from Georgetown University Law Center with a JD. During law school, Dexter focused on international trade and administrative law, including coursework and practical experience in WTO law, trade remedies, and US trade policy. He has worked in international trade law roles in Washington, D.C., including experience in private practice and government-related trade policy work, where he has been involved in matters before US trade agencies and in advising on trade enforcement and regulatory issues.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I joined Georgetown's WTO Moot Court team out of a strong interest in international trade and promoting a rules-based multilateral trading system. Having already developed an academic and professional focus on trade policy, I saw the competition as an opportunity to deepen my understanding of WTO law in a practical advocacy setting. I was especially compelled to join the moot court team because I was interested in engaging with complex issues of WTO jurisprudence, while working closely with a team of highly motivated peers."

"Participating in the WTO Moot Court Competition was one of the most formative experiences of my legal education journey and a defining moment in my development as an international trade lawyer. The competition demanded a high level of analytical reasoning and legal creativity. It required me and my teammates to master the complex WTO agreements and structure arguments that were persuasive to a panel. The experience significantly deepened my understanding of international trade law and, more broadly, the institutional realities that shape international trade governance. Preparing written submissions and oral arguments over an extended period reinforced the importance of the skills that I developed while a part of the moot court team."

"Advancing to the final rounds in Geneva was an extraordinary milestone for me and my team. Competing in Geneva, at the center of the multilateral trading system, gave real meaning to the international trade principles we had studied and argued.

It was both intellectually challenging and inspiring to engage with exceptional peers from around the world. Beyond the substance of the law, the competition was essential in strengthening my skills as a legal writer and oral advocate."

"The process of drafting, receiving feedback, and refining arguments under time constraints closely mirrored the demands of my current practice in international trade law. The experience fostered lasting relationships with teammates, coaches, and competitors who share a deep commitment to the field."

"I am grateful to Georgetown University Law Center and the WTO Moot Court organizers for their support of the competition and for making participation and travel to Geneva possible."



Felix Moser

Queen's University, Canada
2016 (15th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Felix is a dual-qualified lawyer (England & Wales and Ontario, Canada) practising international arbitration with Rothorn Legal in Zurich. Before moving to Zurich, Felix practised international arbitration and commercial litigation with Sidley Austin in Geneva and with Norton Rose Fulbright Canada in Toronto. Felix holds an LLM in international law from the Geneva Graduate Institute, a JD from Queen's University, and a BA (Honours) in philosophy and international relations from the University of Toronto.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I went to law school with the goal of practising international law, but did not have a clear sense of how to realise that ambition. I therefore signed up for every moot court competition with an international law angle, and was fortunate to be selected for the Jackson Moot. Looking back, the Jackson Moot was the most rewarding experience during my time at law school. We had two outstanding coaches, Ms. Valerie Hughes and Professor Nicolas Lamp, whose guidance and encouragement have had a significant impact on my career and with whom I remain in touch more than ten years later. Not only did the competition provide me with my first real experience with oral and written advocacy, but it helped me develop some of the key skills required for disputes work: teamwork under pressure, resilience when dealing with unexpected setbacks, and a sense of humour."

"It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the Jackson Moot to my career. The competition introduced me to coaches, practitioners, and teammates who gave me the confidence to pursue a career in international law. A good indicator of its impact is that every member of my Jackson Moot team now works in either international trade law or international arbitration with law firms and governments in Canada, Switzerland, and the US. I am grateful to the Moot's organisers, the WTO, and Queen's University for the chance to participate."

"The costs of my participation were generously covered by Queen's University."

Scott Falls
Queen's University, Canada
2016 (15th Edition)



PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Scott is an associate at LKK Arbitration in Geneva, where he practices international commercial and investment arbitration as counsel and tribunal secretary. Prior to joining LKK, he was Assistant Legal Counsel at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague and before that, practiced commercial litigation and arbitration with DLA Piper in Toronto. Scott holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Western Ontario, JD from Queen's University, and an LLM in International Dispute Settlement (MIDS) from the Graduate Institute.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I became motivated to participate in the moot after visiting the WTO during the 2016 edition of the competition and discussing the moot with the students from my university who at the time were competing in the Final Oral Round. It seemed like a great opportunity to learn more about international trade law, gain practical experience in oral advocacy, and network with fascinating and accomplished people from around the world. The experience ultimately motivated me to continue studying international law and eventually pursue a career in international dispute settlement. My teammates also turned out to be fantastic friends, all of whom I remain close with today (and who also practice international trade or arbitration)."

