

## **South Africa in final of international moot court competition**

The participants who excelled in the 2013's third National Schools Moot Court Competition (see 2013 (Oct) *DR* 8) were invited to participate in the 2014 High School International Moot Court Competition in The Hague, Netherlands.

The competition was held for the second time by the Justice Resource Center, in partnership with the City Hall of The Hague, and provided high school students an opportunity to engage in civic education with other students and judicial leaders from around the world.

Sixteen teams participated in the competition and other countries that participated included the United States, Poland, Russia and Argentina.

Cherryl Botterill, a project manager at the University of Pretoria who accompanied the students to The Hague, said that the competition was an opportunity for students to learn about the rule of law, gain a better understanding of international relations and increase their legal knowledge.

Two teams from South Africa participated in the competition. One team had six members, while the other had seven. Each team was divided into a defence and prosecution side that each had to lead arguments. After both sides had argued, the team's marks were calculated and compared with those of the other teams to determine the finalists.

The students participated in multiple elimination rounds at Leiden University from 21-23 January and Venezuela and South Africa made it to the final round. The members of South Africa's Team 2 had to decide whether the prosecution or defence side of the team would be participating in the final round. They tossed a coin and the members for prosecution and Venezuela's defence team members were in the final round. The South African team in the final was made up of Anri Erasmus of Grens High School in the Eastern Cape; Caton Schutte of Crawford College La Lucia in KwaZulu-Natal and Palesa Ramanamane of Eunice High School in the Free State.

The final round took place on 24 January with judges from the International Criminal Court and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia presiding. The South African prosecution team took second place. Sam Musker from Redhill High School in Johannesburg was awarded the best oralist award for defence teams.

Palesa Ramanamane told *De Rebus* that she felt honoured and blessed to be part of a competition of this magnitude. She said that she had learnt many things during the competition, but the two lessons that stood out regarded race and unity. 'We need to forget about people's race and rather look at a person's mental capacity. Racism holds us back. I also learnt about unity. We really stuck together and that is how we achieved second place. All 13 of us sat in the boardroom the night before the finals to prepare. Our spirit of togetherness was amazing. We were united', she said.

Her greatest moment of the competition was when they announced that her team had made it to the final round. 'The whole room was singing and dancing to Shosholozza – Brazilians, Americans, everybody,' she said.

Miss Ramanamane said some may perceive the law as 'boring' and just about thick books, reading and theory. 'It does require a lot of research and reading, but it is also very interesting. We must do what we can with our minds. We should challenge ourselves,' she said, adding that she will be studying towards a BA Law degree next year.

The students in the South African teams were selected from different schools across the country. Team 1 consisted of Danielle Dallas and Olivia Habonimana from Immaculata High School in the Western Cape; Thabisile Mahatlane from Mahonisi Learning in Limpopo; Samuel Musker from

Redhill High School in Johannesburg; Matshidiso Legalamitlwa from Tiger Kloof Combined School in the North West; Malefu Mokone from Harrismith Secondary School in the Free State and Ntokozo Magubane from the Drakensberg Comprehensive School in KwaZulu-Natal. Team 2 consisted of Palesa Ramanamane; Anri Erasmus; Savannah Stutchbury of Springfield Convent in the Western Cape; Simphiwe Ntlhabati of Tiger Kloof Combined School in the North West and Tharin Pillay and Caton Schutte of Crawford College La Lucia in KwaZulu-Natal.

**Nomfundo Manyathi-Jele,**  
nomfundo@derebus.org.za