

NCTC Juror Testimonials

Serving on the Teen Court Panel for the past three years has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my high school career. Through this program, I met a wide range of people, built strong connections, and gained lessons that have shaped the way I think and act. The perspective I have gained from Teen Court pushed me to approach situations with clarity and intention, and the variety of cases I encountered opened my eyes to the real consequences of certain choices. Because of this, I've become more cautious, thoughtful, and aware of the impact my decision can have. One of the most valuable things I learned was the importance of second chances. I loved being part of a system that allowed young people to clear their records and learn from their mistakes rather than be defined by them. Watching defendants complete their remedies and work to rebuild themselves taught me that growth is always possible when someone is willing to put in the effort. That idea of redemption and starting fresh has stayed with me. *DP 4/2026*

Teen Court has been an amazing opportunity for me. It's a great way to earn community service hours while genuinely making a difference in my community. Teen court has helped me grow as a leader and strengthen my ability to work as a team, both of which will continue to benefit me throughout life. It's helped me to step out of my comfort zone and become a more confident public speaker. *MT 4/2025*

I'm very grateful that I joined Teen Court because it has allowed me much personal growth. It teaches me valuable lessons of listening to others and trying to understand points of view other than my own. At the same time, I also get the satisfaction that I'm helping my peers, and our community become better. *HN 4/2025*

In my 4 years of participating in Teen Court, I met many new people, made new connections, and learned many valuable life lessons. I am truly happy that I took the chance to participate in Teen Court when I had the chance. Teen Court has allowed me to think more clearly and make thoughtful decisions throughout my high school career. I experienced many different cases, and it opened my eyes to the many dangers. I am now cautious and make sure that I am doing the right thing before acting. I also learned more about giving people second chances. I loved the aspect of giving kids a second chance to clear their record and to teach them a lesson. Through their given remedies I learned that if you put in the work, you can redeem yourself and start new. As I start my journey with college, I am able to take these new skills and put them to use. I will be able to have a stronger sense of community, service and leadership. *VP 4/2025*

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Prior to my Teen Court experience, I was unaware of the effect it would have on me and my future. It was an opportunity that has not only helped me acquire a deeper understanding of the justice system but also shaped my perspective in various ways. I have learned valuable insights into responsibility, leadership and good citizenship. I quickly learned how important empathy and fairness is in the judicial process. Every offender has a unique case that the jury listens to and deliberates on for an appropriate sentence. I have seen how essential programs like Teen Court are and how beneficial it is to offer an alternative to these vulnerable teens. I learned how to make decisions based on facts rather than bias. Working with others and respecting others' viewpoints. Teen Court reinforced my desire to become a positive role model in my community. The Teen Court instilled the essential skills like responsibility, empathy, and altruism that I now carry into my everyday life. *EF 4/2025*

Teen Court was one of the most transformative experiences of my high school career. I initially joined during my sophomore year after a teacher encouraged me to attend a presentation. What began as simple curiosity quickly turned into a deep passion for the legal system. Through Teen Court, I gained valuable insight into restorative justice, developed strong public speaking skills, and learned how to clearly articulate my thoughts and collaborate with others. The program taught me the importance of crafting fair, meaningful remedies that could foster positive change. These experiences not only supported my personal growth but also helped me discover a genuine interest in pursuing law.

The supportive community within Teen Court—from coordinators and mentors to fellow jurors—deepened my commitment to helping others through justice. Together, we worked through difficult cases and learned to lead with empathy and fairness. These lessons extended beyond Teen Court and continued to influence my actions and decisions. Now, as a student at Illinois College, I am double majoring in communications and political science with a pre-law minor. I frequently use the skills I gained from Teen Court in my academic work, leadership roles, and interactions with others. I'm proud to carry those foundational experiences with me as I work toward a future of service and advocacy. *EF 5/2024*