

MODEL UNITED NATIONS (MUN)

My name is Priscilla Pizziol, a member of the 2014 graduating class at the European School of Varese.

Thinking back over all the years I have spent in this school, I can honestly state that one of the most beautiful and interesting experiences has been taking part in the MUN. Over the last two years students of different nationalities and classes have been meeting together regularly during Friday lunchtime. No guys, this was not as you all believed; we were not playing cards or even learning how to cook cakes!

MUN is an acronym standing for Model United Nations, a simulation of the real United Nations in which each student plays the role of a delegate of a specific country. He or she has to represent the concrete will and policies of that country.

It is evident that debating in the MUN is more than a traditional style debate as you are not supporting your own ideas as an individual but actually fighting to defend your chosen country. The hardest thing about the MUN is that in certain cases your personal perspective about an issue could be far distant from the one of the government you are representing; however, you must argue the opinion of that government and ignore your own viewpoint.

In addition to your general knowledge enrichment, including awareness of many different and controversial issues and the position of other countries, you should know that MUN helps you in developing your personality and breaking the barrier of shyness. Moreover, you learn how to structure formal speech and how to negotiate and try to find a compromise with other people. In other words, you learn how to collaborate as part of a group.

Last, but not least, the MUN offers you the opportunity of taking part in major events with other schools. In March 2014 fifteen of us participated in the Milan MUN which took place over three days at the University of Bocconi. This conference gave us the opportunity of playing the role of real delegates representing three UN member states: Bolivia, Rwanda and Ethiopia. We learnt through our interaction with other student delegates. We developed valuable skills of speech-making, resolution writing, lobbying and teamwork. Personally I met many students from different schools in those days, people with whom I'm still in contact.

I hope I have encouraged you all to take part in the MUN, to take our place next year and continue and possibly expand this wonderful experience. Be ready to stand up and make your point, to submit your own resolution, to defend yourself while being attacked by others and be prepared to be chased by Mr Cawthorne to hand in your resolution in time before the Friday debate. Enjoy this opportunity!

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