



THE OLIVE BRANCH

MODEL UNITED NATIONS NEWSLETTER



Inside this Edition:

Page 2: Student Spotlights

Page 3: O-MUN's new SG

Page 5: THIMUN Qatar

Announcements

• The **Qatar Leadership Conference** is taking place from 15-18 October 2015. Apply to be a QLC Presenter!

bit.ly/qlc2015

• If your delegation is planning on attending THIMUN Qatar 2016, make sure to register by September 17!

<http://bit.ly/TQ2016>

• Check out page 5 for the dates of 4 O-MUN debates for the month of September!

• DCMUN November 5-6

• PHESMUN November 21

• MISMUN December 4

Welcome Back!



By Lisa Martin, Head of THIMUN Qatar

The new year is upon us and the THIMUN Qatar office is happy to welcome everyone back to what will be a busy MUN season. The year starts with a burst of activity as we prepare for our first big event, the fourth annual Qatar Leadership Conference (QLC). This high profile event will be the biggest yet, with inspirational global leaders, innovative educators, and wonderful students all sharing their expertise and passion for issues related to MUN, film, leadership, entrepreneurship and humanitarian causes. What makes the QLC so special is the action-focused element of the conference. The goal is to walk away inspired, and to take action, large or small. Something interesting always emerges out of the QLC and this year will be no different. We continue our partnership with

Northwestern University Qatar who helps us bring this exciting event to Doha each year. On the heels of the QLC will be serious preparations for the fifth THIMUN Qatar conference, the largest MUN conference in the Middle East and one of the most prestigious in the world. This year's theme is Peacebuilding and Reconciliation. We are a little biased here at the TQ office, but each year sees an addition or improvement over the previous year's event. This year we will continue to run professional development for teachers, and host not only a delegation from Afghanistan, but also a national unity team from Sri Lanka's Eastern Province. Our press and online publications team is expanding, and we've added a new committee, GA 4, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee. This conference now experiences a waiting list, so if your school has not yet registered,



please ensure that this is done by September 17th. Our wonderful International Film Festival rounds out the year, occurring this year on March 24-26th, 2016. The deadline for film submissions will be February 10 and we anticipate a record number of student films ranging over a wide expanse of topics. This year's Film Festival coordinator, Maryam Al Khalifa, will be providing further updates in upcoming editions of the Olive Branch. The THIMUN Qatar office also oversees the award-winning THIMUN Online Model United Nation's program, publishes the monthly Olive Branch magazine, and supports the development of Model UN throughout the region. Jesse Atkins, the Regional conference Coordinator and myself look forward to working with you all over the course of the upcoming year. Here's to a year of great debates!

Student Spotlight!



AbdulRahman Al-Mana

Grade: Grade 12
Qatar Academy.

Current MUN Leadership Positions: QAMUN Club President

Three words that describe you as a delegate:
Compelling, Eloquent, Emphatic.

Favorite thing to do when you don't have homework: My main two would be that I kill time reading a lot of graphic novels and manga, as well as playing video games. Kind of expected and typical of a geek wearing dorky glasses, isn't it?

Dream vacation: I'd love

to see the whole world some day. But to me, nothing sounds better than walking down the pink cherry blossoms of Kyoto, Japan during spring time, breathing in the fresh air and taking in all of the overwhelming beauty or having the soles of my feet brushed by the sandy shores of Koh Tao, Thailand.

Personal MUN Goal for the year: Landing a chair position at THIMUN-Q 2016.

One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN: For MUN, my goal is to create an environment which encourages students to become great leaders and to be engaged in their own work and working with others. In QAMUN, I would like to see students actively expressing their enthusiasm and engagement to the program and becoming more active to raise the standards of work done.

scribe you as a delegate:
Sweet Talker (The Best Delegate quiz said so)

Favorite Comfort Food:
all types but specifically French fries

Favorite thing to do when you don't have homework:
Hanging out with my friends or playing sports at Skateistan or with my students, checking my social networks and googling about new things to know.

Personal MUN Goal for the year:



Hanna Moazam

Grade:

13, Mesaieed International School (Qatar)

Current MUN Leadership Positions:

Secretary General of MISMUN

Three words that describe you as a delegate:

Feisty, righteous, passionate

Favorite Comfort Food:

Chocolate

Pet Peeve:

Hypocrites

Personal MUN Goal for the year:

Make MISMUN 2015 a memorable conference

One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN:

Make it emulate the real United Nations more accurately, as well as increase its accessibility to students from all walks of life – be they basketball players, or students from less developed nations around the world.



