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*University of New Hampshire*

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Center for International Education

Fall 2009

## MODEL UN GROUP RECOGNIZED AT ANNUAL NEW YORK EVENT

by **Jacob Sneed** '12

*Jacob Sneed is a dual major in international affairs and political science from Exeter, NH.*



*Members of the Palestine delegation, which received "honorable mention" are l to r: Cameron Snow, David Malek, Sasa Tang, Trevor Mauck, Mike Cole.*

The Model United Nations conference takes place annually in New York City and is the largest of the many Model UN

events in the world, with over 4,000 delegates from five continents participating. Each delegation is assigned a country whose position they represent on a number of committees, addressing international issues such as nuclear non proliferation, trafficking of nuclear material, implementing technology and science in educational and social development, regional solutions to regional conflicts within Arab nations, external trade and micro-financial assistance to developing countries, and the role of trade agreements in the international trading system.

This year's UNH delegation, comprising 15 students from an array of majors, represented Andorra and

Palestine. Students prepared by writing position papers on their assigned topics and by gathering background information to give a proper portrayal of their country's position. Once at the conference, students worked with their committees to formulate resolutions. It is an exercise in diplomacy, cooperation, compromise and ingenuity, as students labor tirelessly to create solutions for today's problems. It is an incredible opportunity and, as UNH student Sarah Cattin noted, "truly demonstrates how difficult it is for so many countries to agree on an issue and work together."

On the bus down to New York, I was unsure of what the conference held in store. We began our formal sessions the night we arrived, and it was like nothing I had ever been a part of before. Unsure about the parliamentary meeting regulations and surprised by how serious participants were, I was at first hesitant but, after the initial shock, I became more engaged and the process began to enthrall me. It is difficult to describe the conference atmosphere. There is a level of seriousness to the tone, as students from around the world give speeches on significant topics. Once you conquer your initial nervousness, you learn so much, not only about the issues addressed and the way the UN works, but also about international perspectives. Sasa Tang, a sophomore majoring

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in international affairs and political science, described it as “a study abroad trip in the States.”

Throughout the week UNH students strived to create resolution papers that represented the interests of Andorra and Palestine, then caucused and gave speeches to gain support for their resolutions. The UNH team did a remarkable job representing and voicing the positions of these small nations, and for their efforts the Palestinian delegation was awarded “honorable mention” at the closing ceremonies.

The benefits of the trip to New York went beyond the conference. The UNH delegation was able to meet with a deputy ambassador from Andorra who explained the intricacies of representing such a small country at the United Nations. He also helped the students prepare by explaining some of the issues

important to Andorra. Along with this meeting, students were also able to attend ceremonies inside the UN building; it was quite a powerful experience to be inside the General Assembly Hall looking at the podium where so much history has been created. Speeches were given by Ambassador B. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Sir John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General, on the significance of the Model UN and the importance of learning to interact with people from around the world at a young age. The perspective gained from being involved with this international program will set the tone for my future, and I am sure the other UNH students feel the same way.



*Front Row: Sasa Tang, Jeanna Diorio, Sarah Cattin, Jenny McCardle, Diana Chiang. Back Row: Liz Marcotte, Jake Sneedeen, Justin Troiano, George O’Keefe, Mike Cole, Cameron Snow, David Malek, Mimi White (not pictured is Trevor Mauck).*

### ***INTERESTED STUDENTS***

*Students who are interested in participating in UNH Model United Nations activities in the coming year should contact Professor Alynna Lyon at [alynna.lyon@unh.edu](mailto:alynna.lyon@unh.edu).*

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