

## **A History of Moot Court at CSULB**

CSULB is one of nine schools to win a national moot court championship for oral advocacy, one of fourteen schools to win a national moot court championship for written advocacy, and one of just five schools to win a national championship for both oral (2003) and written advocacy (2004, 2014, and 2021). It is third all-time with four titles (three for written and one for oral advocacy). It won for oral advocacy in 2003 when CSULB juniors Tommy Hartnett and Ja’Nene Hall finished first at that year’s American Collegiate Moot Court Association (ACMA) tournament. Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury won for written advocacy in 2014. That same year, Hall and Maury were runners up in oral advocacy. Aleece Hanson and Barry Klein won the 2021 national championship for respondent brief. CSULB is one of just four schools to have advanced to multiple finals having done so in 2003 and 2014 and it is one of four to advance to three or more national semi-finals.

In the years since 2003, at least forty-four CSULB teams have reached the elimination rounds at the national tournament: eighteen of which reached at least the national sweet sixteen (four were hybrids with another school). Katelyn North-Cheo (2004 and 2005), Timothy Appelbaum (2009 and 2011), Ryan Chapman and Yasmin Manners (2012 and 2013), Ashley Hall (2014 and 2015), Myles Chaney (2016, 2017 and 2018) (with Sarah Geesaman of PHC), and Vaishalee Chaudhary and Marco Romero (2020 and 2021) are the only CSULB students to advance to multiple national sweet-sixteens. North-Cheo did so with teammates Anna Maria Banchemo and Ben Koegel, while Appelbaum advanced with Heather Pegg and Alexandra Lohman. Chapman and Manners were teammates both years. Hall advanced to the national finals with Maury and the Sweet Sixteen with Krist Biakanja, IV. Chaney reached the Sweet Sixteen with Sarah Geesaman of Patrick Henry College. Chaudhary and Romero were teammates in 2020 and 2021. North-Cheo, Appelbaum, Reema Abboud, Chapman, Manners, Hall, Maury, Biakanja, Kevin Poush, Amethyst Jefferson-Roberts, Justin Adofina, Chaney, Anna Sasaki, Mindy Vo, Amanda Botelho, Barry Klein, Chaudhary and Romero are the only CSULB students to advance to the elimination rounds of the national tournament more than once: Abboud, Appelbaum, Biakanja, Chaney, Hall, Sasaki, and Vo each did so three times. There are very few students in the history of the ACMA who have advanced to elimination rounds three times.

As of May, 2021, CSULB has won forty-seven competition titles: forty-four for oral advocacy and three for written brief. CSULB has registered thirty First Place Finishes in Tournaments, Classics and Invitationals for Oral Advocacy, and fourteen First Place Finishes in Scrimmages. This includes ten regional titles (3<sup>rd</sup> in AMCA history). CSULB teams have reached the finals of thirteen regionals, the quarter-finals of two national tournaments, the semi-finals of three national tournaments, and the finals of two national tournaments. In addition, it has placed teams in the semis over at least twenty regional tournaments. CSULB students to win regional or national tournaments include: Tommy Hartnett/Ja’Nene Hall (2002 and 2003), Adria Bonillas and Krist Biakanja (2012), Krist Biakanja and Kevin Poush (2013), Ashley Hall and Krist Biakanja (2014), Shelby Morgan and Kevin Poush (2014), Justin Adofina and Anna Sasaki (2016), Anna Sasaki and Jonah Zeko (2018), Vaishalee Chaudhary and Marco Romero (2020 and 2021), Aleece Hanson and Barry Klein (2020), and Georgina Tierney and Kelton Munch (2020). Tierney and Munch were a hybrid of the College of Wooster and CSULB and they may be the only hybrid to win a regional title in AMCA history.