"The Jackson Moot was a formative experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to engage on a deep level with interesting areas of international trade and public international law and plead in front of experts, academics and practitioners from different legal traditions and backgrounds. More concretely, it sparked my interest in pursuing a career in international dispute settlement, eventually leading me back to Geneva to pursue an LLM and build a career as an international arbitration lawyer. We received funding from our university to participate."



Mallory Felix

Queen's University, Canada
2023 (22nd Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Mallory Felix is an international trade lawyer at Cassidy Levy Kent's Ottawa office. In this role, she advises businesses and governments on international trade, economic sanctions, export controls, and government procurement matters. She represents clients before the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, the Canadian Border Services Agency, and the Federal Courts of Canada. She holds a JD from Queen's University. Prior to her legal studies, Mallory earned a Master of Arts in Economics and a Bachelor of International Economics from the University of British Columbia, writing her final thesis on international trade and development. During law school, Mallory participated in the TradeLab International Economic Law Clinic. Since, she had the pleasure of contributing to Professor Nicolas Lamp's publication "Reckoning and Renewal: The World Trade Organization and Its Dispute Settlement System at 30" in honour of Valerie Hughes.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

“Participating in the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition was a highlight of my law school experience. It allowed me to engage deeply with my academic interests, while developing the oral and written advocacy, and legal research skills that I now use as an international trade lawyer. The Jackson Moot also introduced me to many like-minded peers and colleagues that I continue to work with. The experience left me optimistic about the future of the international trading system and the bright minds that shape it.”

“The John H. Jackson Moot contributed significantly to my academic and professional development. With an academic background in international economics, I entered law school intending to practice international trade law. The Jackson Moot provided my first practical exposure to this field and introduced me to a professional network that helped me enter it. Most directly, I met many of my present colleagues at Cassidy Levy Kent during my preparation for the Moot's regional and Final Oral Round. I also met with other well-renowned trade practitioners who challenged me and helped shape the way I think about cross-border disputes. Not only was the moot incredibly fun, but it profoundly impacted the trajectory of my legal career. Our moot team is grateful to have been able to secure funding directly from Queen's Law.”

Sae Kobayashi
Georgetown University Law Center, US
2022 (21st Edition)



PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Sae graduated from Keio University, Faculty of Law in Japan in 2020, where she specialized in economic law while also pursuing interdisciplinary interests including anthropology. Prior to her master's program, Sae served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, motivated by her profound interest in trade policies. Sae earned a master's degree from Georgetown University in 2022 and continues her career at the Ministry, focusing on economic diplomacy. To strengthen her capacity in economic diplomacy, particularly economic security and international trade law, she also interned with the World Trade Organization and completed a year at Stanford University's Ford Dorsey Master's in International Policy program in California, US.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMPETITION?

“Applying for the Jackson Moot was a natural choice for me as I was determined to enroll in the LL.M program at Georgetown University Law Center to develop a career in trade law and policy. I still vividly remember the excitement when I received the email informing me that I was selected after the rigorous tryout process. Participating in the Jackson Moot is undoubtedly one of the most valuable and meaningful experiences throughout my years of study. Joining significantly strengthened my legal analysis and writing skills in the field of international economic law. The case was timely and carefully crafted so that, by the end of the season, my understanding of international law had developed far beyond my initial expectations. As a non-native English speaker, the Moot also strenghtend my ability to deliver legal oral arguments. The preparation required intensive efforts, including weekly sessions and extra practice from early mornings to weekends. However, thanks to coaches and teammates, this demanding journey resulted in meaningful achievements as well as lifelong skills and friendships. It further solidified my interest in trade law and policy as a diplomat. Jackson encouraged me to engage deeply with international economic law, especially through my internship with the WTO's Trade Policy Review Division in 2023 and my return as a panelist in the Asia-Pacific Preliminary Rounds in 2024, my home region. I always appreciate this whole enriching experience and extensive community that the Jackson Moot allowed me to gain. This remains my anchor, rounding me in international economic law and trade policy.

