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UH Law Center Hosting Virtual Bilingual Dispute Resolution Competition Against Teams from Mexico

HOUSTON, March 31, 2021 - The University of Houston Law Center is launching an innovative online bilingual alternative dispute resolution competition to test law students' skills in negotiation in both English and Spanish. Beginning in April, the competition will pit teams from the Law Center against teams from Mexico's Universidad La Salle and Universidad Anahuac.

"This competition is a first for the Law Center and very relevant today. Business and legal transactions are often international in nature, whether they are cross-cultural or transnational," said Karen L. Jones, executive director of Global and Graduate Programs. "The competition will bring in many practical aspects that are very real and current in today's legal and business practices. Now, with the pandemic, the entire competition will be online, which is a reality of the current and global work environment. It will be an enriching experience for the students."

Alternative dispute resolution is a way to resolve disputes without litigation, Jones explained. ADR tends to be faster, less costly and highly effective.

The competition was developed by Jones, Jim Lawrence, executive director of the Blakely Advocacy Institute and interim director of the A.A. White Dispute Resolution Center, and Alfonso Lopez de la Osa Escribano, director of the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law. It was initially scheduled for April of last year, but postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Programming innovation is one of the key aspects of the Blakely Advocacy Institute," said Lawrence. "This competition seeks to reach students who might not otherwise participate in interscholastic competitions and at the same time, further the BAI's goal of sending more skilled law students into the ever-changing practice of law."

With its proximity to Mexico, cross-border business interests and large Hispanic population, Houston, and Law Center students in particular, will benefit greatly from the international legal interaction and skills training. The Law Center already has strong relationships with many universities, companies and law firms in Mexico and beyond.

"This competition is an amazing exercise to train bilingual English-Spanish future lawyers in a global environment where cross-border legal services are on the rise," said Lopez de la Osa. "The Law Center is proud to be a pioneer with Mexican universities in putting in place academic ways to professionally bring closer Mexico and the United States in the legal field. To understand respective legal cultures is key to grant the success of any transaction, in long-lasting terms."

An opening reception will be held from 5:30-7 p.m. on April 8. The preliminary rounds of the competition are from 4-6 p.m. on April 8-9. The final round will be from 4-6 p.m. on April 16, and will be livestreamed on YouTube.

[Click here for more information on the Bilingual Dispute Resolution Competition.](#)

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About the University of Houston Law Center

The [University of Houston Law Center](#) (UHLC) is a dynamic, top tier law school located in the nation's 4th largest city. UHLC's Health Law, and Intellectual Property Law, programs rank in the U.S. News Top 10. Our part-time program is ranked No. 11. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 11 centers and institutes which fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.

About the University of Houston

The [University of Houston](#) is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter for excellence in undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city and one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse regions in the country, UH is a federally designated Hispanic- and Asian-American-Serving institution with enrollment of more than 47,000 students.