Several CSULB students have advanced to multiple semi-finals or finals of tournaments or invitationals. These include: Hartnett/Ja'Nene Hall (2002 and twice in 2003), Ted McNamara (once in 2008 and in 2009), Appelbaum (twice in 2010), Ewan (2009 and twice in 2010), Aaron Sibley (twice in 2010), Chapman/Manners (twice in 2012), Briana Wilbur (2012 and 2013), Ashley Hall (twice in 2013 and three times in 2014), Kyle Maury (2012 and 201), Biakanja (2012, twice in 2013, and 2014), Asmita Deswal (twice in 2013), David Casarrubias (twice in 2013), Kevin Poush (2013 and 2014), Justin Adofina (twice in 2015 and twice in 2016), Myles Chaney (two in 2016 and three times in 2017) Mindy Vo (once in 2015, twice in 2016, four times in 2017, and once in 2018), Lilian Truong (twice in 2016), Julieta Hernandez (twice in 2015 and once in 2016 as a member of a hybrid with Eryn Mascia of the University of North Texas), Ali Piane and Zsofia Slovak (twice in 2018), Anna Sasaki (twice in 2016, four times in 2017, and three times in 2018), Jonah Zeko (twice in 2018), Gabby Passeri (twice in 2018), Diego Magana (three times in 2018), Nicole Opendo (four times in 2018) Amanda Botelho (three in 2018 and three times in 2019), Chaudhary and Romero (five in 2019 and five in 2020-21), Aleece Hanson (two in 2019 and four in 2020-21), and Barry Klein (twice in 2019 and four in 2020-21).

The following students have qualified for multiple tournament or invitational finals: Hartnett and Ja'Nene Hall (once in 2002 and two in 2003), Ewan (twice in 2010), Ashley Hall (once in 2013 and twice in 2014), Maury (once in 2012, 2013, and 2014), Biakanja (once in 2012, twice in 2013, and once in 2014), Poush (2013 and 2014), Justin Adofina (twice in 2015 and once in 2016), Julieta Hernandez (twice in 2015), Mindy Vo (twice in 2017 and once in 2018), Myles Chaney (twice in 2016 and once in 2017), Anna Sasaki (once in 2016, twice in 2017 and three times in 2018), Jonah Zeko (twice in 2019), Chaudhary and Romero (four in 2019 and five in 2020-21), Hanson and Klein (twice in 2020), Tierney and Munch (twice in 2020)

Thirty-two CSULB students/hybrid teammates, Nina Flores and Tyson Thomas (2002), Tommy Hartnett and Ja'Nene Hall (2003), Jillian Ewan and Ted McNamara (2009), Ian Dunbar and Cassandra Ibaraz (2012), Asmita Deswal and David Casarrubias (2013), Emily Lees and Beatriz Reyes (2013), Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury (2014), Will Torres and Dillon Westfall (2014), Justin Adofina and Julieta Hernandez (2015), Mindy Vo and Diego Duarte (2015) Myles Chaney and Sara Geesaman (2016-2017), Lilian Truong and Dominique Noble (2016), Diego Magana and Nicole Opendo (2018), Anna Sasaki and Jonah Zeko (2018), Klein and Hanson (2020), and Tierney and Munch (2020) have been runners up in tournaments or invitationals.

Thirteen CSULB students have won several national moot court awards for individual oral advocacy. Myles Chaney (2<sup>nd</sup>) (Kyle Maury (3<sup>rd</sup>), Thomas Hartnett (4<sup>th</sup>), Timothy Appelbaum (4<sup>th</sup>), Alexandra Lohman (4<sup>th</sup>), Ashley Hall (7<sup>th</sup>) Ryan Chapman (9<sup>th</sup>) Diego Magana (11<sup>th</sup>), Matthew Gunter (11<sup>th</sup>), Botelho (12<sup>th</sup>) Munch (15<sup>th</sup>) Chris Heffernan (20<sup>th</sup>) and Asmita Deswal (22<sup>nd</sup>) have won national orator awards.

