

# Triton Mock Trial Tryout Packet

## Table of Contents

Welcome Letter	2
Instructions	3
Tips & Tricks	3
Mock Debate	4
Witness Tryout	5
Expert Witness	6
Character Witness	8
Attorney Tryout	10

# Triton Mock Trial 2023-2024 Tryouts

Dear prospective members,

We are so glad that you are interested in trying out for the Triton Mock Trial team's 2023-2024 season. Mock trial gives you the opportunity to hone your public speaking skills and develop your ability to present, argue, and advocate—while traveling to other cities and making lifelong friends along the way. We would like to emphasize that our program is open to everyone and not meant to appeal only to those who have an interest in working in law. We have had numerous aspiring doctors, scientists, engineers, actors, writers, and individuals from vastly different backgrounds and disciplines join and attain incredible success in our program.

Since Triton Mock Trial's conception nearly twenty years ago, we have competed at and won tournaments across the country at the highest levels of competition. We are looking for talented students who are ready and willing to carry on our legacy of success. In this packet, you will find everything you need to prepare for your tryout. Tryouts will be held on **Saturday, October 7, 9 am-6 pm and Sunday, October 8, 9 am-4 pm**, and you can fill out the signup form using the link in this packet. Additionally, we will be holding optional practice tryouts on **Friday, October 6, 12 pm-6 pm**. If you have any questions or concerns about the tryout process, don't hesitate to email us at [tritonmocktrial@gmail.com](mailto:tritonmocktrial@gmail.com) or shoot us a message on our Facebook at [Triton Mock Trial](#) or Instagram page [@tritonmocktrial](#). We look forward to seeing you!

Warmly,

Triton Mock Trial

## **Instructions:**

- Fill out the application form at <https://forms.gle/AXquCzs58KFcX7JT7>
- Sign up for a tryout slot using this [link](#)
  - Please make sure to sign up for a slot, **only** if you are committed to attending.
  - Tryouts will be in person this year! They will be located in NSB 3211 - Natural Sciences Building in Revelle. Map of NSB on UCSD Campus: [https://m.ucsd.edu/maps/nearby\\_point?id=450&mylat=32.87749&mylng=-117.23528](https://m.ucsd.edu/maps/nearby_point?id=450&mylat=32.87749&mylng=-117.23528)
  - Practice Tryouts will be in person as well. They will be located in Price Center East in the Sixth College Room. Map of Price Center: [https://universitycenters.ucsd.edu/images/visit-us-images/PC\\_Directories11X17FA21\\_FNL1.pdf](https://universitycenters.ucsd.edu/images/visit-us-images/PC_Directories11X17FA21_FNL1.pdf)
- You may try out as both an Attorney and a Witness. Trying out as a Witness is **mandatory**. Trying out as an Attorney is **optional**.
- There are 4 parts to tryouts! Each will be explained further in this packet.
  - Mock debate
  - Expert witness
  - Character witness
  - Attorney statement

## **Tips and Links:**

- **Finding Character in Mock Trial - UCLA Mock Trial:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAcvWIVAezQ>

UCLA consistently brings entertaining character witnesses to competitions. This short video will help you understand how to form a character and his or her quirks based on the given information.

- **Direct Examination (Character Witness)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jD4SgHyM2k>

This video shows you two examples of character witnesses, the first being perky and overly enthusiastic, the second being smug and cocky. These are merely examples of characters; you should not copy them.

- **How to Deliver an Opening Statement - Mock Trial University:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05uaOrBdtbE>

This video shows you an excellent example of an opening statement and contains tips for writing and delivering opening statements. Pay special attention to the speaker's tone, speed, and pausing.

## The Mock Debate is REQUIRED

### Mock Debate:

- You will also have to prepare for a mock debate on one of these three topics:
  - What is easier to fight, 10 duck sized horses or 1 horse sized duck?
  - What came first, the chicken or the egg?
  - What is the best holiday?
- This mock debate is meant to showcase your ability to think on your feet and present an organized argument. We have kept these topics fairly light, but you *may* use notes for this portion if you would like!
  - The best mock debates will demonstrate strong argumentation skills, an alacrity of wit, and coherent organization of your thoughts and subsequent argument.

## Trying out as a witness is **REQUIRED**

### **Witness Tryout:**

- You must demonstrate your ability to learn an affidavit or expert report, create a character, and create well-articulated answers to questions for a brief direct examination.
- You will be playing **TWO** witnesses from this year's case: one **expert** and one **character**. For both of these types of witnesses, you should aim to memorize the information, respond concisely, thoroughly, and confidently.
  - For the **character witness**, fabricate a character that is authentic and engaging. In the past, successful witnesses have used elaborate backstories, costumes, and a variety of accents.
  - For the **expert**, you need to have a thorough understanding of the facts and be able to demonstrate that you are qualified and credible. However, do not be boring; give your expert some personality! We are looking for witnesses who can be both informative and engaging.
- **BE ENTERTAINING!**
  - The best character witness tryouts create lively, vibrant characters through the appropriate use of (but not limited to) accents, a backstory, appropriate humor, costumes, and mannerisms.
  - The best expert witness tryouts will present themselves in an articulate, convincing, and persuasive manner while at the same time remaining interesting to listen to.

