

In The Spotlight with: Jason Ramsey, Law Student, Ohio Northern University

By Kate Feeks

Jason Ramsey, a law student at Ohio Northern University, will be on the show *Law Talk* with host John Celebrezze to discuss his recent win of the Ohio Northern Law School Anthony J. Celebrezze Appellate Advocacy Competition. This show will run throughout the month of July on Wadsworth Cable (WCTV) Public Access Channel 15, Brunswick Area Television (BAT) Public access Chanel 21, and Armstrong Cable Access Channel 37 in Medina County along with Clear Picture Channels 21 & 22 in Wooster and Massillon.

The Appellate Advocacy Competition is named in honor of the late Anthony J Celebrezze, LLB '36, distinguished alumnus of the Ohio Northern College of Law and former senior justice on the Sixth Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals. This year's competition was held in April. The competition is offered every year to all second and third year law students attending Ohio Northern.

The winner of this year's appellate advocacy competition was Jason Ramsey, a second year law student.

Jason Ramsey grew up in northeast Ohio in a very small village named Beloit. "We don't even have a stop light in Beloit." Ramsey commented about his home town. He attended Ohio Wesleyan University for his undergraduate work in history and politics. After completing his studies there, he pursued his goal to work on a campaign. In 2008, he traveled to Iowa and worked for Hilary Clinton. After helping with the campaign he traveled back to Washington D.C. to work at a law firm.

In 2011 Ramsey decided to return to Ohio and attend Ohio Northern School of Law. "I wanted to go to an Ohio school and Ohio Northern was a perfect fit for me, it's a small school and it kind of reminds me of home." Ramsey said.

Those students interested in competing in the competition sign up at registration. Once students are registered they are presented with the case question and they begin the process. The case presented this year was about the Voting Rights Act. "This year's case was emailed to the students giving us only three weeks to craft an argument. We prepared by reading all the briefs, reading the lower court opinions, reading all the cases sort of attached to this particular issue. It was nice that this case was very heavy litigated in the past so it was fairly easy to find all the information and piece together an argument." explained Ramsey.

Students are required to prepare arguments for both sides of the case. They are not told with which side they will have to argue until a few days before the competition.

Shelby County, Alabama v. Eric Holder, Attorney General of the United States was this year's case for the competition. The case problem focused on two particular sections of the Voting Rights Act. For every state that is covered under this particular section of the Voting Rights Act, any time there is a change in that state's election laws, whether it was something small or large, that change has to be approved by the attorney general. The Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965 as a reaction to the very discriminatory voting laws that were passed particularly in the South. "The question was whether these laws were still applicable today being that things today have improved in the South dealing with minorities. Basically, whether or not these provisions were still justifiable by Congress." said Ramsey.

Ultimately the United States Supreme Court did decide to overturn a portion of the Voting Rights Act.

The competition requires students to complete and win a series of five rounds of arguments before a moot court executive board. The entire competition takes approximately three weeks .

To learn more about the outcome of this case ruling watch for the interview with Jason Ramsey and John Celebrezze throughout the month of July on *Law Talk* .