

Eric's Y Story

For nearly 30 years, Eric has coached Mock Trial. He has seen what the program makes possible for young people, which is why he believes it is one of the most powerful educational programs available to students today.

"It teaches far more than legal procedure," he says. "It teaches students to think, to adapt, and to respond under pressure."

Students come in with a plan. Then the trial begins, and everything changes. They learn to adjust in real time, process new information, and respond with clarity and confidence. These are skills that shape futures. And yet, for many students, this opportunity has remained out of reach. The barrier isn't talent.

Eric has worked with exceptional students across communities. Students with the ability, the drive, and the potential to succeed. In places like Marysville, that potential is everywhere. What was missing was consistent access. That's when Mock Trial found the Y.

"The difference was immediate," Eric shares. "For the first time, the program had stability."

At the Y, barriers fell away. Students had a place to meet, to prepare, and to belong. Volunteers stepped in. Resources followed. Most importantly, the program was embraced.

And the students responded. In the first year, the team advanced to the state tournament. This season, they finished second overall.

"The YMCA wrapped its arms around the program and loved it," Eric says. "Quite simply, it finally had a home."

Eric says more students don't need to be found because they're already here. "They just need a place to belong and a structure that allows them to succeed," he says.

To learn more about YMCA Mock Trial and other teen programs, visit [Youth Leadership/Teens – YMCA of Snohomish County](#).