The following pages contain the questions for each of the two witnesses along with the respective report and affidavit upon which you will base your answers and characters.

## **Expert Report of Amarii Ebi**

### **BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS**

I am Amarii Ebi, forensic scientist, former lab director, and former detective in the State of Midlands. I'm the founder of Con-Error Forensic Services, LLC. Our company provides aid to litigants requiring expertise in DNA and forensic analysis, DNA testing, and investigative procedures. I am a court-recognized expert in all of these fields. Prior to founding Con-Error Forensic Services, LLC, I worked for 15 years in the Santa Ivo Forensic Science Unit. I worked for the lab until 2017, when I left to find my own consulting firm.

Prior to working at the forensic science unit, I was a police officer in the State of Midlands. I worked as a patrol deputy from 1995 until 1999, and as a detective from 1999 – 2002. In addition to my training and experience on the job as a patrol deputy and a detective, I have a B.S. in forensic sciences from the Midlands State College of Science and Agriculture. After joining the lab, they paid for my continuing education and I earned a Masters of Forensic Science in 2004. During my time as an analyst, I testified in over 50 jury trials on behalf of the State of Midlands. Since opening my consulting firm, I have testified for the defense in over 30 jury trials.

### **MATERIALS REVIEWED**

In this case, I was hired by the defense to review the work of forensic laboratories and analyze the work of investigating officers. In this case, I did not do any secondary testing, but I did spend 30 hours reviewing the file, plus 10 hours preparing to testify. I reviewed the following documents: M. Nguyen's DNA Report no. 2022112-A00613-1; M. Nguyen's Fingerprint Report no. 2022112-A00613-2; Detective Kit Bahmani Report no. SIPD-22-0099; Agent Shar Burke Report dated April 17 2022; SIPD Interrogations of Poe Cameron dated November 21, 2022 and December 5, 2022.

### **APPLICATION**

The gold standard for forensic DNA testing is Short Tandem Repeat (STR) testing. This is a form of what is known as "nuclear DNA" testing. The decision to run a nuclear DNA test was the appropriate decision in this case. While I cannot find any direct evidence of tampering or contamination by the lab, it is at a minimum concerning that a blood sample test resulted in a finding of "mixture." It is possible this is an interpretation issue. My second concern is that many of the objects examined for DNA are ripe for DNA transfer.

When looking at investigative errors, most commonly they occur when an investigator becomes so focused on a single suspect that they become blind to other options and other explanations. This is what is known as confirmation bias, and it can quickly send an investigation off the rails. After reviewing the report of Shar Burke, I became concerned that Agent Burke may have inappropriately targeted Berkley De la Porta. That said, it would be irresponsible to conclude that there was definitely confirmation bias here. While I cannot find any evidence of wrongdoing by Detective Bahmani in this case, I remain concerned that there might be secondary confirmation bias as a result of Agent Burke's insistence that De la Porta is involved.

Additionally, I remain concerned that Poe Cameron may have been forced into committing this crime, though I acknowledge that Poe Cameron has never directly said that, and I did not interview Poe Cameron myself.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through my review of the case, it appears that the DNA laboratory followed the appropriate procedures. These tests appear to have been performed according to industry standards, in a lab certified to conduct these results. Overall, it appears that the lab did appropriate work.

I am hesitant to speculate on the likelihood of transfer in this case, because there is very little evidence to suggest that transfer occurred. Some of this is due to testing limitations, but there is nothing else in the materials I reviewed to suggest there is a significantly higher risk of DNA transfer in this case. That being said, DNA transfer cannot be ruled out completely as a possible explanation either.

Finally, after a thorough review of both Agent Burke's investigation, and the work of Detective Bahmani, I cannot conclude that either investigator acted inappropriately. While I believe there should have been some consideration of alternative suspects, and additional efforts to determine if Poe Cameron was coerced or even involved in the heist at all, it is understandable why investigators did not do so, and there was certainly no wrongdoing by either investigator, or their departments. There is a significant amount of evidence pointing to the involvement of both De la Porta, and Poe Cameron.

## **Questions for**

1. What do you do for a living?
2. Why are you in court with us today?
3. What is your educational background?
4. Did you review any materials for your investigation?
5. What investigative errors, if any, did the investigators make?
6. What did you conclude in today's case?

**Affidavit of Blaise Nova**

My name is Blaise Nova. I am happily married to my spouse, Alex Nova, and we have three beautiful children together. Growing up I was huge into cheerleading and tumbling. In college, I was a member of one of the best stunting groups in the country for three years running. I also have dabbled in magic since I was young. One day, I hope to own my own magic shop right here in Santa Ivo City. I am a real estate agent by trade, but I also dabble in property management from time to time, which is why I'm relevant to this case.