Jalyn Wang and Kirstin Brown (1<sup>st</sup>), Ryan Chapman and Yasmin Manners (2<sup>nd</sup>), Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury (1<sup>st</sup>), Justin Adofina and Julieta Hernandez (5<sup>th</sup>), Zsofia Slovak and Ciarra Lofsrom (4<sup>th</sup>), Zsofia Slovak and Ali Piane (2<sup>nd</sup>), Mindy Vo and Anna Sasaki (4<sup>th</sup>), Amanda Botelho and Barry Klein, Aleece Hanson and Barry Klein (1<sup>st</sup>) have won written brief awards at the national tournament. Timothy Appelbaum and Alexandra Lohman, Ruth Anderson and Robert Lane, Amethyst Jefferson-Roberts and Dominique Noble, Will Torres and Dillon Westfall, Vo and Lilian

Truong, Andrew Aronesty and Kimberly Mondragon, Nicole Opendo and Amanda Botelho, and Anna Sasaki and Jonah Zeko, and Vaishalee Chaudhary and Marco Romero have finished among the top ten for written brief at the national championship. Slovak and Klein both won two top five awards for written advocacy, Vo, Sasaki, and Botelho won one top five and one top ten awards for written advocacy.

### **2006-07**

Starting in 2006-07, teams had to earn bids to the national championship through a series of automatic and at-large-bids. In addition, the national finals adopted a seeding system in 2006-07. These changes have made it more difficult to reach, and succeed, at the national tournament. To date, CSULB teams (including four hybrid teams) have earned thirty-eight bids to nationals. Thirty-three of these bids have been automatic bids, while five have been at large-bids.

In 2006-07, CSULB senior Michaelyn Thomas, paired in a hybrid team with Will Glaser (a junior from Patrick Henry College), became the first CSULB student in history to be on a team that earned an automatic bid. Paige McCormack and Shelia Soroushian and Kristin Hallak and Jillian Martins became the first CSULB teams to earn at-large-bids.

### **2007-08**

2007-08 proved a good year at nationals for the CSULB squad. The program again earned three bids to nationals. A hybrid of Mason Taylor and Anna Accomazzo (a freshman from Patrick Henry College) earned an automatic bid. In addition, CSULB teams of Paige McCormack (the only CSULB student to earn two bids to nationals) and Muhammad Ataya and Melissa Sanchez and Ted McNamara earned at-large-bids. Traveling to Iowa in January, CSULB took along an alternate, senior Lindsay Nelson. When fate (and the weather) kept two teams from attending the national tournament, Nelson teamed with Justin Jenkins (a junior from Patrick Henry College) to form a hybrid. The two hybrids survived to the elimination rounds with Taylor and Accomazzo missing a trip to the Sweet Sixteen by a mere two points. The team of McCormack and Ataya just missed becoming CSULB's third member of the round of 32.

In the spring of 2008, two CSULB teams competed in the Capital Challenge. This was an invitational moot court tournament held at the Prettyman Federal Courthouse in Washington DC. Students from four universities competed. The team of Mason Lawrence Taylor and Ted McNamara reached the semi-finals before being eliminated by the eventual champion.

### **2008-09**

In 2008-09, three teams from CSULB garnered automatic bids. Heather Pegg and Timothy Appelbaum, Laila Nikaien and Reema Abboud, and Nicole Wilson and Edgar Gutierrez competed at Chapman Law School in Orange County. Two teams advanced to elimination rounds with one, Pegg and Appelbaum, reaching the sweet 16. These were the first non-hybrid CSULB students to earn automatic bids and the first to reach the elimination rounds since the tournament went to a bid and seeding system.

## **2009-10**

In the spring of 2009, several CSULB teams competed in the first annual California Classic. This was an invitational moot court tournament held in Los Angeles at Mt. St. Mary's College. Three CSULB teams reached the elimination rounds. The finals pitted the champions Heather Pegg (the top orator) and Timothy Appelbaum against class-mates Jillian Ewan and Ted McNamara.

In 2009-10, five teams from CSULB garnered automatic bids. Timothy Appelbaum and Reema Abboud, Jillian Ewan and Ryan King, Richard Bosanko and Kyle Bourne, Ashlie Brillault and Jose Reynoso, and Kathleen McHale and Kyle Lee (of Chapman University). Three teams advanced to elimination rounds before losing split-decisions. Appelbaum was named the number four orator.

