

Rotary Model United Nations Program



Developing the Leaders of Tomorrow Today

2011 Rotary District 5340 Pathways to Peace Model United Nations Conference

The seventh annual Rotary District 5340 Model United Nations Conference will take place on the weekend of May 14th, 15th at Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice, University Of San Diego, and the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mission Valley. The Model United Nations is a reproduction of the United Nations General Assembly. A number of nations that have representation in the UN are each represented by a delegation of two students. These students are selected, sponsored supported and advised by participating Rotary Clubs in District 5340. The advisor attends the Conference and may be a Rotarian, a teacher, or other interested member of the community.

Prior to the Model UN Conference, three resolutions are distributed to the participants. The resolutions closely relate to issues before the current General Assembly of the United Nations. The students are given training in conflict resolution, critical and analytical thinking, and presentation skills. They are exposed to many sources for research and review the actual workings of the United Nations. They are asked to familiarize themselves with the culture, attitudes and policies of the country that they represent, the region it is situated, and must deal with the resolutions as a representative of that country, not as a high school student residing in San Diego.

During the two day Conference they present prepared and spontaneous speeches to the General Assembly and break into smaller groups to present amendments to the resolutions. Ultimately they debate the amendments and vote on them and the entire resolutions. They will also be challenged to spontaneously deal with a hypothetical world crisis.

There are many benefits for the students involved in this program. They will become exposed to and engaged in major world issues, while meeting and working alongside their peers from different socio-economic groups, cultures and backgrounds. They will strengthen their leadership qualities while applying their studies in such areas as history, geography, and science to a practical situation. Most importantly they will become peace builders and future leaders.

Students participating in the program will learn about many different nations and about the dynamics of international affairs. In addition to learning about the cultures and policies of the countries that they represent, students also learn about the world as a whole. They learn the details of important global issues, the policies of many countries toward these issues, the activities of the United Nations, and develop a better understanding of world affairs.

The experience forces the student to re-examine prejudices, beliefs, and stereotypes about other cultures. The student accomplishes this by having to uphold the foreign policy of a country alien to him or herself, even when the country's policies are in conflict with the student's own feelings. In today's global economy, there is a major advantage to a person whose understanding is not limited to just their own society.

Our Conference is based on a program that the Rotary Club of Winnipeg, Canada has been successfully sponsoring for over 50 years. San Diego presents different challenges and opportunities than does the Winnipeg catchment area. Here we are emphasizing representation from a diverse spectrum of ethnic and socio-economic groups. We are indebted to the Winnipeg Rotary Club for their encouragement and continued assistance with our program.