**Law School Negotiation Team Wins National Championship**

Two Creighton University second-year law students, Angel Harris-Lewis and Karen Douglas, took the National Championship in the American Bar Association’s National Negotiations competition held in Philadelphia Jan. 30-Feb. 3.

**Native American Retreat Celebrates Milestone**

Growing up on the Rosebud Reservation in St. Francis, S.D., Nicole Haukass saw little interest among her high school classmates in attending college.

But Haukass had a dream. “Growing up, I just had this idea that I wanted to go to college,” Haukass said. While she had the desire, Haukass also was a bit intimidated. None of her immediate family members had gone to college, and, with little interest among her peers, the dream seemed daunting.

That’s when Haukass’ high school principal told her about Creighton’s new Native American Retreat program. The year was 1997 and Creighton had just launched the retreat — a three-day visit to Creighton’s campus — as a way to introduce Native American high school students to college life and the variety of studies and careers they could explore.

For Haukass, the retreat opened up a whole new world. “I really liked the environment at Creighton,” Haukass said. “The people were very welcoming.”

And the program’s career tracks, which introduced the high school students to a variety of occupations, including health professions such as occupational therapy, dentistry and nursing, were an eye-opener for many who came from the reservations.

“I didn’t even know what occupational therapy was until I came to the retreat,” Haukass said. “They gave us an opportunity to see all different sorts of majors. They showed us that there are a lot more opportunities than you know about.”

In May, Haukass will earn a degree in nursing, making her the first retreat participant to enter Creighton and graduate from the University. Two other former retreat participants, who took part in the second retreat in 1998, also will graduate in May. They are Jessica Graham, a computer science major, and Nakina Mills, a sociology major and president of the Native American Association at Creighton.

For Creighton’s Tami Buffalohead-McGill, coordinator of multi-cultural student services and founder of the retreat, the graduation of these three students marks something of a milestone. “We had no money to start the program,” Buffalohead-McGill recalled, “but we had plenty of energy and enthusiasm. We were amazed that people came and that it worked. Up until the last minute, I couldn’t believe we were doing this.”

Today, the program is drawing national attention. Buffalohead-McGill said Gonzaga University started a similar program modeled after Creighton’s retreat, and several other universities are making inquiries. Interest in Creighton’s retreat among Native American high school students has grown too, but Buffalohead-McGill limits the retreat to about 60 students annually to ensure individual attention. This individual attention — which includes having the Native American students live in the residence halls with Creighton students — is one of the main reasons for the program’s success.

“That’s why the program is so unique,” Buffalohead-McGill said. “It’s the closest you can come to being in college without being enrolled.”

This spring’s retreat included a mock trial sponsored by the Sarpy County (Neb.) Attorney’s Office and a “Take Off with Aviation” course offered in cooperation with the University of Nebraska-Omaha that had students taking the controls of a Cessna training aircraft.

Harris-Lewis and Douglas, coached by Creighton Law Professors Edward Birmingham and Catherine Brooks, beat out the University of North Carolina in the final round to claim the title.

Twenty-four universities competed in Philadelphia, including Northwestern, George Washington, University of Texas, New York University and the University of Illinois.

In July, Harris-Lewis and Douglas will travel to London to represent the United States in the international Negotiations Competition where eight countries will be competing. This year’s national championship followed last year’s national championship for Creighton in the American Bar Association’s Criminal Trial Competition.