## **2010-11**

In the spring of 2010, five CSULB teams competed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> California Classic. This was an invitational moot court tournament held in Fresno, CA at the campus of Fresno State University. Three CSULB teams reached the elimination rounds. The finals pitted the champions Jillian Ewan and Matthew Gunter against Fresno States Alisa Campbell and Matias Bernel in a thrilling split decision. Also reaching the semi-finals were Aaron Sibley/JaVon Payton and Thomas Linton/Payal Pancholi.

The CSULB moot court team of 2010-11 was a veteran squad that earned four bids to the national tournament. Timothy Appelbaum and Alexandra Lohman advanced to the Sweet 16 – for Appelbaum this was his second appearance in the Sweet 16 and his third appearance in an elimination round. Appelbaum graduated with an overall record of 25-7-3 (Western Regional 13-3, CA Classic 5-0, and ACMA National Tournament 7-4-3). At that time, no CSULB student had won more rounds in a career. Reema Abboud and Andrew Klein advanced to the Round of 32. For Abboud, this marked her third straight appearance in the Round of 32. Abboud graduated with a record of 20-10-2 (Western Regional 13-3, CA Classic 2-1-1, and ACMA National Tournament 5-6-1). Also attending nationals were Jillian Ewan/Aaron Sibley and Matthew Gunter/Richard Bosanko. Jillian Ewan graduated with a lifetime record of 22-8-2 (Western Regional 10-3, CA Classic 9-1-1, and ACMA National Tournament 1-4-1). Alex Lohman was named the number four orator. Appelbaum and Lohman won recognition for their written brief.

## **2011-12**

2011-12 was a rebuilding year in which CSULB exceeded expectations. At the 2012 national tournament, for the first time, every CSULB team advanced to the elimination rounds. Wyatt Lyles and his teammate Kari Rice (Carroll College) and Yasmin Manners and Ryan Chapman advanced to the Sweet 16. Peter Vasilion and Taylor Carr qualified for the Round of 32. Lyles and Rice won every ballot cast Friday night and finished the year as the 10<sup>th</sup> ranked team in the nation. Manners and Chapman finished ranked 15<sup>th</sup> while Vasilion and Carr finished 21<sup>st</sup>.

Three teams from CSULB competed in Dallas, Texas in March, 2012 in the Texas Undergraduate Championship. Every CSULB team advanced to the elimination rounds. CSULB's Ryan

Chapman and Yasmin Manners won the tournament and in the process went an impressive 7-0. Manners was named the third best orator. Wyatt Lyles and his teammate Kari Rice (Carroll College) advanced to the Elite Eight. Rice was named the 7<sup>th</sup> best orator and Lyles was named the 11<sup>th</sup> best orator. Andrew Kemper and Robert Lane advanced to the Sweet Sixteen before dropping a split decision. Chapman and Manners finished the year with a record of 14-3 – that appears to be the most wins in a single season in CSULB history.

### **2012-13**

In April of 2012, five CSULB teams competed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> California Classic which was held in Anaheim at Westwood College. CSULB won the tournament and the top four teams were from CSULB. Kyle Maury and Brianna Wilbur defeated Ian Dunbar and Cassandra Ibarez in the finals. Robert Lane and Sara Castillo and Jonathan Sellers and Allan Ngyuen finished third and fourth respectively. Lane, Maury, Wilbur, and Dunbar won speaker awards.

In October, 2012, three CSULB teams competed in the South Texas College of Law Moot Court Invitation Tournament. CSULB's Ryan Chapman and Yasmin Manners finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. Chapman was named the 2<sup>nd</sup> best orator. Krist Biakanja and Brianna Wilbur finished 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> out of 76 orators.

