

SMU in top moot court contest for 3rd time

By PEARL LEE

FOR the third year running, the Singapore Management University (SMU) will represent the Republic at the world's largest moot court contest.

Five students from SMU's law school, which was set up in 2007, beat the team from National University of Singapore at the national round of the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Competition on Feb 7.

The students will head to Washington in April, where more than 100 teams will compete.

Each year, only one team from Singapore gets to go, and up till 2012, it was always the NUS team. NUS still holds the best track record, with four wins and seven second-place finishes.

SMU's team captain, Mr Patrick Tay, 25, said: "It is a big honour to represent Singapore, which sends only one team every year."

The SMU team also includes Ms Victoria Leong, 23, Mr Nicholas Liu, 31,



Flanked by coaches Daniel Liu (left) and Kenny Lau, SMU team members (in jackets, from left) Qabir Sandhu, Nanthini Vijayakumar, Patrick Tay, Nicholas Liu and Victoria Leong will represent Singapore in April. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Mr Qabir Sandhu, 25, and Ms Nanthini Vijayakumar, 22.

Their coaches this year are Mr Daniel Liu, 27, and Mr Kenny Lau, 26,

both SMU and Jessup alumni.

For the national round held at the Supreme Court, both the SMU and NUS teams presented arguments and

answered questions before a panel of judges who are also Jessup alumni: Attorney-General V. K. Rajah, Solicitor-General Lionel Yee and Senior Counsel Chan Leng Sun.

Mr Liu, now a justice's law clerk, described the national round as "a tough fight", adding that NUS is a recognised and well-established competitor with outstanding mooters.

To prepare the SMU team for the moot court contest, the coaches have invited law faculty alumni to act as guest judges each week. "The students practise in front of the guest judges to simulate the moot itself," said Mr Liu.

SMU finished second in the last two years. It lost to Australia's University of Queensland last year, and to the National Law School of India University in 2013.

Notable Jessup alumni in Singapore include Law Minister K. Shanmugam and Senior Minister of State for Law and Education Indraneel Rajah.

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