

John Gray High School wins the Cayman Collas Crill Moot

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Nia-Shae Wedderburn and Asonya Sweeney of John Gray High School have won the Cayman Collas Crill Moot 2024/25.

This is the first year the school has taken part in the mock-trial competition.

John Gray's Nia-Shae and Asonya faced Kai Bodden and Cate Lee of Cayman Prep and High School in the closely-fought final, in a fictitious case concerning the shady dealings of a billionaire entrepreneur.

The final took place on 22 January at the Grand Court in George Town and, in a first, was judged by the Honourable Justice David Doyle, Judge of the Grand Court. He was joined on the tribunal by Collas Crill's Managing Partner in Cayman, Stephen Leontsinis.

It is the third time the Moot has run in Cayman, with more than 60 students taking part in the competition this year.

As in the previous rounds, the finalists were marked on a number of factors including their court etiquette, persuasiveness, clarity, body language and time-keeping.

Stephen Leontsinis said: 'Congratulations to all of the finalists. It was a closely fought final and it was clear to the judges that all of the students had worked incredibly hard on their arguments. Both Justice Doyle and I were extremely impressed by the level of preparation, presentation and overall persuasiveness displayed by the finalists. However, in the end Nia-Shae and Asonya just edged it as the winners on the day.'

In his closing remarks to Nia-Shae, Asonya, Kai and Cate, Justice Doyle said: 'This well-established mooting competition is a real must-attend event. Last year I attended as a spectator, this year I have had the pleasure of attending as one of the judges of the final round.

'This court is where the people of Cayman come to see the law of this jurisdiction upheld, and justice done. Today you have all done justice to the court room we are in. Your preparation, practice and talent have shone through, setting yet another aspirational benchmark for the competition next year.'

The Grand Court was packed to the rafters with Moot students, teachers, family, friends and Collas Crill staff for the final itself and the post-event reception.

Winners Nia-Shae and Asonya were presented with the coveted Collas Crill Moot Shield, which will be on show at John Gray. They have also been offered the chance to take part in Collas Crill's Summer Internship programme.

All finalists were presented with a trophy and certificates from Collas Crill. A number of additional awards were also handed out to acknowledge stand-out performances of teams and individuals throughout the competition.

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Stephen said: 'The Moot has grown and developed year on year, with more students and high schools taking part than ever before. To see them, their teachers, family and friends gathered in the Grand Court to watch and support Nia-Shae, Asonya, Kai and Cate in the final shows just how far the Moot has come in three short years and the place it holds within the community. To have the Honourable Justice David Doyle, Judge of the Grand Court, involved was a true privilege and everyone will agree, added greatly to the gravitas of the occasion.

'Through the Moot we have developed a great working relationship with the five high schools and along with our other initiatives, like our internship and scholarship programmes, we are proud to be helping to identify and support the future generation of Cayman lawyers. I would like to thank the staff and teachers of the high schools for their support. I would also like to thank Justice Doyle and the Honourable Chief Justice Margaret Ramsay-Hale and her staff who, once again, allowed us the use of the Grand Court facilities.

'Of course an initiative like the Moot doesn't simply happen without the support, time and energy of my fellow attorneys and staff at Collas Crill. The team is involved at every stage of the months-long competition - from the weekly organisation of the competitive rounds and the provision of support and training to the students, to the time spent judging the competitive rounds and the finals. It is a real team effort and I thank them for their commitment.'



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