

United Nations Day 2017: the best of New York and Rickle Pick

By *Justin Ross*

2 November 2017



Photo: David Hollingsworth, ODU

On Friday, October 27, ODU's Webb Center was the scene of the Old Dominion Model United Nations Society's largest on-campus event, UN Day. UN Day marks the anniversary of the creation of the United Nations in 1945. At ODU, it is a formal occasion involving students from all across campus.

Over 100 ODU students registered for the event. Also present were students from Hampton University and the University of Mary Washington, joining their first Model UN simulation. They sat behind country placards with ODU students, representing delegates from member states of the United Nations.

The event was gavelled by its Secretary-General, ODU sophomore Amanda Crocker, a political science and business management double major, who confessed she lived and breathed all the details of organizing the event for months.

According to Crocker, "UN Day is a perfect way to welcome newcomers into the Model UN and get students debating real world issues. To be politically literate, discussion with people of all different opinions is a necessity. In MUN, we do this kind of thing all the time in and outside of meetings. UN Day did the same thing on a country scale, and even challenged students with representing opinions of a nation that may not match their own." She noted that "this event is the Model UN's chance to give students an accurate understanding of what the Model United Nations does every day at conferences around the country".

In his welcome speech, the ODU Model UN Faculty Advisor, Professor Aaron Karp, told the audience "Diplomacy isn't just about being nice. Sometimes it means asserting your country's point of view by sticking out your elbows to press for its distinct goals, whether you represent

the United States or Iran, Burkina Faso or Vanuatu.”

After welcoming speeches and rituals like a placard roll call vote, the first order of business was to setting a topic. Voting as the assembled states, the delegates chose to work not on international terrorism, but the issue of global immigration and the issues surrounding migrants to host nations.

The Vice-Chair for the event was ODU senior and education major David Schaeffer. According to Schaeffer, “This event is ideally suited for students getting together to gain experience with involvement in an international diplomatic setting”.

As noted by Old Dominion University Model United Nations member, “This event is suited for students getting together to gain experience with involvement in an international diplomatic setting”.

Another participant, Robih Abuismail, joining the simulation from the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg. Representing Slovakia, he said he took away the lesson that “simplicity is key to conflict resolution. A lack of democracy and dictatorship are the key roots to all problems within the international community”.



Joshua Markham at ODU UN Day 2017.
Photo: David Hollingsworth, ODU

As the simulation progressed, speeches became more passionate, voting blocs emerged, motions were made and resolutions drafted, exactly like the General Assembly, meeting simultaneously in New York. Many first timers were surprised how hard it was to achieve anything. ODU

Model United Nations officer and senior Carlos Lopez Santana later explained “this highlights the importance for people to come together and to simulate the requirements of cooperation”.



Amanda Crocker, ODU sophomore and Secretary-General at UN Day 2017, with David Schaeffer and Summer Peebles. Photo: David Hollingsworth, ODU.

After a touchy start, a majority of represented states passed a compromise resolution on migration policy, nick-named ‘Rickle Pick’, for a character from *Rick and Morty*. It urged that regardless of local policy, education, housing and basic needs for migrants be supplied by the member states receiving migrants.

The award for Best Delegate 2017 went to ODU junior Alec Lippe, representing Syria. David Cuthrell from Hampton University won Outstanding Delegate, or second place. The day was summed up by Ashia Williams, a sophomore international studies major from Hampton, who said, “As the 72nd anniversary of the United Nations, this event was a perfect celebration. It was a lot of fun, and it helped me understand the problems to be overcome in conflicts between countries and peace.”