

## **MANY OF REGION'S BRIGHTEST STUDENTS GET LESSON IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AT MODEL UN CONFERENCE**

More than 1,000 students from 53 schools took part in this month's Old Dominion University Model UN Society high school conference, the largest in many years. The 35th annual conference met Feb. 16-19 at the Sheraton Waterside Hotel (see photos below).

An intense role-playing simulation, Model UN features participants representing more than 100 United Nations countries, from Albania to Zimbabwe. They deliberate for three days, trying to agree on solutions to controversial issues in nine major international arenas. Simulations start with major General Assembly committees, and include crisis simulations in the Security Council and regional organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the African Union (AU).



*Aaron Karp, faculty sponsor of the ODU Model United Nations Society.*

ODU President John Broderick opened the conference when it convened the morning of Friday, Feb. 17, followed by a welcome from conference Secretary-General Christopher "Luke" Watson, a junior economics major at the university. "ODU Model UN is proud to continue its tradition of bringing together the region's best schools and brightest students for engaging international debate that mirrors contemporary discussions shaping our world," Watson said. The featured speaker was Abdelhamid Abdeljaber, a former UN official and keynote speaker at the ODU conference since 1991, now at Rutgers University.

Aaron Karp is faculty sponsor of the ODU Model United Nations Society and a lecturer in political science. He was consultant to the UN Secretary-General for nuclear weapons and missiles, and currently consults for the Small Arms Survey. He is co-editor of the journal *Contemporary Security Policy* and the Routledge book series *Global Security Studies*.

To help celebrate the ODU Model UN's 35th anniversary, the university Alumni Association hosted a reunion for past conference secretaries-general, society presidents and other officers. Attending the event were alumni from at least 15 states, as well as all three previous directors of the program: Jerome Bookin-Weiner, founding director, 1977-87; ODU Professor Emerita Christine Drake, director, 1988-93; and Maria Fornella, the longest-serving director and currently lecturer of political science and geography, 1994-2008.

The Model United Nations Society is ODU's window on the United Nations and international activism. The society's mission is to promote global, multicultural education and leadership experience through experiential learning, stressing student participation in simulation conferences and courses.

The society represents the university at Model UN, European Union, NATO and crisis simulation conferences around the country. Membership is open to students from all colleges and disciplines at the university. More information is available on the society's Web page, <http://al.odu.edu/mun/>.

*Photos by David Hollingsworth*







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