ANNOUNCEMENT!

2015 SUNY Buffalo Law School
Representation in Mediation Competition
AND
1 Credit Advocacy in Mediation Course

UB Law School’s “Representation in Mediation Competition” is a great experience for law students. Its popularity among students has grown considerably over the last several years. This year’s competition will be held on Saturday, November 14th from 8:15 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Participation is limited to 2nd and 3rd year law students. First year students are encouraged to contact the student ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) Association officers if they want to help run the Competition.

As an increasing number of civil legal cases are referred to mediation, it is vital that the lawyer accompanying his or her client to the mediation table has the knowledge and skill-set necessary to maximize a client’s results in this context. The interaction of lawyer and client and the use of interest-based problem solving is the focus of the Representation in Mediation Competition.

Law student attorneys form attorney-client teams and are given two different dispute fact scenarios distributed to law schools by the Dispute Resolution Section of the American Bar Association (“ABA”). Together the team strategizes and prepares to negotiate at a mediation session. Then, on the day of the Competition, the team engages in negotiations with an opposing attorney-client team (using the two different legal disputes in a morning and afternoon round), with a professional mediator from the community at the table to facilitate. A lawyer or other professional with mediation advocacy knowledge will also be present to score and give feedback to the teams. The students are judged on preparation, teamwork, how well the interests of the client are represented, how well opportunities in the mediation process are used to promote those interests, and other elements of effective advocacy in mediation. To learn more about the Competition and its rules (we follow the ABA rules), go to the following link (the 2015-2016 rules have not come out yet, but last year’s rules should suffice for now, as they do not change significantly from year to year):

http://www.americanbar.org/groups/dispute_resolution/awards_competitions/law_student_national_representation_in_mediation_competition.html

The two winning teams will be sent to represent our law school at the ABA sponsored Regional Representation in Mediation Competition during a weekend in late February or early March (location and date to be determined by the ABA). If one of our teams wins the Regionals, that team will be sent by the law school to the ABA National Competition in April 2016 in New York City.

There is no requirement that students have any education or background in mediation or negotiation to participate in the Competition. Deadline to register for the Competition: Wednesday, October 7th.
There are 2 ways to participate in the Representation in Mediation Competition:

**OPTION #1:** Participating as part of a one-credit course in effective attorney advocacy in mediation, (entitled *Advocacy in Mediation* (course # 570)).
Participating in this manner involves:

1.) By Wednesday, October 7th, signing up with a partner as a team by filling out a registration form (attached below) and returning it to Debbie Nasisi (room 717 O’Brian; tel: 645-2459; email: dlnasisi@buffalo.edu). Both team members must sign the registration form, which contains a promise to follow through with this commitment. If one team member takes the one-credit *Advocacy in Mediation* course and the other team member decides not to take the course, that is perfectly fine. If you do not have a partner for the Competition, but would like to participate, submit your registration form with just your name on it for now, and clearly and prominently indicate on the form that you need a partner. While we cannot guarantee that we can find you a partner, Nasisi will try to randomly pair you with another student that submits a registration form that indicates the need for a partner. You cannot participate in the Competition and receive course credit unless you have a partner. In the event we have too many registrants to accommodate in the Competition, students taking the one-credit course and third-year law students with partners would have preference, and second-year law students not taking the course would be chosen by lottery.

2.) Obtaining a force slip from Debbie Nasisi and registering for the one-credit course by Wednesday, October 7th.

3.) Mandatory attendance at the two classes on attorney *Advocacy in Mediation* on Saturday, October 10th from 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. and on Saturday, October 24th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (breakfast provided on both Saturday mornings, courtesy of the ADR Student Association). Both classes would meet in O’Brian room 107. We will be using articles on representing clients effectively in mediation.

4.) Participating in the Representation in Mediation Competition on November 14th (from approximately 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

5.) Writing a 5 page reflective paper on the Competition experience and what you learned about effective client advocacy at the mediation table, due within 2 weeks after the Competition.

**NOTE:** If you have already received course credit last year, you may not do so again, but you CAN still fully participate in the Competition (see Option 2 below).

**OPTION #2:** Participating, but NOT for credit. Participating in this manner involves:

1.) By Wednesday, October 7th, signing up with a partner as a team by filling out a registration form (attached below) and returning it to Debbie Nasisi (room 717 O’Brian; tel: 645-2459; email: dlnasisi@buffalo.edu). Both team members must sign the registration form, which contains a promise to follow through with this commitment. Neither of the team members is required to take the one-credit course to participate in the Competition (but one or both can). If you do not have a partner for the Competition, but would like to participate, submit your
registration form with just your name on it for now, and clearly and prominently indicate on the form that you need a partner. While we cannot guarantee that we can find you a partner, Nasisi will try to randomly pair you with another student that submits a registration form that indicates the need for a partner. In the event we have too many registrants to accommodate in the Competition, students taking the one-credit course and third-year law students with partners would have preference, and second-year law students not taking the course would be chosen by lottery.

2.) Having at least one member of your team (although preferably both) come to an informational session during the first portion of the Advocacy in Mediation class on Saturday, October 10th from 9:30 to 11:00 p.m. (full class goes until 12:30 if taking the one credit course referenced above) in O'Brian Room 107. This attendance of at least one member of your team is mandatory for your team to compete (unless you have special permission from Professor Sugarman for neither to attend). The informational session on the 10th will contain important information about the Competition and will get into general mediation advocacy concepts. If you are not taking it for credit, you do not have to stay for the second half of the first class or come to the second Advocacy in Mediation class (on Saturday, October 24th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in O'Brian Room 107), although you may attend both if you would like to improve your skills, and perhaps enhance your chances of success in the Competition (please let Professor Sugarman know in advance if you choose to do this).

3.) Participating in the Representation in Mediation Competition on November 14th (approximately 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

If there are any questions, please email Debbie Nasisi dlnasisi@buffalo.edu or Professor Sugarman at: ssugarman@psasattorneys.com  Thank you.
Representation in Mediation Competition
2015 Registration Form

All information contained on this form below MUST be fully completed for each team member, unless you do not have a teammate yet.

- The top 2 teams from our Representation in Mediation Competition will be sent by our law school to the Regional ABA Competition Friday-Sunday in late February or early March (date and location still to be announced by the ABA).

If a UB team wins the Regional Competition, they will be sent to the Nationals, which would be held at the ABA Dispute Resolution Section Annual Conference in New York City in April 2016.

Please be aware that by committing to compete in our November 14th Competition, you are committing to participate in the Regional and National competitions should you advance.

- At least one member of the team (preferably both) must (absent special permission by Professor Sugarman) be at the first half of the first Advocacy in Mediation class and informational session on Saturday, October 10th from (9:30-11:00 a.m., and are welcome to stay for the whole class until 12:30 p.m.)

**Required Information:** If you do not have a team member, you may still register, and we will do our best to match you up with another student in the same situation if we can.

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The following is a list of professors that sometimes judge or mediate at the competition. Please list below any of these professors that you have had class with. This assures that no conflicts of interest will occur in assigning scoring judges or mediators in the competition. Professors: Griffin, Saran, Phillips, Christen Morris Carey, Schlegel, Gelernter, Korn, Haynes, Connolly, Boucai, Breen or Ewing.

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