Mursal Saidali

Grade: 102
Skateistan- Kabul, Afghanistan

Current MUN Leadership Positions:
Head of Curriculum, AF-MUN

Three words that de-

After joining MUN conference I met lots of people and I made lots of new friends. I am in contact with them but I saw that in other countries students do their own conferences in their countries. But unfortunately there wasn't any MUN conference in Afghanistan and people didn't know anything about it. So now me and our club members want to spread this in most of regions in Afghanistan and make AFMUN as wide as possible. My main thought is that I really want to see MUN developing in Afghanistan. And see that people are joining this conference

around the world in Afghanistan.

One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN:

Well... one major improvement in MUN that I want to see is that you must spread this word (MUN) in all countries as much as you can, especially in poor and backward countries. Because if you develop it in these countries it is empowering such countries and solving more problems and having a peaceful world... moving away from any kind of problems (terrorism, racism, poverty, illiteracy)

QLC Updates



By Razan Kalhout, QLC 2015 Secretary-General

The summer's coming to an end, and QLC (Qatar Leadership Conference) is quickly approaching. Last year at this time, I was feeling the pre-workshop jitters. This year, goosebumps are basically living on my skin!

The conference we've been preparing for you is special in a number of ways. Between October 15th and 17th of 2015, every student that participates at the QLC will have learnt at least one thing - they'll leave improved, even if by one mere piece of knowledge. That's our aim for the conference. Every year that I've participated at QLC, I've felt almost liberated; during those few days, every student gets a chance to think about how they alone can do something extraordinary. This feeling comes from being surrounded with students who are motivated, and presenters that are inspiring.

This year, our presenter line up is stronger than ever. You can choose to learn about being an ICJ witness with Erika Soublert, a graduate of Northwestern's School of Law, or you can attend a workshop with Yousef Ramzy and Ahmed

El-Agha, students at the American University of Cairo, and learn about Film Production on a low budget!

Our student presenters from Qatar have put together exciting workshops for you! With Anusha Khan and Hamza Asim, get to know the MUN basics with their workshop "Do you even MUN?", or if you aspire to become leader of your country one day and want to learn about leadership styles, we've got you covered with Yahya Kayyali's workshop "Laidback vs Strict"!

Are you excited yet? I know I am! I've come to love QLC; the conference is special in its own way. You don't get a chance like this everyday, if not the elite presenters, then just the chance to start bettering yourself and getting involved with the community. All the presenters we've chosen for you are skilled in their fields, but we value them because they've chosen to share their expertise and experiences with students and other members of their societies. Just a month left until we bring you the QLC. Keep checking in to the Olive Branch for any updates on the event, and to find out more about our awesome presenters!

THIMUN Qatar 2016 Updates

By Adeeba Ahmad, Secretary General of THIMUN Qatar 2016

Our summer holiday is coming to an end, and as students hurry to prepare for the upcoming school year, many also rush to prepare for their Model UN club at school.

Qatar is hosting several MUN events this year, from local conferences to the exciting Qatar Leadership Conference, there's plenty to keep MUNer's busy.

As directors prepare to welcome groups of young, bright-eyed delegates, the THIMUN Qatar executive team has also been working to prepare a conference worthy of the effort they put in.

For schools preparing to register and submit their delegate deposit for THIMUN Qatar 2016, the deadline for doing so is September 17th. This is also the deadline for student officers, both experienced and new, to submit their applications. This must be done in a timely fashion, as Student Officer Positions will be announced on the 24th. For more details regarding these deadlines, please click here.

As we all rush to complete our summer homework assignments (executive team included), the THIMUN Qatar office wishes everyone well on their assignments.

To our future participants, I wish you good luck on your applications!



Afghan Model UN Now Its Own NGO



Rahmatullah Hamdard is the new President and CEO of Afghanistan's first NGO devoted primarily to Model United Nations. Formed under the umbrella organization HELA (Hope for Education and Leadership in Afghanistan), this new organization will carry on the initiative started at the 2014 Qatar Leadership Conference. (For more information refer to Full Circle: The TQ Afghanistan Initiative).