I am grateful to Georgetown Law Center for supporting the school's Jackson Moot and covering our travel costs during my years on the team.”



Carol Sayeg

Georgetown University Law Center, US
2013 (12th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Carol is currently a Law Clerk at Wiley Rein LLP, a Washington D.C. based law firm. She recently graduated from Georgetown University Law Center with an LLM in International Business and Economic Law, with WTO certificate. Carol was previously an associate at Pinheiro Neto Advogados (Brazil), in International Trade and Customs.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"Before joining the competition, I thought I wanted to be an in-house counsel and focus on corporate law. I received a low grade in one of my corporate-related classes in law school, and coincidentally, also received an email inviting students to register for the competition. I took a leap of faith and found out that I liked international trade law a thousand times better. The competition allowed me to study WTO law, which is not a subject typically explored in depth in law school (at least in Brazil). It also exposed me to a multicultural environment, where I got to learn more about other countries. This vibrant and ever-changing environment is one of my favorite aspects of trade."

"The Jackson Moot changed the course of my career. I learned that I was passionate about international trade law through the competition, and got my first job through my coach, who was impressed by my performance in the competition. I was also granted a significant scholarship at Georgetown University due to my performance in the Jackson Moot Court, where I met my mentor who also offered me a permanent position in a D.C. law firm."

"For the Regional Round, my team had some financial support from private law firms in Brazil, but a significant portion of the costs were covered by the students themselves. After we won 1st place in the Regionals (Latin America), our university granted us an award that covered most of the costs of travel to Geneva for the Final Rounds."

Michael Jacobson
Harvard Law School, US
2012 (11th Edition)



PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Michael Jacobson is a partner at Hogan Lovells where he advises clients on complex cross-border disputes before the US International Trade Commission, US federal courts, and international arbitration tribunals. Michael regularly represents companies and governments in trade disputes under US law and treaty-based arbitrations, including investor-state and state-state dispute settlement under free trade agreements such as the USMCA, NAFTA, and the WTO. He holds a JD from Harvard Law School and a B.A. from Georgetown University (magna cum laude) with honors in Economics, and is admitted to practice in the District of Columbia, Maryland, the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the US Court of International Trade, and the US Supreme Court.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

"I went to law school with the goal of becoming a trade lawyer. My law school did not have an ELSA WTO moot team, so I decided to hold try-outs and form a team in my second year. In my view, working on a case is the best way to learn the law and related policy considerations. I also was excited about the opportunity to meet others interested in international trade from around the world and getting to learn from the many trade experts that served as panellists. In fact, I have been an adjunct professor at American University Washington College of Law for the past ten years, in large part because of having gotten to know Professor Padideh Ala'i through the moot."

"The moot was an invaluable experience to help launch my career in international trade law. I learned a lot about trade law, brief writing, and oral advocacy skills that helped me hit the ground running when I started my career at the law firm Hogan Lovells."

"Equally as valuable has been the community that I have gained through moot. I very much value these professional contacts and friendships that I owe to the moot."

"We sought and secured funding from our law school, as well as sponsorship from law firms. I formed an international law moot court board at my law school at the time to help with fundraising both with the University and with private donors."



Colette Van der Ven
Harvard Law School/ Kennedy School of Government, US
2013 (12th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Colette attended United World College of the Atlantic, from which she graduated with an International Baccalaureate (IB) in 2004. After spending a year in Paris studying philosophy at the Institut Catholique, she attended Middlebury College in Vermont, graduating in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She subsequently spent a year working on human rights litigation at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Between 2010 and 2014, Colette pursued a JD/Master's in public policy dual-degree track at Harvard Law School and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Between 2014 and 2018, she practiced international trade litigation as an associate at Sidley Austin LLP, spending time in both the Washington, D.C., and Geneva offices. She represented sovereign states in their disputes at the World Trade Organization, including in oral proceedings. She was also the founder and director of the Trade for Development Pro Bono Initiative at Sidley, which provided free trade law advice to least-developed countries and select business associations in Africa and Asia.

