

The Colorado Springs School
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NEWS

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STUDENTS FROM THE COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL TO COMPETE IN THE NORTH AMERICAN INVITATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS IN WASHINGTON D.C.

Colorado Springs, Colo. – The Colorado Springs School (CSS) is proud to announce that eight CSS students will attend the annual conference of the North American Invitational Model United Nations (NAIMUN) from **February 14-17, 2008 in Washington D.C.** NAIMUN is one of the oldest UN simulation conferences for high school students in North America . Since 1963, the conference has been a forum in which a dynamic range of young students come from around the world to seek, through discussion, negotiation and debate, solutions to the various problems of the world.

NAIMUN has selected six schools to represent Colorado at the Conference; CSS is the only school representing Colorado Springs. CSS started its Model United Nations team in 2005. In their training, CSS students pushed to heighten their understanding of the international system from both political and legal perspectives, while also testing their negotiation, judgment, and problem-solving skills. In 2007, CSS hosted a statewide Model United Nations competition. Now, after only three years of establishing a team, they have been invited to NAIMUN to compete at the highest of level.

“It’s inspiring to witness high school students seeking alternative solutions to real world problems,” said David Benson, Upper School History Teacher and Model United Nations Advisor. “Model UN topics are real and they are engaging a new generation of thinkers to explore the practices of a well-constructed debate, diplomacy, and even compromise. These kids are looking for viable outcomes to complex world matters.”

For many months the students have been preparing for the rigorous competition and researching assignments which include representing:

- **Malawi** for debates on eliminating racism from Football and preparing for South Africa to host the World Cup.
- **Malawi** in the **G77** (an association of 133 of the world’s developing nations created to give voice to economic and political concerns) as they debate the Promotion of Dialogue between G77 and G8 (the world’s most powerful economies) and attaining the Millennium Development goals through the integration of trade.
- **Guinea** in the African Union in a debate over the threat of malaria and security in the Horn of Africa.

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- **Grenada** in the Organization of American States (OAS) for the debate the topics of trans-national migration and terrorist group organizations in Latin America.
- The **Chinese Foreign Minister, Yang Jiechi** in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (10 member nations representing 44% of the world's population and 25% of its land mass). They will debate energy security and development in Greater Central Asia.
- A Parliamentarian (MP) in the **British House of Commons** from the Glasgow district to debate the Terrorism Act of 2006 and devolution in the United Kingdom.

In addition to participating in the North American Invitational Model United Nations, Benson has arranged for the students to meet with Charles Hauss one of the founders and leaders of Alliance for Peace Building, which is dedicated to working toward sustainable peace and security world-wide. Hauss is also the author of the textbook used by CSS students for AP Comparative Politics. He has invited the several NGO leaders to come and talk to the students about the role of non-governmental organizations in the peace process. CSS students are also schedule to visit the U.S. Peace Corps offices and the Holocaust Museum.

For more information about CSS students attending the North American Invitational Model United Nations or information about The Colorado Springs School, contact Jessica L. James, Director of Communications at jjames@css.org or 719.434.3506.

About the CSS Students on the Model UN Team

Yann Schinazi

Yann is a senior at CSS, his mother is Brazilian and his father is French. He has attended CSS since 9th grade. Yann has always been deeply interested in international issues at least partially as a means of better understanding his own complex identity. He was the student founder, and has served as Secretary-General, of the CSS Model United Nations club in 2005. Since then, student membership in the CSS club has grown tremendously. Model UN is now entrenched in the school's culture, having greatly contributed to a greater spirit of internationalism and awareness of social and political issues in the school. In addition to performing well at state-level meets and holding the first Colorado MUN meet ever to be held outside of Denver, the club's greatest achievements are connected to an awareness of the vital work of the United Nations, and the importance of educated action as a means of combating injustice and fighting for a better future. Both members and non-members alike have greatly benefited from increased exposure to global issues from a variety of international perspectives since the club's creation.

Nathaniel Kelley

Nathaniel Kelley has attended The Colorado Springs School for 3+ years. He lives between Woodland Park and Divide. The outdoors around his house is very conducive to the outdoor activities he likes, including: soccer, cycling, and snowboarding. Nathaniel is very involved in school in both academics and extra-curricular activities. He is the Upper School treasurer, a member of the National Honor Society, vice-secretary general for Model United Nations, and a participant in the state-winning Knowledge Bowl team. For Model United Nations Nationals, he will be representing Malawi in the F.I.F.A. ad-hoc council. The council is striving for political peace surrounding the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, as well as an end to racism on the soccer field.

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Maya Quijada

Maya Quijada is a sophomore at The Colorado Springs School. A new student at CSS, this is her first year of Model UN, but she is thoroughly enjoying it. She spends most of her time outside of school at her dance studio, where she does primarily modern, ballet, and jazz. She also likes to run and play the piano. Maya is extremely excited to have the opportunity to attend the National MUN Competition in Washington DC.

Blake Ramsey

Blake is a junior who loves to debate political topics and has been in Model UN for three years now (since the founding). He is also a passionate cross-country runner, and will run a half marathon in Arizona the weekend before flying off to the National Model UN event! He is hoping to qualify to run the Pikes Peak Ascent next year.

Tahani Khan A freshman, this is her first year to be involved in the club. She speaks several languages including Urdu. Tahani lived in Italy for a few years and aspires to be a UN doctor when she grows up.

Britt Ford Britt Ford is a sophomore who has been in Model UN for 2 years now. Britt also has a passion for dance and is active in school theatre.

Harry Gilbert Harry Gilbert is a sophomore in his second year with model UN. He was one of the first freshmen in the state of Minnesota to be picked to work as a presiding officer, the person who runs a Model UN council debate. Harry is also a very talented thespian, who has been active in school plays. He is also a member of the CSS Knowledge Bowl team.

David Benson

David Benson has taught upper school history at the Colorado Springs School since 2005. He teaches AP US History, AP Comparative Politics and African History and is the faculty sponsor of the school's Model United Nations team. Benson graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in French and history. He earned his master's degree in African history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he also attained competency in Hausa and Swahili, two sub-Saharan African languages. Before moving to Colorado, Benson was the academic director of the School for International Training's college study abroad program in Cameroon, Central Africa for 10 years. He has done research and traveled extensively in Central and West Africa, including the Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. In the summer, Benson is a camp director for the Concordia Language Villages, where he runs the French Voyageur program, a French language wilderness and historical immersion program that takes place in the north woods of Minnesota. He is also the director of a study abroad program for high school students that takes place in Cameroon, Central Africa. Fluent in French, Hausa and Swahili, Benson has also studied, Fulfulde, Yemba, Malgassy and Pidgin. An avid lover of paddling and wilderness experiences, Benson has participated in and/or led canoeing and kayaking expeditions in New Zealand, Samoa, South Africa, Namibia, Cameroon, Madagascar, Canada, and the United States.

About the Colorado Springs School (CSS)

CSS offers an experiential educational curriculum for PreKindergarten – 12th graders. Through superior academics and mentoring, The Colorado Springs School prepares students to think independently and to meet the needs of a dynamic world with leadership, ingenuity, problem-solving skills, and personal integrity.

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