In the Fall of 2012 CSULB captured its second Western Regional Championship when Adria Bonillas and Krist Biakanja, the 18<sup>th</sup> seed, won five straight split decisions en route to their first tournament title. CSULB placed four teams in the elite eight. These included Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury, Ryan Chapman and Yasmin Manners, and Brianna Wilbur and her teammate from Patrick Henry College Rebecca Sampayan.

CSULB sent four teams to the 2013 national championship tournament. Three of these teams advanced to elimination rounds. Yasmin Manners and Ryan Chapman advanced to the Sweet 16. In doing they became just the third and fourth CSULB students to qualify for two national sweet sixteens and the first CSULB team to qualify for two national sweet sixteens. Adria Bonillas and Krist Biakanja and Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury qualified for the Round of 32. Chapman and Manners finished the year as the 11<sup>th</sup> ranked team in the nation in oral advocacy and they finished second in the nation in written advocacy. Chapman finished 9<sup>th</sup> in oral advocacy. Chapman and Manners became the winningest team in CSULB history with a mark of 26-7-1. At the time they graduated they were tied for the most wins in CSULB history.

### **2013-14**

Three teams from CSULB competed in Dallas, Texas in February, 2013 in the Southern Methodist University Law School Moot Court Tournament. CSULB placed all three teams in the semi-finals. Asmita Deswal and David Casarrubias were the runners up while Brianna Wilbur and Ruben Frausto and Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury finished third and fourth respectively. CSULB won five orator awards with Brianna Wilbur finishing second overall with an average of 372 out of 400. Also winning orator awards were Asmita Deswal, Ruben Frausto, Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury.

In April of 2013, six CSULB teams competed in the 4<sup>th</sup> California Classic which was held in Anaheim at Westwood College. CSULB won the tournament and the top four teams were from CSULB. Ashley Hall and Krist Biakanja defeated Emily Lees and Beatriz Reyes in the finals. Jose Hernandez and Brandon Drew and Michelle Monroy and Mario Gomez finished third and fourth respectively. Hall, Biakanja, Lees, Hernandez, and Natalie Sanchez were the top orators.

The fall 2013 moot court season was a magical one. At nationals, the team of Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury finished first in the nation in written advocacy for the respondent and second in the nation in oral advocacy. They finished the season as the best overall team in the nation terms of oral and written advocacy skills. CSULB is just one of four schools to have advanced to more than one regional finals. Krist Biakanja and Kevin Poush, David Casarrubias and Asmita Deswal and Amethyst Jefferson-Roberts and Greg Brown (CSU Fullerton) qualified for the Round of 32. Maury finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in oral advocacy, Hall was 7<sup>th</sup> and Deswal 22<sup>nd</sup>. All three were in the top 15% of advocates. Maury's graduated with a lifetime mark of 29-7. He advanced to two finals and four semi-finals. That same year, CSULB's Krist Biakanja and Kevin Poush won the Upper Midwestern Tournament in a thrilling final round against a terrific team from Arkansas State University. This was CSULB's third regional title. Biakanja, who holds the CSULB record with three tournament titles, was named 2<sup>nd</sup> best orator and the team went undefeated. At the Western Regional, Ashley Hall and Kyle Maury and David Casarrubias and Asmita Deswal finished third and fourth respectively. Amethyst Jefferson-Roberts and Greg Brown (CSU Fullerton) and Laura Mergenthaler and Dillon Westfall also advanced to the Sweet 16. Hall and Deswal won top orator awards. The season ended with Will Torres and Dillon Westfall finishing as runners up at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual California Classic. Shelby Morgan and Kevin Poush also advanced to the semi-finals.

