

Student Steps Into Shoes of an Ambassador

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In a corner of an ornate Philadelphia ballroom, Israel and Kazakhstan whisper over a lengthy anti-sex trafficking resolution, while South Africa and Slovakia handle similar negotiations with South American and Arab nations. It is Saturday (Nov. 13), the last evening of the Model United Nations Conference, and Tulane students are among those joining in the discussions that have shifted into high gear, with two blocs vying for the last few straggling votes.



First-year student Cody Wild, in the first row at far left, joins the Tulane delegation at the Model United Nations Conference in Philadelphia. Wild offers an inside look at the conference in this story. (Photo by Sydney Zorowitz)

South Africa's persuasion seems to have brought Oman and Qatar to our (Slovakia's) side, and we manage to successfully sway a satellite resolution to merge their ideas into our own. After an onerous eight hours of committee meetings, not to mention hours of outside drafting and discussion, I collapse back into my hotel bed, exhausted but brimming with a sense of accomplishment, as I unclip my nametag from my blazer, and set Slovakia on my dresser until my final session Sunday morning.

In just a few hours, these lofty roles will have evaporated, and we will morph back into typical college students, trading in our heels, skirts, suits and ties for conventional street clothes. But for now, at the conference that's being held at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), in the thick of deliberation and the heat of collaboration, the roles we play begin to feel real as we immerse ourselves in this imagined world.

Tulane University's Model United Nations chapter is a service organization that promotes awareness of international issues on campus, but the chance to travel to Philadelphia for this conference expands our involvement with students from other universities.

To the uninitiated person peering through the hotel ballroom doorway, the Model U.N. experience may seem to be a static affair — an inexorable tedium of speakers rehashing their points — but beneath the surface it is pure dynamism: a flurry of notes changing hands, cementing support and scheduling talks, groups spiriting themselves outside to write and rewrite by hand an eight-page resolution incorporating the best ideas.

As the conference draws to a close, our hard work pays off, as the comprehensive anti-sex trafficking resolution behind which I'd thrown my support passes with the most votes of any in our committee. Congratulations are exchanged and we the students emerge from our countries, shaking off our personae, at least until we meet again behind a new set of closed committee doors.

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