Model UN adventures in Arkansas

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The Model United Nations team began fall break at its first conference of the year. Twenty-five students boarded a bus on Thursday, November 15 for the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, Arkansas.

Model UN is technically a branch of the Debate Team, although there is very little actual debating involved. Model UN works much like the actual United Nations, where many world leaders meet in New York. Students, or “delegates” usually work in pairs and are assigned a country and a committee. Delegates from Gulf Breeze were in charge of the countries Norway, Saudi Arabia, and Germany. The delegates would then meet with those of other countries in their committee at the conference. The committees had special topics to discuss, such as the role of women in peace making or environmental refugees. Delegates then worked to pass a policy that represented the desires of their home country. The delegates would have to work with other countries in the committee to write the policy, creating small alliances and pacts.

The conference lasted two days. On the first day, each committee worked on resolving the three topics assigned to them. On the second day, the committees met for a while, and then a
general assembly of all the committees met. The moderator, or the overseer of the assembly, announced a mock global crisis that had occurred, and it was the job of the delegates to solve it. For each hour of real time that passed, one day occurred in the scenario, and the situation got progressively worse. In this particular conference, the scenario was of the Israeli/Gaza conflict, and it took the delegates a little over two hours to settle the conflict.

This is the first conference that the Model UN team has traveled to this year. In the spring, however, the team will be traveling to the University of Florida for a conference, and potentially even to New York City for a conference held in the actual United Nations building.

Danielle Lieneman, a captain of the Model UN team, liked the conference. “I think the conference went well. I think everyone on the team learned a lot about how parliamentary procedure works as well as how to work with others through compromise to reach a common goal.”

The team came back from the conference and started their fall break with some new friends that they didn’t have before the trip.