

While some students were glued to the NCAA final four action, the Hebrew Academy of the Five Towns and Rockaway (HAFTR) High School Mock Trial team had amazingly made it to their own final four. Returning from Passover vacation, the jubilation over being Mock Trial semifinalists was felt in the air! On almost every door, bulletin board, and staircase, posters were hung encouraging students to come support the Mock Trial team on April 10 at their semifinal trial against Our Lady of Mercy Academy.

The team had come so far since their first trial in February as a result of strict practices and devotion. Practices were held at least once a week (and sometimes even twice a week) to prepare for the trial. The team had to ready prosecution and defense teams, with three lawyers and witnesses on each. Witnesses had to memorize their affidavits (sworn testimonies from their characters) in order to prepare for direct examination. Lawyers had to practice asking questions, and perfect opening and closing statements. Both positions required long hours of effort and practice, since no notes were allowed in the courtroom.

Even when they did not have formal practice, students were constantly thinking of the trial. "Sometimes practice went until 9 p.m.! Lawyers came in to help us prepare. We even practiced during Passover vacation!" said sophomore Katie Glickman. Skills in public speaking and spontaneous critical thinking are essential for success on the Mock Trial team. "It takes wit to think quickly and speak eloquently," said Michael Sos-

Although the Mock Trial team will not be continuing on to the championship round in Albany, all of the members gained so much

from the experience. "Coming down to the final four out of 45 schools in Nassau County is an achievement in itself," Sosnick said. "Who wins and who moves on is literally splitting hairs — a few points here and there is what makes all the difference."

Faculty advisor, Lauren Lillien, also congratulated the team for making it to the semifinals. "I am lucky to be able to work with such talented, dedicated, and hardworking students. They all inspire me, and will continue to make their marks with everything they do," said Lillien, referring to all Mock Trial members, including

Sosnick, Matthew Goldstein, Adam Lifshitz, Andrew Lifshitz, Samantha Lish, Glickman, Jonathan Greenberg, Jason Sulzberger, Sarah Fuchs, Tara Seidel, Elliot Fuchs and several others. The HAFTR Mock Trial team has made a lasting impression, and will now be on the radar of other schools for next year.

## HAFTR HIGHLIGHTS



DENA  
GERSHKOVICH

### 'The Tattler' best online

The HAFTR online newspaper, "The Tattler" ([www.haftrtattler.com](http://www.haftrtattler.com)), has also achieved phenomenal success. At the Adelphi University 2013 Annual Press Day Journalism Conference, "The Tattler" won the Adelphi University Quill Award for Best Online Newspaper. I will never forget the joy that we all felt after hearing the spokesman announce this exhilarating news.

As I watched Sam Levinson and Katie Glickman, the editors of "The Tattler," stride