After starting Afghanistan Model United Nation's project (AFMUN) with the Skateistan organization, I decided to do a big thing for Afghan youth: providing MUN international leadership programs with more students and also to spread this throughout Kabul and then maybe in the whole country. The only way of spreading it in high level was to register as a local Afghan NGO. The focus of the NGo would be to focus on Model UN, OMUN and the THIMUN Qatar Northwest-ern film festival. I wanted to start it with schools and organizations and also to get an office where other

students would be able to come. So I shared my idea with Miss Lisa (Head of THIMUN Qatar,) and she kindly and happily supported the idea and promised me to help me and my team in the registration process. The biggest challenge was to raise funds for registration and an office space. Our team started working hard on raising funds; they started of asking their friends whom they visited at the MUN Qatar conference. Fortunately and finally, we raised the much needed money to start the process.

The first and biggest problem in the registration process was that the government did not accept the name AFMUN, since no NGO can contain the words United Nations, so we were thinking to choose a name which must have the similarity to our projects. We decided on the name of HELA (Hope for Education and Leadership in Afghanistan). In Dari, this word also means hope, so we thought that was appropriate. One month later we finally got the license and now we are able to spread our project

throughout the country.

HELA has several major goals: to spread AFMUN (Afghanistan Model United Nation), OMUN (Online Model United Nation in Afghanistan) and also have our students make some films or short documentaries so then many youth will be able to choose their way or their future.

We are some of the first MUNers in Afghanistan

and want to improve this such a amazing leadership project in our country. We follow the THIMUN model, meaning that we are run to empower young Afghans to have a say in the world! We look forward to attending more international conference and supporting new leadership opportunities for students.



Community, People, and jrO-MUN



By Jessica Chen, Secretary General for jr-OMUN

2015-2016 will mark my fourth year anniversary with jrO-MUN, and there is not a program of which I am prouder. Over the past four years, jrO-MUN has grown from the initial debate platform for two international schools to the online community involving four schools and countless other independents it is today. It is not, however, the numbers and statistics of the program's outreach that tethers me to it. Instead, as I am sure you have heard before, it is the myriad of "little" moments during the operations of the program that anchors the heart of anyone who has worked in jrO-MUN to the community it stands for. As cliché as it may sound, yes, the value of any institution does not purely stem from its structure of staff. Rather it stems from the people who choose to associate with it. Here are three noteworthy moments in jrO-MUN in the past year and how they make the program the most inspiring of its kind:

1. Taipei American School delegates meeting American Embassy School of New Delhi delegates. The two schools' delegates have been

debating with each other for the past 2-3 years. This past 2-3 years. This past April, through the connections they established online, AES New Delhi delegates travelled to Taiwan to debate with TAS delegates face to face at TASMUN, junior level conference hosted by TAS. The networking they performed online only strengthened their relationship at the conference and made the event more unique for all the delegates and leadership team members involved.

2. jrO-MUN is reaching independent delegates in many regions of the world, including Colombia. This past summer debate, I was very intrigued by this particular delegate's accent. I assumed that he went to AES, seeing as the most dedicated summer delegates tended to be affiliated to a school regularly involved in jrO-MUN. I remembered thinking that this delegate must have a very diverse cultural background—a South American going to an American school in India. When I asked for comments and feedback from the delegates at the end of the night, as per routine, he immediately raised his placard and

(continued on page 11)

Meet OMUN's New Secretary General Wesley Chen

By OMUN Staff Writers

OMUN is lucky to have at its helm for 2015-16 Wesley Chen, a senior at Pacific American School in Taiwan. Wesley joined OMUN over two years ago, and quickly became a pivotal member of the leadership team.

Wesley has shown dedication to the program and its mission and vision statement through his consistent participation. He has served as the Deputy Secretary General for the all-important Global Debates component of the program, and last year was DSG for Special Conferences/Security Council Debates. One of the most important tasks he undertook was to organize the online demo debates for THIMUN Qatar and The Hague in 2014—no meagre task and one that took many hours of work. So successful was this that an international "Wesley Appreciation Day" was held on March 13, 2014. In addition to spamming his Facebook page with thanks from OMUN members from around the world, he even had a small party hosted for him!

We caught up with Wesley and asked him a few questions about his activities in MUN, his views on OMUN, and his idea of a dream vacation!

Three words that describe you as a delegate: Diplomatic, Knowledgeable, and Experienced.