## **2014-15**

2014 saw the CSULB team win two regionals and earn four bids to the national championship. The season began with Shelby Morgan and Kevin Poush successfully defending CSULB's title as Upper Midwestern Champions. Poush and Morgan were named the first and third orators respectively. In two regionals, Poush compiled a record of 13-0-1. Next up, Krist Biakanja and Ashley Hall won the Western Regional. For Biakanja it marked his third regional title in three tries (an ACMA record) and his CSULB-best fourth title. Also advancing to nationals from the Regional were Jefferson-Roberts and Dominique Noble and Julieta Hernandez and Chris Nielson. Noble and Jefferson-Roberts won orator awards. At nationals, CSULB advanced two teams to the Sweet 16. Biakanja and Hall and Morgan and Poush. Ashley Hall graduated as CSULB's winningest individual mooter with a lifetime record of 41-10-1, and Biakanja graduated with a mark of 36-7-3. Poush graduated with a mark of 22-3-4. His winning percentage of 88% is the best in CSULB history. The season ended on a high note. The team of Justin Adofina and Julieta Hernandez won the 2015 6<sup>th</sup> California Classic in a 2-1 decision over their classmates Mindy Vo and Diego Duarte. Adofina was the top orator. Adofina and Hernandez also won the CSULB Spring Classic defeating a team from Fresno State.

## **2015-16**

2015 was a rebuilding year. One that started and ended well. Justin Adofina (29-7-2) and Julieta Hernandez (26-9) led the squad to scrimmage triumphs over the Air Force Academy and The

College of the Holy Cross and they reached the semi-finals of the University of North Texas School of Law Undergraduate Moot Court Invitational which was held in Dallas, TX. All CSULB students returned from Dallas with an award either for individual advocacy or for advancing to elimination rounds. Adofina and Hernandez finished second at the Upper Midwestern Moot Court Regional. They lost a 3-2 decision in the final (CSULB's only loss to date in that regional) by one point. Hernandez was named the second best orator and Adofina was named the fifth best orator. At the Western Regional the hybrid of Myles Chaney (CSULB) and Sarah Geesaman (Patrick Henry College) and CSULB's Mindy Vo and Diego Duarte reached the quarter finals. Chaney was named the top orator. Dominique Noble was named the 11<sup>th</sup> best orator. CSULB hosted the 2016 ACMA national championship. Chaney and Geesaman reached the Sweet Sixteen while Adofina and Hernandez (Round of 32) and Vo and Duarte (play-in round) all advanced to elimination rounds. Adofina and Hernandez finished tied for 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the Respondent Written Brief Championship while Ciarra Lofstrom and Zsofia Slovak finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the Petitioner Written Brief Championship.

## **2016-17**

The 2016-17 moot court season was one of CSULB's best to date. Julieta Hernandez competed on a hybrid with Eryn Mascia of the University of North Texas in the Southern Methodist University Law School Moot Court Tournament. Mascia and Hernandez both won top orator awards (finishing first and third respectively) and they reached the semi-finals of the tournament.

In May of 2016, six CSULB teams competed in the 7<sup>th</sup> California Classic which was held in Los Angeles at Mt. Mary's University. CSULB won the tournament and three of the top four teams were from CSULB. Malia Blake and Dyana Beshay defeated Lilian Truong and Dominique Noble in the finals. Andrew Aronesty and Kimberly Mondragon finished third. CSULB had five of the top seven top orators: Zsofia Slovak finished the highest – she was the second best orator.

In the fall of 2016, CSULB teams competed in two scrimmages, one invitational, and three regionals. Justin Adofina and Anna Sasaki, a first-semester freshman, began the season with a win in the CSULB Fall Classic (a four-school/sixteen team tournament). CSULB closed the Classic as Chaney finished second (he argued all three issues), Andrew Aronesty and Kimberly Mondragon and Mindy Vo and Lilian Truong finished third and fourth respectively. Adofina and Sasaki finished third at the Falcon Classic held at the United States Air Force Academy. The pre-season closed with Chaney and Geesaman winning the fifty-team Southern University Law School Invitational. Vo and Truong finished third. Vo, Sasaki, Chaney, and Mondragon won speaker awards. CSULB competed in three regionals – finishing first, second, and fourth. Adofina and Sasaki reclaimed the Upper Midwestern Regional title in a thrilling 3-2 decision over Loyola University of Chicago. Adofina won a top orator award. Chaney and Geesaman dropped a 4-3 decision in the Western Regional to Patrick Henry College. Geesaman was the top orator. Chaney, Mondragon, Daniel Ishu, and Nancy Gomez also won speaker awards. Vo and Truong finished fourth in the Windy City Regional. Vo was the number two speaker. CSULB earned three bids to nationals which was held at Stetson University College of Law in Gulfport, FL. Chaney and Geesaman advanced to the semi-finals and finished third in the nation. Adofina and Sasaki advanced to the round of Thirty-Two. Vo and Truong also advanced to elimination rounds. Chaney was the number two orator. Geesaman was number four. Zsofia Slovak and Ali Piane