In 2019, Colette founded TULIP Consulting, a boutique, Geneva-based impact consultancy that provides legal and policy advice at the trade, environment and development nexus. She has served as its executive director since then, advising the public sector on issues such as border carbon adjustment mechanisms, trade and climate cooperation mechanisms, industrial policy, and trade preference schemes. Colette is also a visiting lecturer at the Geneva Graduate Institute, teaching a legal practicum in international economic law.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITION?

“My time in Cambodia sparked my interest in trade and investment issues. I wanted to learn more about the international trade architecture, and participating in the Jackson Moot Court competition seemed a great way to do so. When I applied, the Jackson Moot had only been available for one year in my law school, so it was all quite new and exciting. My Jackson Moot Court experience was one of the highlights of law school."

"The competition tackled complex trade issues where the jurisprudence was often underdeveloped, challenging teams to construct compelling arguments for both complainant and respondent. This immersive, practice-based approach brought trade law to life in ways that purely theoretical classroom frameworks could not, and proved to be an invaluable foundation for my subsequent career as a WTO litigator."

"The Jackson Moot also sharpened my written and oral advocacy skills considerably. Fielding direct and probing questions from panelists across multiple rounds taught me to think on my feet and respond confidently to unexpected challenges."

"What has stayed with me, more than ten years on, is the sheer passion we all brought to the competition. As a team, we spent countless late nights dissecting the problem, refining our arguments, and critiquing each other's oral performances. I still smile remembering how we travelled to Costa Rica with a full-size printer in tow, convinced the hotel would not be able to meet our on-demand printing needs. That same energy was just as present the year I returned as a coach - passion and excitement were defining features of the experience, both times."

"The Moot Court also introduced me to leading trade lawyers in the field, several of whom later became colleagues or opposing counsel. Many fellow competitors have since built careers in trade law, and I have crossed paths with them in the most unexpected places. That early network made it significantly easier to integrate into the world of trade law when I relocated from the United States to Geneva."

"Finally, at the risk of sounding cliché: some of my closest friendships from law school were forged through the Moot Court. The intensity of the teamwork and the shared travel created an almost inevitable bond. We also made a point of mixing business with pleasure - after our final pleading rounds in Geneva, the entire team headed to Istanbul, where we enjoyed being tourists and gleefully crashed what would otherwise have been a private meeting of one of our team members with her future in-laws. Needless to say, we were all invited to the wedding."

"I am grateful to Harvard Law School for supporting the school's Jackson Moot and covering our travel costs during my years on the team."



Ted Brackemyre
Harvard Law School, US
2016 (15th Edition)

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Ted graduated from Indiana University in 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history, economics, and political science. Ted then attended Harvard Law School, where he graduated with a JD in 2017. He currently practices as an attorney in Washington DC at Wiley Rein LLP, where he is a partner in the firm's international trade practice. Ted has been with Wiley since 2017, representing clients in trade litigation and enforcement matters primarily before the US Department of Commerce, US International Trade Commission, US Customs and Border Protection, and the US Court of International Trade. Among other things, he also advises clients on issues related to international trade and tariff policy, including matters regarding trade, climate, and the environment.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE PART IN THE COMPETITITION?

"I joined my school's Jackson Moot team due to a broad interest in international trade policy and litigation. Participating in the competition provided me unparalleled lessons in the procedures and substance of WTO law as well as fundamental policy issues facing WTO practitioners. Participating in the Jackson Moot court competition was a defining moment of my law school experience and a catalyst for my career as an international trade attorney. The rigor of the competition provided a crash course lesson in the procedures and substance of the WTO legal regime as well as the institutional and other trade policy issues facing the WTO and WTO practitioners. To this day, I carry many of the perspectives and lessons learned from my fellow competitors as well as the competition's judges as I navigate international trade law and policy in the United States.