In 2022, I was filling in for a friend of mine, Cherry. She asked me to take over as the building manager for Ivy Lane for the year of 2022. Getting into the building requires a key fob. Every tenant has their own unique fob with a microchip key that unlocks their apartment door. If they want, they can have extra fobs made for their unit. To get into each unit, the renters have a second key. This one is a physical key, but it's a special kind of lock that apparently is unpickable. I know for a couple reasons, (a) because I googled it, and (b) because I thought I could work that into a new magic trick I was working on—but that did not go well. Now attorneys have told me to talk about everything I know related to Unit 322. On August 9th 2022, someone called me asking whether there were any units available in the building. I said, "there sure are! There's this one beautiful corner unit that I think would be perfect for you?" The person said that they could be there by 1pm. A few hours later at 1pm, someone buzzed the desk asking to be let in. I asked who it was, and they said their name was Memphis Raynes.

Memphis wasn't very talkative. He just walked around Unit 322 mumbling to himself about some gala. Honestly I didn't think he liked the unit, but after Memphis talked on the phone with who he said was his boss, Memphis handed me a wad of cash and said, "I'll take it." Signed the lease right then and there too. One thing that I thought was odd was that Memphis asked for 5 sets of keys to be made for the unit. I tried to make a joke about asking why so many people would need keys, and Memphis had a bit of a strong reaction. I was taken aback, but then Memphis softened a little bit and said, "Sorry. I just know that this place is known for its discretion. I can trust you to keep my trust, can't I?" I said "Of course!!" I wanted to be extra helpful and decided to do something out of the ordinary for them. I made each of the key fobs a different color: green, blue, purple, red, and gray. That way Memphis could keep track of which one was which.

I saw Memphis and the people with the green and gray key fobs almost everyday. They were always walking down the hall talking about some gala and halloween. I even heard them talking about a helicopter once?!

A few months went by and then I saw another person with the Blue key fob begin to come into Ivy Lane. I was decorating for Halloween and directed them towards Unit 322, since I knew the blue key fob belonged to that unit. They were shocked and said “I didn’t realize so many people were in on this. I just thought it was the four of us plus the boss.” I later learned, after watching the news, that this person was Poe Cameron.

In late September, I was at a coffee shop across from Ivy Lane, when I ran into Berkley de la Porta. I mean the Berkley de la Porta. The famous billionaire fortune 100 CEO of 3 major companies. I just had to introduce myself. You see I’m an inventor of sorts and I just had to pitch my latest invention to Berkley. They loved my idea so much that he gave me his personal email address. When they were leaving the coffee shop, I noticed something really weird though. I saw Berkley pull out what looked like the red key fob I gave Memphis and walk towards Ivy lane.

Then just a few weeks later, I saw Berkley again. Only this time I was in Ivy Lane. I immediately thought they were there because they loved the 157 emails I sent them detailing my invention and outlining what a great investment opportunity it is. I pulled them into my office to discuss, but I didn’t realize the time and had to go grab my kid from daycare. I apologized to Berkley and showed him to the elevator, which is when I saw him pull out that same red key fob again. This time I knew it had to belong to Unit 322.

Nothing else notable happened until Halloween night, which I now know was the night of the heist. Usually I’m busy throwing my family’s annual Halloween bash, but I had to deal with a noise complaint in Ivy Lane. Let’s just say I wasn’t too pleased given the nature of the Halloween costume I was wearing. The noise complaint was for the apartment right next to Unit 322, I was just about to leave when I heard some scuffling noises and decided to hide by the stairs. I saw 4 people exit the elevator, one of which looked like an extremely injured Memphis Raynes. I also recognized the voice of Poe Cameron. They all seemed really nervous and on edge. I didn’t know why they weren’t calling an ambulance. I was about to do so myself when I saw them pick up the phone, but it wasn’t 911 instead it was another voice that I was familiar with; Berkley de la Porta. Berkley was angry that the others called them and wasn’t even concerned that Memphis was injured. Instead the only thing Berkley asked was, “Did you get the packages?”

### **Questions for Shannon Shahid**

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. Why was Memphis Raynes in Ivy Lane?
3. How could you tell if someone lived in Unit 322?
4. Are you familiar with Poe Cameron?
5. How did you meet Berkley de la Porta?
6. How is Berkley de la Porta connected to Unit 322?
7. What happened the night of the Heist?

## Trying out as an attorney is OPTIONAL

### Attorney Tryout

- To be considered as an attorney, you will have to prepare a 2-3 minute speech.
  - Write an opening statement defending or prosecuting a character, real or fictional, in a case of your choosing. For example, you can prosecute or defend Christopher Columbus, Homer Simpson, or even Severus Snape.
  - Choose a crime and explain to us why they should or should not be found guilty. Create facts and witnesses as needed to build your argument.
  - Your choice of character, crime, or setting is only a backdrop to the presentation and argument of your case. Feel free to get creative and have some fun with it!
  - Your statement **must not exceed 3 minutes.**
- This statement is an opportunity to demonstrate your skills in argumentation, public speaking, and persuasion. The ideal statement is delivered with poise, passion, *and without notes*. That being said, we don't expect a trial-ready, award-winning opening statement or a spectacular knowledge of law and the legal system. This may appear intimidating, but don't worry: we've all been there before!
  - The best statements will demonstrate excellent public speaking skills, the ability to persuade using everyday language, and the ability to tell a compelling story.