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## John Marshall sends moot team to Asia to face world

BY DAVID THOMAS  
*Law Bulletin staff writer*

A group of John Marshall Law School students will travel to Hong Kong this year in order to help resolve the troubles between two companies in the fictional countries of Equatoriana and Mediterraneo surrounding the delivery of frozen horse semen.

That will be the issue at hand when the students compete in The Willem C. Vis East International Commercial Arbitration Moot.

Kristen E. Hudson, one of the team's coaches, said she believes it's "the most realistic, best-written problem in all the competitions I've seen out there, in terms of preparing students to tackle both international and domestic issues in arbitration."

The moot competition places the Marshall team — which consists of six students, two of whom are alternates — in a scenario that is "ripped from the headlines," said Hudson, who is a principal and general counsel at Chuhak & Tecson P.C.

The competition's contract issue centers around tariffs that were imposed by one of the fictional countries. The students will be arguing who ultimately has to pay for the increased cost of frozen horse semen.

"There are a lot of nuances to the problem, but in a nutshell, that's the contract issue," Hudson said. "The procedural issue involves whether the arbitration problem has the power to adapt or modify the terms of the contract to cover this unforeseen issue."

All students in the competition will have to make arguments on behalf of both the buyers and sellers, both in written briefs and during oral arguments that will be

held at the Hong Kong Productivity Council. The competition is March 31 to April 7.

The Marshall team is scheduled to compete against law students from the Leibniz University of Hannover, based in Germany; the Renmin University of China, based in Beijing; the Institute of Law Nirma University, based in Ahmedabad, India; and the University of Mandalay, based in Mandalay, Myanmar.

The Vis East moot is a fairly tough competition, Hudson said. Around 90 of the 120 teams never make it past the first round.

The Marshall students have been preparing for the moot competition for several weeks. At least two students on the team have said that they now want to pursue a career in international dispute arbitration as a result of their experiences.

Zhiwen "Jeannette" Jie, a third-year Marshall student and the team's co-captain, has spent the past semester studying law at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. She said her time there has given her "an open mind about how European English sounds like" versus American English.

Jie was an alternate on last year's team and one of the team's Chinese students. As one of the main team members, she will be expected to compete in oral arguments in Hong Kong. That used to give her pause, as she was worried about her oral argument skills. Now, her confidence is such that she is considering a career in litigation, and not transactional law.

"We have done plenty of oral practice. I have spent so many times correcting my oral pronunciation. I have the confidence and I know I have improved a lot," Jie said. "I changed my career plan to



**Kristen E. Hudson**

start to think about the possibility of me doing the litigation, with my experience in Europe, I started to put this legal field into my career plan."

Caroline Muzarek, a third-year Marshall student, said the team has been researching international law, including the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods.

Muzarek said she considers herself to be a strong oral advocate for her clients and has always planned on going into litigation. But her time preparing for the Vis East moot competition has "shaped my interest in global investment law," pushing her to take a class on international banking and financial law this semester.

The two other members of the traveling team are Zike "Ariel" Yang, a third-year law student from China, a co-team captain and a returning team member, and second-year law student Gabrielle Neace. The team's alternates are Humza Ansari and Sara Geoghegan, both second-year law students.

Joining Hudson as co-coach is Daniel R. Saeedi, a partner at Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP.

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