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West Word Web Exclusives



Model United Nations competes in international debate conference

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News and Wire Editor

Members of the Niles West Model United Nations (MUN) club participated in the sixth annual Chicago International Model UN conference (CIMUN) held at the Holiday Inn Merchandise Mart in Chicago, Dec. 10-13.

According to sponsor Matt Wiemer, "MUN is a club in which we are assigned a country by the conference and do a mock simulation of committees of the actual United Nations".

In addition to participating in debates over global issues, students are required to write position papers to identify their countries' stances on the topics.

At CIMUN, West's students represented the countries of Peru, Sweden and Singapore. Additionally, one student was part of the Russian delegation, and another was a member of the Iranian Cabinet.

Senior club member Danya Snowsky feels that MUN is important because it "provides [students] with a good opportunity to learn about the world, other countries and ongoing conflicts".

Senior Fatima Elahi agrees.

"The average student today is not aware of or very concerned about current affairs, and does not notice the world outside of the U.S or even their school. MUN gives you the chance to learn about politics and the different conflicts around the globe," Elahi said.

According to Snowsky, CIMUN was different from other conferences in that "it was more interactive and realistic."

This is the first time in five years that West's MUN participated in CIMUN. Although MUN regularly attends two conferences a year—the Model United Nations of the University of Chicago (MUNUC) and the Northwestern University Model United Nations (NUMUN)—Wiemer has worked toward participating in an additional conference.

"The reason we went to three conferences this year, is because we have a lot of interestingly motivated seniors," Wiemer said.

Elahi believes that MUN conferences can leave important impacts on the lives of students.

"Even though we are not signing real resolutions, it shows that we, as different people, can come to compromises and join together in alliances."

Elahi also commented on how the conferences are great experience for those students who wish to pursue careers in politics.

"We always talk about how the youth is going to be tomorrow's presidents and senators, and this gives us a chance to prepare for that," Elahi said.

According to its members, MUN is both an intellectual and enjoyable club.

"Conferences are so much fun, and you get to meet interesting people from all around the world," Sknosky said.

Snowsky believes that club members can improve "by being more competitive so that we can compete up to the levels of schools like Francis Parker or St. Ignatius."

According to Weimer, the club's goal is for "students to learn about current events and have the experience of debating over them."

Elahi agrees.

"I think our goal as a club is to learn and have fun at the same time."

Currently, the club is searching for new members.

"Because there are a lot of seniors this year, I know there will not be many club members next year, so I hope more underclassmen join," Snowsky said.

In February, members of MUN will also participate in the MUNIC conference. Additionally, they will attend the NUMUN conference in April. MUN meets after school every Wednesday in room 3115.



Delegates at CIMUN vote on proposed resolutions.
Photo courtesy Allie Guiang