

Hudson students learn valuable skills through Model UN

by junior Caleb McCullough

Should we have military action in space? Should we recognize Palestine as an independent nation? How should cryptocurrency be regulated? While most people don't ponder such questions, Hudson's Model UN students are trying to figure out the answers.

Model UN sits hidden among the 52 clubs offered at Hudson. Led by high school social studies teacher Paul Simmer, it has 23 members this year that participated in two conferences throughout the year.

Model UN is designed to simulate the workings of the United Nations (UN). Students take the role of UN delegates and are presented with real-life political issues. Through the course of a two-day conference, students from 20+ Iowa schools are split into committees, each school representing a different real-world country. These committees debate issues, propose different solutions, and come to an agreement as if they were the UN.

With all the responsibilities and involvements that Hudson students have already, many wonder why people participate in this club.

Sophomore Abi Henderson got interested in Model UN because her brother, 2014 graduate Ben Henderson, was involved in it. When she looked into it further, she thought it would be a good opportunity to build her knowledge of politics and history. Henderson enjoys talking and learning about history in Model UN. She was proactive prior to the spring conference this year, researching her topic (education in a child's first language) and going to the conference prepared to give input. "It's fun to meet new people who also want to learn about history and politics," said Henderson.

Senior Maddie Hartleip has been part of Model UN since her sophomore year. She was inspired to join when Simmer came to her table at lunch and told her and her friends about it. Interested because it was something different from her musical activities, she joined.

Hartleip enjoyed the fact that she was able to think critically about real-world issues. Hartleip also hopes that it will be beneficial as she moves on into college.

"You have to pick and defend a position, and that obviously helps with college classes and in life," said Hartleip.

The team attended the spring conference at UNI on April 6 and 7. At the conference, students were involved in various committees on different topics, ranging from nuclear disarmament, militarization of space, and more. Students from Hudson had the opportunity to represent South Korea and Israel in these committees.

Along with other students representing other countries, these students drafted resolutions that attempted to find solutions to these real-world problems.



photos by junior Katelyn Pint and high school social studies teacher Paul Simmer

Freshmen Alexis Schares and Ellie Brown along with sophomores Mikaela Meyer and Abi Henderson prepare for their committee meetings. Juniors Wyatt Kelly and Dawson Ellingson, sophomore Jacob Kuhn and freshman Naomi Henderson collaborate during the opening ceremony. Junior Abby Lashbrook, Junior Caleb McCullough, freshman Ellie Brown, junior Dawson Ellingson, junior Madie Widner, junior Wyatt Kelly, junior Grace Jorgensen, sophomore Jacob Kuhn, freshman Naomi Henderson, sophomore Abi Henderson, sophomore Mikaela Meyer, junior Katelyn Pint, freshman Alexis Schares, and freshman Jenna Twait represent South Korea and Israel in the 2017 Model UN spring conference at UNI.

Q&A:

Hudson High School superintendent Dr. Anthony Voss was one of four people appointed by governor Terry Branstad to the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners. This is a group that meets once a month, beginning in May 2017, for a four year term.

Q. What is the Board of Educational Examiners?

A. The Board of Educational Examiners is similar to a school board. Its main responsibility is to oversee license requirements for teachers and to administer in the state of Iowa. Teachers and administrators all have to have licenses and we (the board) oversee it. The board puts rules in place for what it takes to be a teacher or administrator. The board then works with colleges and determines what teachers need to know and/or do. Part of it, and probably the biggest part, is handling ethical violations. For example, if a teacher or administrator does something they shouldn't do, then there are certain things that have to be reported to the ethics board. The ethics board will then do an investigation and the board will decide what needs to happen. Often times it is either a revoked or suspended license or something placed in their file.

Q. How did you get this position?

A. About two months ago, I got a phone call from the executive director from the Educational Board of Examiners, and she asked me if I would want to be nominated. After I agreed, she said she would forward my name on. She didn't know exactly what happened from there. A few weeks ago, someone in the governor's office called and said the governor was going to appoint me to the board, but in order for that to happen I had to fill out an application and the state senate had to be notified. I then got an official letter from governor. At the moment it is pending senate confirmation. The senate just has to confirm it because the governor has already appointed me. Since then, I have been getting phone calls from different senators asking a variety questions.

Q. What does this mean for your current job at Hudson?

A. Nothing will change as far as my job at Hudson goes. I think it will enhance my job here at Hudson. I will have more of an opportunity to learn about statewide policy making and how it impacts local school districts because it decides the requirements for the teachers to teach what class. It will give me a perspective and the rest of the board a perspective. It will help the rest of the board and seeing how it will impact other small schools.