Favorite thing to do when you don't have homework: Read News or Sleep

Dream vacation: Relaxing on a Mediterranean Beach

Personal MUN Goal for the year: I wish to bring THIMUN O-MUN to new heights



One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN: More speaking time for delegates

Describe a little bit about your history with OMUN: I joined OMUN around March of 2013 during my freshmen year. Since, then I had the honour of serving as the DSG of Global Debates (2013-2014), then the DSG of SC (2014-2015), and now the Secretary General of THIMUN OMUN. Biggest contribution that OMUN has made to MUN? I believe the biggest contribution that OMUN has made to MUN is that, OMUN made MUN more accessible to people around the world. Furthermore, OMUN has offered students the opportunity to attend prestigious conferences such as THIMUN the Hague and THIMUN Qatar, where there are many schools are lining up just to attend.

First MUN Launched in Timor-Leste

When a new conference starts in a place where MUN programs are few or non-existent, it gives us extra pleasure to be able to share their story. Ariel Mota Alves, one of the co-founders of DMUN, originally heard of MUN through OMUN. Two years later and inspired by the MUN learned at UWC Adriatic, Timor-Leste saw its first ever MUN conference. Here is the story!

Two years ago, we got an invitation from a student from UWC South East Asia in Singapore to attend in something called "Online Model United Nations (O-MUN)". We were completely 'blanked' about what MUN was. We tried our best to connect to the internet and follow the instructions from one of the O-MUN personnel. As it turned out it did not work very well for us, as it was hard to understand and because internet was extremely poor and expensive at that time.

A year later I got a scholarship to study at the United World College (UWC) affiliation in Italy (UWC

Adriatic). I joined the MUN club then, as my creative activity of the college. One night, in a random conversation with one of my best colleague in Dili, Rose, we decided to come with this idea to organise the first ever Model UN conference in our country, Dili Model UN.

Two days later, I sent a proposal asking for grant from the United States Embassy in Dili. They positively responded that they would like to help us. I swear it was all started from very very scratch and we almost gave up in the beginning. The preparation was absolutely short and most of the people doubted this would happen. But it did in the end. We had three training sessions with delegates, distributing study guides, helping them write positions papers, and on 17th-19th July, we had our very first Dili Model UN in the country, brought to Dili by Timor-Leste Youth for Peace (TLYfP) in collaboration with Timorese students at the United World Colleges around the world.

Our theme for this



pioneer Model UN conference in Dili was "Creating a sustainable peaceful society, through alliance of civilizations and international cooperation in sectors of security, justice and equality. We had five committees: UN Security council, UN Woman, UN Human Rights council, UN Development Program and UN Environment Program.

Some of the most important people in the country were presented for the opening speech such as Mr. Ramos Horta, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate from Timor-Leste as well as UN Representative to Timor-Leste. We were blown away when 79 participants arrived for the event! The participants

were well-prepared and and fully engaged in discussions, representing countries to the UN and regardless from their opinions, and learn how to write resolutions. We closed the conference with a General-Assembly on Sustainable development and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A Look Inside MUN Press Teams



By Ralf Yap, Doha College

Most students have experienced MUN as a delegate. Many participants opt to be delegates for their first conference, and all the chairs and executives were once delegates too. I was a delegate when I first started MUN, and although the position was interesting and educational, I felt that it wasn't a position I would do well in. Being a delegate might not be for everyone, and that's fine. The great thing about MUN is that it offers so many different opportunities in different areas for students to excel in. One such area is journalism. Each MUN organisation produces a magazine for every conference, and behind each issue is a press team that documents the events and the people involved in the conference. Not everyone gets a chance, or chooses, to be a part of this group of writers, photographers, and layout artists, so I thought it would be interesting to take a look at the inner workings of the Doha College MUN press team, and see what a typical conference day is like for these journalists.

The fifth annual One Day Training Conference (ODTC) was hosted by Doha College and held on March

20, 2015. But preparation for this conference extended weeks before the actual conference date. For the members of the press, many of whom were new to either the team, MUN, or both, this involved getting to grips with the conference and the issues being debated, as well as being assigned roles and establishing a system of communication within the team.

Once that was sorted, it was time to work on the Pre-Conference issue. Every conference is preceded by a Pre-Conference issue that is uploaded to the DCMUN website and made available to download. This year, it featured an interview with the new President of DCMUN, Thushan Puhaleendran, and the new Secretary General, Michael Young.