Beyond the law and policy learned, the Jackson Moot sharpened my skills as a legal writer and oral advocate. The practice of writing and responding to argument, often under intense time pressure, has proved invaluable and set me up to succeed in many similar circumstances in private practice. Lastly, I have immensely enjoyed the cadre of teammates, competitors, judges, organizers, and alumni that I met during and have stayed in touch with after my Jackson Moot experience. As a trade lawyer in Washington DC, I frequently meet other alumni, and it is clearly a shared experience for many of the world's leading international trade lawyers. I am grateful to Harvard Law School for supporting the school's Jackson Moot and covering our travel costs during my years on the team."

FROM

SUPPORT RECEIVED

TO

SUPPORT GIVEN.

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Participating in the Jackson Moot may entail significant costs, including registration fees, travel, and accommodation for the regional round and, for the teams that advance, the Final Oral Round in Geneva. This section sets out the different funding strategies that Alumni have used to successfully finance their participation. We hope this sheds light on how prospective students may effectively cover the costs associated with the moot.

Many Jackson Moot Alumni — not only those featured in this publication — attest that, far from being a financial burden, participating in the competition is one of the best professional investments they have made. The experiences collected in this publication speak to careers that have been shaped, networks that have been built, and doors that have been opened, in ways that far outweigh the initial costs.

Financing participation in the Jackson Moot is rarely a straightforward endeavour and typically requires personal commitment, resourcefulness, and the ability to engage with institutional support. The financial challenges that must be overcome to participate are, for many students, part of the story of what the competition means to them and their journey into the legal profession. In all cases, personal funds are the starting point of every funding strategy.

Institutional support from universities is the most common secondary source of funding across the Alumni featured in this publication. In a number of cases, universities covered virtually all the costs of participation. This was the experience of Felix Moser, Scott Falls, and Mallory Felix (Queen's University, Canada); of Rocio Monzón, Javier Comparini-Cuetto, and Andrés Paniagua (Universidad Francisco Marroquín, Guatemala); and of Devony Schmidt, Ted Brackemyre, and Colette van der Ven (Harvard Law School, US).

More commonly, universities tend to provide only partial support. Naiana Magrini (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil) and Lucas Pires (FGV, Brazil) each combined institutional contributions with personal funds. Gabriela Sandino's university (Universidad de los Andes, Colombia) covered flights and accommodation but not daily expenses. Andrea Sarmiento received partial coverage from Universidad de los Andes for the Final Oral Round in Geneva, which she supplemented with personal funds. Ana Conover and Daniela Gómez Altamirano (UNAM, México) similarly relied on a combination of institutional and personal resources.

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Several of the Alumni were able to secure support from private law firms. Mateo Ferrero and Santiago Wills, from Universidad de los Andes, were funded by a Colombian law firm that believed in encouraging young students with an emerging interest in international trade law. Alberto Madero (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia) also received financial assistance from the law firm where he was interning at the time of his participation, alongside support from his university.

Fundraising and community support have been another avenue Alumni have pursued to fund their costs. Marina Takitani, from FGV in Brazil, offers a notable example of a bottom-up fundraising model. Unable to rely exclusively on university support, her team engaged in a fundraising campaign, reaching out to law firms interested in international trade law and launching an online campaign that allowed family and friends to contribute. This approach underscores both the determination that the competition demands and the breadth of support that participants can bring together.

These examples illustrate that there is no single model for financing participation in the Jackson Moot. What they share is a common thread: resourcefulness, determination, and a willingness to seek support from wherever it may come — whether from universities, law firms, family, or the broader community. Prospective students should not be deterred by the financial challenge. If the experiences of these Alumni are any guide, the investment in the competition is well worth making.

HOW TO SUPPORT

THE ALL-AMERICAS REGIONAL ROUND

You can make a **difference** by supporting the All-American Regional Round in the following ways:

SPONSORSHIP

Contribute as an institutional or corporate sponsor to help cover travel, accommodation, and participation costs for students who would otherwise be unable to compete.

MENTORSHIP & TRAINING

Legal professionals can support the competition by offering mentorship and training sessions to participating teams, helping them refine their advocacy skills.

JUDGING & ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Experienced trade law practitioners, academics, and professionals can volunteer as panellists to provide valuable feedback and ensure the highest academic quality in the competition.

