

Stockton Students Representing U.K. in
Model United Nations Program in Japan

For Immediate Release ; with photos on facebook

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“Our delegation on the Security Council in their opening speech reminded everyone of the inscription on the Hiroshima Memorial: ‘Let all the souls here rest in peace, for we shall not repeat the evil,’ to encourage their fellow delegates to address the threat of nuclear weaponization of North Korea with new solutions and not fall back on plans that have thus far failed,” Zappile said. Rich Nuccio, a senior Criminal Justice major, and David Yoon, a senior Political Science major, are on the Security Council.

“The experience in Japan is of great significance to me as a student from South Korea,” said Yoon. “Researching on the topic of nuclear proliferation and human rights situation in North Korea for the past semester is very important to me on a personal level. As a student aspiring to work in conflict resolution as a foreign service officer for the U.S. State Department, the Model U.N. has provided me with such a valuable experience. Meeting students from around the world and learning about Japan’s culture and history is an unforgettable experience for me as both a student and a global citizen.”

Other students on the team include: Maryam Sarhan, a senior Political Science major and president of the Student Senate, who is on the General Assembly delegation, along with Dominic Tierno, a sophomore Political Science major; Nicole Mitchell, a junior majoring in Health Science, and Angelo Bechara, a senior double majoring in Political Science and French, who are on the U.N. Refugee Agency delegation; and Josh Battaglia, a junior Political Science major, and Daniel Correa, a senior majoring in Environmental Science, who are on the Economic and Social Council delegation.

At the opening session today, the group heard a panel discussion: “Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction: Japanese and Global Perspectives.” The role of the private sector in increasing disaster resilience was discussed at length, as Japan has led the way in mainstreaming public-private partnerships to address disaster risk reduction. Japan is the #1 donor for disaster risk reduction in the world with the U.S. ranked at third behind Europe. Asia-Pacific has experienced the greatest number of deaths due to natural disasters and the U.S. is also at high risk for the occurrence of natural disasters; Hurricane Sandy in particular was noted by the panel.

The trip includes cultural experiences in Kyoto and Hiroshima, with visits to two temples in Kyoto: Kinkaku-ji, the famed “Golden Pavilion” and Tofuku-ji Temple, and the island of Miyajima.

The group also toured the Hiroshima Memorial Park including the memorial where President Obama spoke in May 2016 and the museum where the horror of nuclear weapons for humanity is communicated through photos, stories, physical items, and live testimonials from survivors.

“As an American, it was difficult but necessary to hold the space for the mixture of anger and deep sadness that was palpable in the museum and on the grounds of Hiroshima Memorial Park,” said Zappile. “As a parent, it was excruciating to hear Sadako’s story and, especially, the hour long testimony of then 8-year-old Keiko Ogura about the horrors of that day and the week that followed. Our group debriefed on our way home but I think many were still processing. Our Japanese college student guides were honest about their mixed emotions, allowing for meaningful cross-cultural dialogue about war with many of our students. I will never forget this day,” she said.

“This trip and conference has given me the opportunity to travel out of the country for the first time,” said Mitchell. “This opportunity means the world to me, I’m beyond grateful. I expect to accomplish new relationships with students from all over the world. Apart from the information within the conference, the conversations with those people open my mind to different opinions and a glimpse into their lives. I’m so humbled in realizing how vast and diverse this world is.”
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