On the day of the conference, the press team were instructed to meet at 7 AM, an hour before the conference was scheduled to begin, in order to set everything up and get ready for the day's events. Just like each committee is assigned to a classroom that acts as a debate hall, the press team is assigned a room that serves as a workplace, a hive of creativity where the team can produce works of the

highest quality that represent the school and the conference. The IT room available to the DCMUN press team, the "home base," if you will, has a line of computers on its perimeter and plenty of desks for the team to work on.

During lobbying and debating hours, starting from 8 AM, the writers and photographers were free to perambulate the school and their assigned committee rooms and observe the goings-on around the conference. Breaks in between debates presented opportunities for writers to conduct interviews and interact with the delegates and chairs, and start forming the basis of their articles. So for the first hour or so into the conference, the press room was largely void of people, save for a couple of members coming in to grab a snack (journalism really stirs up one's appetite). Things were, for the most part, quite relaxed.

It was in the final hours of the conference when things started to get a little more hectic. The team had only 2 hours to get everything finished. That meant completing 600-word articles and having them edited, uploading over 100 photos to Google Drive, and

laying out all the articles and photos in magazine format ready for printing by noon. There was a lot to get through. The light clacking of keyboards filled the room as writers typed out their pieces. Photographers sifted through their photos to select ones to be used in the issue and layout artists prepared for the wave of articles and images that would soon come flooding their way.

There's something about the mess of charging cables and the frantic mood that gives the press room a real buzz. The rush to have everything done by a certain time is all part of the experience. It creates pressure which pushes the team to deliver the best they can. Although the work can be taxing at times, especially with a deadline constantly looming over my head, it's what I like about being a member of the press team. Being a member of the press allows aspiring writers, photographers, and layout artists the opportunity to experience what working for a real publication is like - an experience that is extremely rewarding.

New Student Spotlight

In this monthly column we will feature a student new to MUN and only just beginning their journey into the MUN community. We would like to introduce Farzen, from Kabul, Afghanistan, one of the original AFMUN club members.

Farzen is 16 years old and has one brother and two sisters. Her father is an engineer. She hopes to become a teacher. In her free time Farzen loves to skateboard, and read the Holy Quran and story-books. She hopes to visit Saudi Arabia and France someday.

Farzen, in her own words:

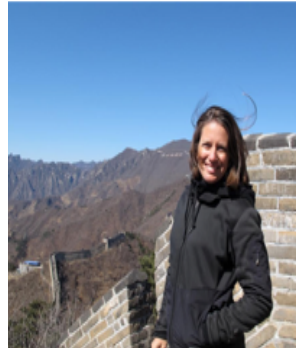
One of the most important learning activities of MUN is improving our English language, which is really helpful in our daily life. Writing resolutions for the problems that we have in our country is another reason. The most important reason for doing MUN is that our learning activities of being able to solve problems is getting better and better.

Through MUN projects we can develop Afghanistan and we can create future leaders. MUN can help high school students to show their talent and have participation on helping countries with their problems. For Afghanistan the most important thing about MUN is that it can change the lives of youths and accomplish their dreams.

On the Future: The current situation in educated attention. I want to be a teacher in the future so that I can train others to be like me, as I wanted to be like my teachers as they are right now.



Director Spotlight: Kari Detwiler Beck



Name: Kari Detwiler Beck

School: American School of Doha

Number of Years Being an MUN Director: 4

Idea of a dream vacation: A beach, a book and my baby girl and husband nearby!

Biggest pet peeve: Unmotivated and uninspired students. Find something that inspires and motivates you!

Animal Lover? Yes, dogs. Not a big fan of cats - too much hair, attitude and odor.

Biggest challenge teaching and being an MUN Director: Not being able to give as much as I would like to MUN! I find that most of my "MUN time" is spent orchestrating logistics for conference prep and not diving into the nitty gritty fun stuff that actually matters (like preparing students with appropriate skills and debating/discussing the content). I wish I had more time for that.

Three things you wish parents understood about MUN:

(1) What you say and do,

matters. Your ideas/solutions/schemes/plans have value and are in most cases, more daring and outside the box of traditional UN matters.

(2) Your experience now will shape the person you will become. My experience participating in MUN in high school directly led to my decision to study government in college, obtain a masters in international relations and work at the UN and with a humanitarian organization, the International Rescue Committee. Let these experiences shape you and help you figure out what you love.

(3) MUN encompasses all the critical skills a well rounded student should have - strong public speaking; diplomacy, poise and tact; strong content knowledge; ability to strategize, think creatively and apply what you know from inside the classroom to a setting beyond your school.