finished second in the nation in Petitioner brief. Vo and Truong finished sixth and Aronesty and Mondragon finished tenth.

## **2017-18**

In April of 2017, CSULB teams competed in the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual California Classic which, for the first time, was held in Long Beach. Anna Sasaki and Mindy Vo delivered an undefeated performance. Sasaki and Vo topped a team from Occidental College. Victoria Duffy and Levi Tristao advanced to semi-finals in their first tournament.

2017-2018 started and ended well. In the fall of 2017, CSULB teams competed in two scrimmages, one invitational, and two regionals. Mindy Vo and Anna Sasaki won both scrimmages and won the Holy Cross Invitational. The final round was a 5-4 decision. Myles Chaney and Sarah Geesaman advanced to the semis at Holy Cross. Vo and Sasaki finished third at the Windy City Regional. Chaney and Geesaman were runners-up at the Southern University Law School Regional. CSULB won numerous orator awards. Vo and Sasaki advanced to out-rounds at national. Chaney and Geesaman, the greatest hybrid in AMCA history, advanced to their third-straight national sweet-sixteen. Sasaki and Vo finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the national written brief contest.

## **2018-19**

In the Spring 2018 season, Vo and Sasaki won the Hastings College of the Law Moot Court Championship. Ali Piane and Zsofia Slovak finished 4<sup>th</sup>. Piane was the top orator. Piane and Slovak then defeated Nicole Opendo and Diego Magana in a 6-3 decision at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual California Classic.

2018-2019 was a rebuilding season. CSULB teams competed in two scrimmages, two invitationals, and three regionals. In total, it produced eight semi-finalists in scrimmages/invitationals and three in regionals. CSULB's Anna Sasaki and Jonah Zeko won the Windy City Regional and they finished first in the sixteen team CSULB Fall Classic. Sasaki and Zeko finished second on the Rocky Mountain Invitational in a final round held at the Colorado Supreme Court. Gabby Passeri and Diego Magana reached the semi-finals at the Southern University Law School Regional. CSULB earned two bids at the Western Regional: Nicole Opendo and Amanda Botelho and Marissa Rael and Chris Heffernan finished 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively. Both teams face the two-time former national champs, Caleb Engle and Chris Baldacci. Rael and Heffernan tied the champs in the preliminary rounds, while Opendo and Botelho, in the defining moment of their season, bested the defending champs in a 2-1 decision in the sweet 16. At nationals, Rael and Heffernan advanced to the quarter-finals, before being ousted by the 2018 national runners-up from the University of Chicago (Henry Filosa and Rebecca Lin). Sasaki and Zeko advanced to the Sweet-16 before losing to the College of the Holy Cross. All four teams advanced to out-rounds. Magana and Heffernan won top orator awards, while Opendo and Botelho and Sasaki and Zeko finished among the top ten in the nation in respondent written brief.

