

Students Witness Mock Court Drama

Helping Services for Northeast Iowa joined forces with Luther College and NICC in sponsoring a mock rape trial earlier this month.

The trial was presented in three venues, one for local high school students at the Winneshiok County Courthouse in Decorah, and the others at Luther College and on the NICC campus in Calmar.

The program was held in conjunction with April Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and was designed as a prevention awareness program by the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Resource Center of Decorah.

Planners were Carole Daughton, sexual assault prevention educator, and Kabra Addi, a Luther College Senior.

The event provided a close-up view of the criminal prosecution of a sexual assault case involving two college students who consumed alcohol before engaging in sexual behavior. The courtroom drama unfolded as the jury heard testimony of several witnesses and based on this testimony, sought out a unanimous verdict. A question-and-answer session was held after the sentencing.

Students from the high school and their teachers sat in on the trial, sitting through opening statements, closing remarks, directs and cross-examinations by “actor” lawyers. They saw trial strategies unfold for both attorneys and witnesses participating in the crime drama.

The cast of characters included Bill Deutsch as the judge; Nathan Lein, as the district attorney; Raymond Rinkol as the defense attorney; Seth Engel as a bartender; Makara Fiarman as the victim, Melissa Stanton; Pat Knapp as Joe

Richards, the accused; Adrianna Diaz as Stacey Saunders, a witness; and Lydia Beattie as a nurse. The goal was raising awareness and educating young people about the issues facing victims of sexual assault during a criminal trial and demonstrating the importance of civic involvement through jury service. For more information contact the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Resource Center, toll free at 1-800-383-2988.



Participants in the recent mock trial at the large courtroom in the Winneshiok County Courthouse included jury members (top photo from left): Brock Arend, Lance Loney and Corey Smock. Volunteer “attorneys” were Nathan Lein for the district attorney’s office and Raymond Rinkol for the defense. Other cast members were Bill Deutsch, Seth Engel, Makara Fiarman, Pat Knapp, Adriana Diaz and Lydia Beattie. The trial was a collaborative project funded by Luther College, NICC and Helping Services for Northeast Iowa.