Most memorable MUN moment: My senior year, giving the opening speech at the THIMUN General Assembly in The Hague, while representing the Arab League...while coming from an international high school in Israel.

Open Forum: I am excited to teach a new course this year at ASD called Global Politics (modeled after the IB Global Politics), which has so much potential to extend beyond classroom walls and into the work and learning we do in MUN.

OMUN a winner at the World Summit Youth Awards



Alia ElKattan is the Executive Administrative Officer for OMUN in Egypt, Secretary General of the OMUN Arabic program, and an important member of OMUN's student leadership team. She recently travelled to Sao Paulo to accept a Youth Award on behalf of THIMUN Online Model United Nations.

On June 15th, 2015, I found myself in the beautiful Sao Paulo, ready to represent Online Model United Nations at the World Summit Youth Awards' Winners' Festival. (WSYA awards youth under 30 who are creating positive change and working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through ICT.) Over a year earlier, Zohaib Ahmed had posted on the OMUN Leadership Team's Facebook Group suggesting that we apply for the award. As O-MUN's platform is the Internet, several people agreed that it would be a great idea, and I volunteered to help with the application, with no idea what that would mean a year later. While we were working on the application, I found out that the winners get to present their project at the WSYA festival in Brazil! It seemed like such a great opportunity, but I decided not to get my hopes up because well, it was a bit too farfetched. Months later, we received

a message from Ms. Lisa Martin, O-MUN founder and THIMUN director, that said "WE WON!!!!!"

It was surreal, and I felt unbelievably proud and happy. The work and dedication that Ms. Lisa Martin and many students from all around the world have been putting into O-MUN was finally going to be awarded! Simply put, attending WSYA was the best experience of my life. Unfortunately, Zohaib could not make it, as he was at an internship in Shanghai at the time, a great opportunity that Zohaib totally deserved.

The three days of the festival included the Winners' presentations, inspiring and accomplished speakers, beneficial workshops, many "fruitful" discussions, and lots of friendships being made. As the youngest attendee, I came out with lots of new knowledge, ideas,

inspiration, and motivation. (Also, the best birthday celebration ever!)

The greatest part of the World Summit Youth Awards had been the people: a diverse group of inspiring change makers and social entrepreneurs from literally all around the world, each with a valuable experience to share. Whether it was the winners, the jury, or the organizers, every attendee of the event whom I met added a lot to the experience. Of course, I cannot fail to mention my dear mother who accompanied me to Sao Paulo as the best travel partner and friend I could wish for.

Many people were not familiar with MUN, online or offline. Attending the festival gave me the chance to share with a great audience what OMUN is and how it has been benefitting us in so many ways. Representing

an organization I truly admire and am proud to be a part of in Brazil was a great honour, and attending the festival was an unforgettable experience.

I would like to thank the entire OMUN community, because the dedication of each delegate is what got us the award. Of course, I must thank Ms. Lisa Martin for her continuous dedication and support (and for founding OMUN, obviously), and the person who introduced me to the MUN world and supported me along the way, Hayah's MUN Director Mr. Karim Eldib. Finally, to the organizers of the festival and all the great people and friends that I met in Sao Paulo at WSYA, thanks for the great memories, and I hope you keep changing the world!



PiMUN: Sharing Computers So We Can Change Lives

*By Madison Swanson,
John Burroughs School,
Missouri, USA*

As our world becomes ever increasingly global, society is adapting to fit the new international landscape we live in. Technology plays a huge role in linking the world together, and from it we have new opportunities that didn't exist twenty years ago. One of the tools that has helped so many of us get connected to the global community, and utilizes technology to do it, is Model UN. MUN helps kids learn about what is going on in the world and work towards attainable solutions for the problems that are demanding attention. Through MUN, we are learning how to be the leaders that the world will soon need.

At THIMUN, many of the delegates are coming from different countries around the world, and it helps us expand our global view. I, for example, traveled from St. Louis, Missouri in the United States all the way to Doha for THIMUN Qatar 2015. While there, I met students from Doha, of course, but also the U.A.E., Australia, England, and many more countries

and regions of the world. We got to spend a lot of time with the students of the Afghanistan Initiative, who had traveled from Kabul. They were among the first students from Afghanistan to participate in MUN, and the delegation from my school was lucky enough to spend a day with them in Doha before the conference began. We started at the Islamic art museum with stiff interactions because we were unsure what to say to each other, being that there was half a world's difference between us. However, the night ended with us all on the rooftop of a Dhow boat cruising through the Arabian Gulf, enjoying each others company, sharing a mix of our favorite music. There may have even been some dancing! The THIMUN experience helped us break down our borders and expand our horizons. We were able to take off the blinders and realize that, no matter where you grew up, we're all so similar. THIMUN helped us build bonds that will not easily break.