## **2019-20**

The rebuild started in 2018 continued in 2019-20. CSULB's Marissa Rael and Riley Anderson won the 10<sup>th</sup> California Classic besting a team from San Francisco State University. In the Fall, CSULB teams competed in two scrimmages, one invitational, two regionals, and the national championship. In total, it produced nine semi-finalists. CSULB's sophomores Vaishalee Chaudhary and Marco Romero had a great season winning three competitions (including the Frank Guliuzza Memorial Western Regional Qualifying Tournament and the Rocky Mountain Invitational) and advancing to the national sweet 16. They also finished 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation in petitioner written brief. Amanda Botelho and Barry Klein advanced to the semis of the Windy City Regional and finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in respondent written brief. Botelho was named the 12<sup>th</sup> best orator in the nation. Aleece Hanson and Alexis Liataud earned an invitation as an official alternate team invited to nationals on the basis of advanced to the Elite 8 at the Windy City Regional. Chaudhary and Romero capped the season off by winning the Hastings College of the Law Moot Court Championship held in early 2020 just before COVID-19 hit. The CA Classic was cancelled for 2020 due to COVID-19.

## **2020-21**

2020-21 was the Zoom/COVID-19 season. Ten students – nine from CSULB and one from the College of Wooster – came together to deliver what will go down as quite possibly CSULB's finest season. It included a national championship in written advocacy, a national quarter-finalist, three regional titles, four regional quarter-finalists, four bids to nationals, and four-pre-season titles in invitational. There were numerous top orator awards, every team advanced to at least one semi-final, and no one who was a coach or on the squad will soon forget the sight of classmates not waiting for them in Zoom at very early hours to help get them ready to win (we competed in three east coast regionals and several invitational in other time zones). Vaishalee Chaudhary and Marco Romero were the most consistent and dominant team in the nation. They went 40-2 – at one point winning 30 straight rounds. They won five competitions and became the first CSULB team to repeat as regional champs. They also repeated as Rocky Mountain Invitational Champions and both won orator awards at their regional and at the Rocky Mountain Invitational. Chaudhary and Romero advanced to the quarter-finals – finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation.

Aleece Hanson and Barry Klein won the first ever Eastern Michigan Regional. They won the National Championship for Written Advocacy (Respondent), won orator awards at the regional and at the Rocky Mountain Invitational, and advanced to four semi-finals and two finals. At nationals, they advanced to the Round of 32.

Georgina Tierney (College of Wooster) and Kelton Munch (CSULB) became quite probably the first hybrid to win a regional title. Their win in the Midwestern Regional was even more poignant in that it was the legendary Wooster coach, Mark Weaver, who suggested the pairing. Tierney and Munch were the number two and three orators at the regional. Munch finished 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation in oral advocacy. Tierney and Munch advanced to two finals under the rallying cry of – “go Scots/Go Beach!!” At nationals, they advanced to the Round of 32. They finished 17<sup>th</sup> on the season.

Alexis Liataud and Jessica Zaitarain earned a bid to nationals by advancing to the quarter-finals of the South Atlantic Regional. Both were among the top 25 orators at the regional. In addition

to their success in their regional, Liautaud and Zaitarain advanced to the semi-finals of the Texas-California Fall Classic. At nationals, they advanced to the Round of 32 – just missing a trip to the Sweet 16.

The fifth CSULB team, Celeste Sanchez and John Littles also had a very successful season. Sanchez and Littles advanced to the Sweet 16 of the South Atlantic Regional and were one ballot away from nationals. Sanchez was voted the third best orator and Littles finished eleventh. They advanced to the Semis of Rocky Mountain Invitational and narrowly lost to one of the top teams in AMCA history Courtney and Jensen Request.

It was a truly special season of finished (and some unfinished) business which capped off a tough year for so many and which showed that beneath the Beach-Scots jersey beat the heart of a champion. Geaux Beach – onto 2021!!

## **2021-22**

CSULB wins the 2021 11th Annual California Classic

CSULB's Jessica Zatarain and Nichole Athanitis won the 11th Annual California Classic. This was the first California Classic to be held on Zoom. It was the 10th California Classic title in CSULB history and the 7th in a row. Zatarain and Athanitis dominated from start to finish winning 20 of 20 ballots. CSULB's Aleece Hanson and Ryan Marden finished third. Hanson was named the top orator with a 380/400 average. Kellie Sala, Marden, and Zatarain were also named top ten orators.

