

# SMU beats NUS for place in top contest

SMU team will represent S'pore in international law moot court competition

By IAN POH

SINGAPORE will again have a team competing at the international rounds of this year's Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition. Except that for the first time, it will not be a National University of Singapore (NUS) side.

Instead, four men and a woman from the Singapore Management University (SMU) will try to do the country proud at the prestigious competition in Washington.

"We're going to prepare extremely hard," said Ms Chong Hui Ying, a 23-year-old law student. "We are not merely competitors but also ambassadors for our school and Singapore."

With her will be four other final-year students – Mr Kenneth Tan, Mr Shaun Pereira and Mr Liu Zhao Xiang, all 24, and Mr Aleksandar Georgiev, 22.

They defeated the NUS team at the third national round of the competition on Feb 23, with Ms Chong named best oralist. SMU had failed to do so the last two years.

"Some may consider our team composition unique, but it has not hindered our preparations in any way. We continually give each other support," said Ms Chong, on being the only female member in the team.

The teams represented two fictitious countries disputing the consequences of one of their territories getting submerged by rising sea levels. They present-



(From left) Assisting coach and SMU alumnus Charles Li, 31, with the SMU team comprising students Shaun Pereira, 24, Aleksandar Georgiev, 22, Chong Hui Ying, 23, Kenneth Tan, 24, and Liu Zhao Xiang, 24. The team beat NUS at a national round in February and will represent Singapore at the international level. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

ed arguments and answered questions from a judging panel.

Attorney-General and Jessup alumnus Steven Chong, who chaired the panel, said the quality of this year's contestants had been "among the highest" in

many years. "Their mastery of the facts and clarity in representing their legal points were remarkable."

The panel also included Judge of Appeal Chao Hick Tin and Mr Ang Cheng Hock, partner at law firm Allen & Gledhill.

This is the third time that SMU's law school, which took in its first batch of students in 2007, is fielding a team for the competition.

Some 550 law schools from more than 80 countries are taking part in the 54th year of the competition, which takes its name from the US representative to the International Court of Justice from 1961 to 1970. The international rounds take place from March 31 to April 6.

Teams from NUS – till now the only school to have represented Singapore competitively since it first sent a team in 1973 – have emerged winners on four occasions since 1982. Notable Jessup alumni include Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Senior Counsel Davinder Singh and Associate Professor Eleanor Wong of the NUS law school.

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