DONATIONS

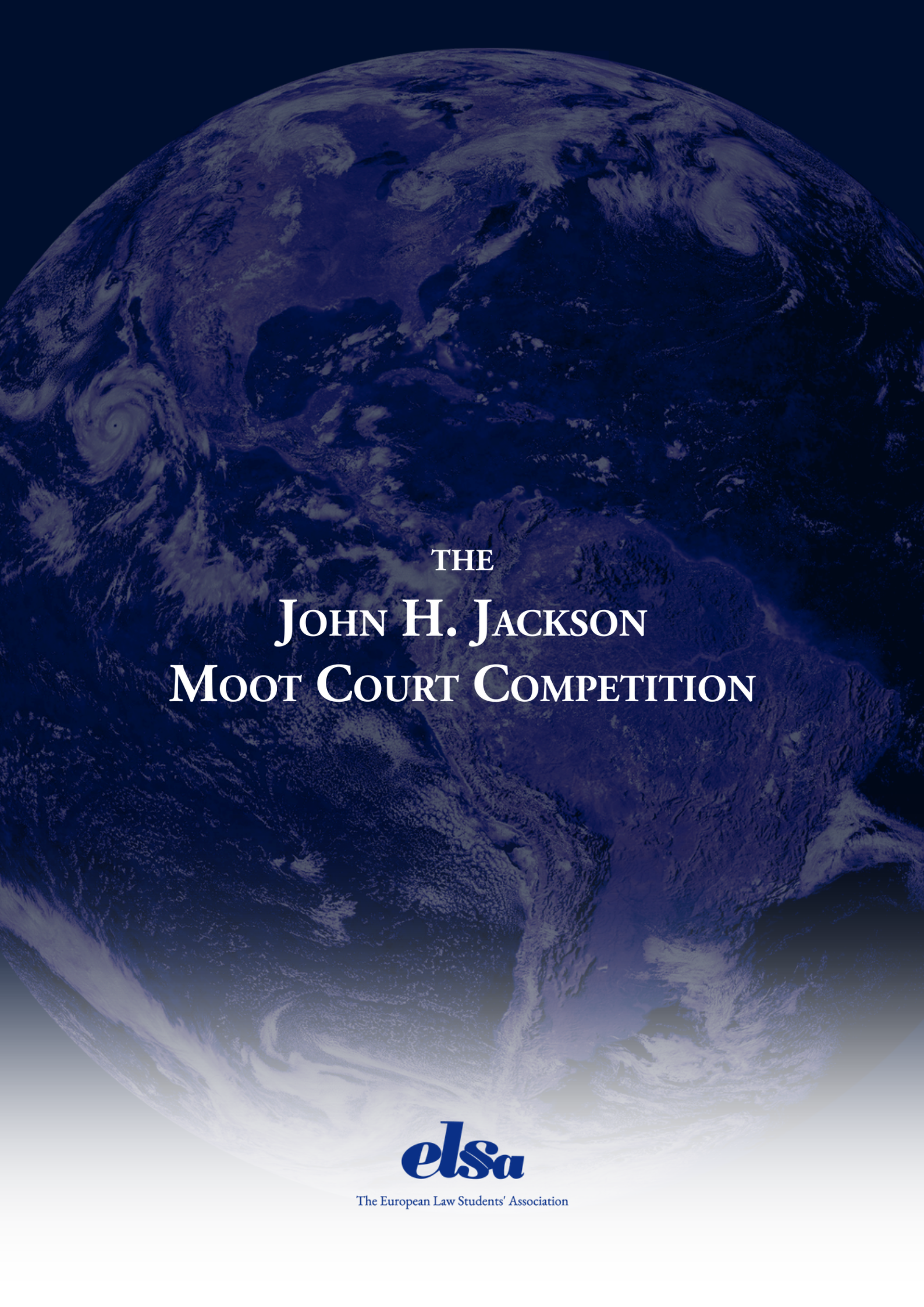
Individual contributions, big or small, go a long way in ensuring that talented students from underrepresented regions have the opportunity to take part in the competition.

If you or your organisation are interested in contributing,
please reach out to ELSA at **johnhjackson@elsa.org** for more details.

GET INVOLVED!

REGISTER YOUR TEAM OF 2-4 STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE UPCOMING 25TH EDITION!

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