

President's Cup 2021 Finalists

Theresa Pollard
Lauren Kilbride



President's Cup Negotiation Competition 2021

On Monday 6th December, two finalists Theresa Pollard from Nottingham City Council and Lauren Kilbride from Rotheras competed in the President's Cup competition.

Both finalists share their experiences....

Theresa Pollard – 2021 Winner

Like so many of us, since March 2020 I have spent a lot of time WFH. I entered this competition for the first time just a couple of months after qualifying, thinking it would be good for me after an extended period of lockdown elasticated- waistband and slipper wearing.

We have also had steady encouragement from the head of our team for all those eligible to enter Nottinghamshire's Law Society competitions, so this year, I finally thought that encouragement deserved to be matched with some willing on my part. In case you missed it, that's a non-subtle nudge to all you senior colleagues to encourage your graduates, trainees and juniors to enter these competitions; your encouragement really does make all the difference to us.

As anyone who has completed their training contract will know, a significant proportion of your time is spent being confronted with 'new-to-you' situations. Writing the entry for the competition for me was similar, but was a really useful exercise in practising legal research in an unfamiliar area, as well as legal analysis and critical thinking. I found it very interesting but quite challenging; so was incredibly surprised to find out that I had received the final.

When it came to the actual negotiation on the day, I wasn't too sure what to expect from the situation, or from myself in it. I had a fair bit of trepidation about whether I could do the occasion ample justice. This sounds like the kind of thing that would be made up for me to put into this kind of piece, but, I kid you not - in the meeting room at work where I went to spend an afternoon of leave to prep for the negotiation, someone had anonymously written on the whiteboard '*You are excellent, you are strong – speak positively to yourself*'. I took this somewhat cheesy but valuable advice and settled down to try and write some decent notes for myself, after my typical brand of anxious 'distraction procrastination' (and a gentle nudge from my manager to get off Teams chat).



Trophy presentation with President Philip Turton & Theresa Pollard

Squeezed back into my now significantly more snug pre-lockdown work suit, the nerves on the day were real. However, the judges were extremely friendly and truly put us at our ease. The 45 minutes sounds long, but once you get started, it really flies by, especially when you realise how much you want to cover. My opponent Lauren was extremely well-prepared and came across like a consummate professional negotiator. As the judges told us, it was very tight and really could have gone either way on the day.

So, to anyone reading this who isn't sure if they have got what it takes, or if they are just generally struggling a little with their confidence at work; I say especially to you, just give it a go. I am truly living testament to the fact that you never know what could happen – you actually might even surprise yourself and win!

Theresa Pollard



Theresa Pollard
Nottingham City Council



The Negotiation



Lauren Kilbride
Rotheras

Lauren Kilbride – 2021 Finalist

My experience in the President's Cup 2021

The President's Cup is such a unique experience to enter and prepare for. Not many people come across negotiation in their studies at university, nor in practice. This competition is perfect for anybody wanting to experience and practice negotiation skills and to develop personal skills.

Not only did this competition allow me to practice negotiating, it also allowed me to build my confidence, develop my preparation skills and pushed me to think on my feet.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't nervous for the President's Cup Final but with the support of my firm and the Law Society Judging Panel, those nerves instantly faded when I walked into the room. The Final was arranged to be 50 minutes long to allow both myself and my opponent to come to a negotiation on the scenario we had planned for. At first, 50 minutes sounded like a long time to speak for, but once we had started the negotiation, the time flew by! I instantly forgot anyone else was in the room except for my opponent and myself and thoroughly enjoyed the whole negotiation process.

It was a privilege being in the President's Cup Final and I would recommend this competition to anyone to enter in 2022. The skills and confidence you gain from this experience is second to none. It may sound daunting to enter, but to take part is something to take away into future practice and will always remain a highlight of my first year as a trainee solicitor.

Finally, congratulations to my opponent, Theresa for winning the President's Cup 2021, it was a privilege to take part in the final with her and it was such an enjoyable experience!



President Philip Turton & Lauren Kilbride

The competition was judged by:

President - Philip Turton

Deputy Vice President - Stephen Luke

Education & Training Committee Chair - Helen Fanning

Education & Training Committee Member – Jane Ching

NJLD Academic Secretary – Sarah Murray

Nottinghamshire Law Society would like to thank Ropewalk Chambers for the use of their conference room and hospitality.

Theresa Pollard won the coveted trophy and cash prize of £250 and finalist Lauren Kilbride won the cash prize of £150.

The President's Cup is an annual competition, which is launched in October.



The Judging Panel

Stephen Luke - Philip Turton
Jane Ching – Helen Fanning – Sarah Murray