A few weeks removed from the trip, I struck up a correspondence with one of the Afghan



boys, Rahmat. After THIMUN, he returned home to Kabul and started Afghanistan's first model UN club. His club attracted twenty two students, but, unfortunately, only one computer. Rahmat was attempting to teach twenty two kids MUN and have them research, formulate, and type resolutions on one single laptop. I was amazed, and knew that there had to be something I could do. So, I sat down with my MUN director, Mr. Andrew Newman, and we created Plug into Model UN, or PiMUN. PiMUN's goal is to collect unused computers four years old or less, wipe their memories, and distribute them to students in developing countries across the globe so they, too, can have access to the lessons taught by MUN and the global network of students it attaches them to. We are col-

lecting computers from individuals, schools, and businesses, and have already accumulated around ten since our start last April. Our next step is to bring PiMUN to the global arena so that we can really begin helping students.

What PiMUN needs is simple: it needs driven students who want to put in a little work for a great cause. If PiMUN clubs are augmented to schools all around the world that collect even just a few laptops a year, the output would be tremendous. We could give laptops to hundreds of students and introduce them to MUN, which has the potential to change lives. It's as simple as getting a few students involved, getting the word out, and stirring up donations in your school and community. Then, you can watch as you change lives.

Best Delegate students visit UN during Model UN Institute

By Erik Leiden

This summer, the Model United Nations Institute (MUNI) hosted students from around the world at the inaugural MUNI UN Studies program at Columbia University. Students also participated in the first ever United Nations for Model United Nations (UN4MUN) procedure conference to be held on U.S. soil. UN4MUN is a Model UN framework designed by the UN Department of Public Information (UN-DPI) focused on accurately simulating the United Nations through equality of Member States and

holding consensus on resolutions as a goal for international cooperation.

During the program, MUNI students also took a field trip out to UN Plaza and the United Nations Headquarters to meet with some of the big players in the United Nations and Model U.N. community. First, MUNI students visited the offices of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA). Frances Lee, the Model UN Fellow at WFUNA, briefed students on their work with the United Nations across policy areas, especially Youth Empowerment. Through the WFUNA International Model United Nations Conferen-



ce (WIMUN), WFUNA partners with Best Delegate and UN-DPI to deliver the largest UN4MUN conference in the world, and will be hosting WIMUN this year at the UN Headquarters from November 10-14.

Following their briefing with WFUNA, students went into the United Nations Headquarters for another briefing, as well as to check out the exhibits and sites at the UN. At the UN students met with Bill Yotive, the Director of the Global Teaching and

Learning Project in the UN Department of Public Information, and a member of the U.N. Secretariat. Mr. Yotive spoke to students about the work of the United Nations, their growing role with Model U.N., and how students can get involved with the U.N. as volunteers or even someday as members of the Secretariat.

Thank you to UN-DPI, WFUNA, and the United Nations Group Programmes Unit for hosting us!

continued from page 5, "jrO-MUN"

eagerly announced that he was so glad that he had the opportunity to debate here. He went on to elaborate that he is residing in Colombia and jrO-MUN means a lot to him because it allows him to practice his English. I cannot put into exact words the satisfaction, passion and warmth I felt when I heard him say that.

3. Delegates' improvement throughout the years. jrO-MUN is the only MUN "conference" in which one may track a delegate's

progress. It is evident in their resolutions and speeches that they have all improved their debate skills over the years. Whether or not this progress can be attributed to jrO-MUN, we cannot say. It is simply incredible to witness and be part of these delegates' process of self-improvement.

This year, we look forward to building a sustainable structure under which jrO-MUN will thrive and broadening the program to include more amazing individuals in this community. Please watch out for the subsequent series of



jrO-MUN delegate articles in the next editions of the Olive Branch!

To join the jrO-MUN family, simply go to www.onlinemodelunitednations.org/jro-mun-debate and fill out the registration form and one of the leaders of the program will contact you!



**JoMUN XIII
CONFERENCE**
17 - 20 Sept 2015



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