

Members of Mr. Ruppert's Design and Innovation Elective, Future Solutions-Debating World Issues, recently spent an incredible two days at the San Diego Regional Junior United Nations Conference. The Conference offers the chance for students from around the county to meet, tackle real world problems, and debate over possible solutions. The students picked committees focused on topics ranging from social issues, weapons and disarmament, infrastructure and development, and environmental issues. This is our fifth year of involvement with JMUN and we have increased from 3 to 15 students participating.

Each student represents a country and within each committee, participants discuss various proposals, debate their merits, give speeches, build coalitions with other delegates, and craft amendments to strengthen and improve the proposals. Perhaps the most impressive aspect is that the conference is organized and entirely run by high school students!

The First Committee included Alex Severinhaus and Collin Schneider and addressed cybersecurity, piracy and nuclear disarmament, including Collin's resolution "Encouraging the Cooperation of Non-nuclear States in Global Nonproliferation Effort." (see it [here](#)) In the end, Collin's resolution passed unanimously and his Crisis Resolution was also selected and approved.

Morgan Link participated in the Economic and Social Council which looked into world-wide sustainable development, working conditions, and religious intolerance. She was selected to receive a Commendation from her committee.

The Fourth Committee, including Bhadra Rupesh, Kai Goodsell, and Kaitlyn Podlich considered ways to support religious and ethnic minority groups, landmine removal in war-torn areas, and how to handle territory and jurisdiction in space.

In the United Nations Environment Programme, Isabel Lehmann, Kelly Bordine, and Mehar Thaper tackled renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and light pollution.

WHO? David Samy and Arjun Chatha, that's WHO (World Health Organization). These two delegates discussed and debated the best way to treat healthcare in refugee camps, improve water sanitation in developing countries in Africa and Southeast Asia, and mental illness among young and old. The Crisis Resolution that David and Arjun helped craft was selected and approved.

The Development Programme is perhaps one of the more challenging committees in that it looks at massive infrastructure issues in impoverished areas. Topics discussed by Lakshmi Menon, Jack Zdanowski, and Scarlett Streitman included sustainable energy and drinking water, improving refugee camp conditions, and gender inequality. Both Crisis Resolutions worked on by Lakshmi, Jack and Scarlett, were selected and passed.

Each year, the conference is dramatically interrupted by an international crisis which must be addressed. This year's crisis began with a bombshell report from U.S. news sources uncovering the extent of Russia's tampering in numerous elections worldwide. Tensions between Russia and Turkey quickly intensified and North Korea and Saudi Arabia question the veracity of the report. Soon, the crisis spread to affect the Black Sea's environment, a massive influx of refugees, child soldiers, and ethnic minorities! Students end the first day of the conference meeting in groups to brainstorm the most effective way to respond to the multitude

of challenges. Delegates exchanged contact information and worked throughout the evening on their resolutions, which were then presented, debated, and voted on.

This phenomenal event encourages many skills that are at the core of the Rhoades School mission, including collaboration, deep thinking, public speaking, pragmatism, and world knowledge. Our delegation were active and involved, and represented our school very well.