



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senator Martins Congratulates Elmont Memorial High School Model UN Team

JACK M. MARTINS April 11, 2011

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The annual Lee Markus SIDMUN Model UN competition at Sewanhaka High School was the scene this past weekend where hundreds of high school students from Elmont, Floral Park, Carey, New Hyde Park and Sewanhaka High Schools debated the issues and represented their adopted home country's interest in Model UN. Students represented countries from the United Kingdom to Azerbaijan in the conference taking up their respective interests and debating the issues passionately from 8:15 a.m. until sunset.

The morning started off with a breakfast and program highlighted with a keynote address by Senator Jack M. Martins, who was invited to address students by the Model UN Administrative Council. Joining Senator Martins in the opening ceremony was Sewanhaka Superintendent of Schools Warren Meierdiercks, Dr. Linda Opyr, Lee Markus, Elmont Memorial Principal John Capozzi, Carey Principal Val Angelillo, Sewanhaka Principal Debra Lidowski and New Hyde Park Principal Michael DeMartino. MSG network also televised and interviewed students throughout the day.

Senator Martins was greeted to the conference by students Aaron Weinstock of New Hyde Park, Funlola Otokoya of Elmont Memorial, Shana Brodeur of Sewanhaka and Louie Cona of H. Frank Carey High School in Franklin Square. "We chose Senator Jack Martins as our keynote speaker because of his dedication to the Sewanhaka District, and his support for vital state funding to see programs like this continue for years to come. He is a symbol to all students and current politicians of how one man can make a difference in our community. For that we were grateful to have him at our conference and proud of his support.," said Cona.

The Model UN is patterned after the United Nations where students are assigned countries to represent. They then take on the assigned nation's interest and put forth their respective positions in papers, debate and resolutions considered by committees and the security council. This year, another form of Model UN took place where a committee debated ancient Greek historical conflicts taking the interests of the different Gods and nation states.

Senator Martins addressed the entire group during the morning program and attended several sessions of the Model UN committees to see debate in an action. "Seeing our young people debate the issues with the passion and knowledge they had was inspiring. They brought an acute awareness of the issues and the impact that many of these conflicts bring to our global economy and stability as a world," said Martins. "The historical roundtable of

ancient Greek wars was fascinating to watch. I hope Model UN builds on that committee into the future.”

In addition to the opening ceremony, students honored retired Floral Park teacher Marion Brzozowski for her work in developing the Sewanhaka Central High School district Model UN program with founders like Lee Markus. Students bestowed her an honor of naming the position paper portion of Model UN after her.

Weinstock noted, “I had so much fun working with everyone at this year's SIDMUN. Everyone put a lot of work into making the conference and debate run smooth.”

Brodeur added, “It was worth all the hard work that went into this to make this a successful conference, and I am proud of everyone who was involved. It was all worth it.”

Senator Martins attended a meeting of the Model UN Security Council where students debated issues of strategic importance to different regions and countries. Subject matters such as nation building, drug trafficking, natural disaster preparedness and economic stability were discussed. “Watching each country stand up at the committees, deliver a speech based on knowledge, research and global interest was exciting to anyone who had the opportunity to see Model UN in action. I was very proud of all the committees and their work,” said Senator Martins.

The Security Council was the scene where intense debate was going on regarding the country of Haiti and rebuilding the nation in the aftermath of natural disaster. This debate was made all the more current with the recent Tsunami that has impacted Japan. Saul Ellison and Crystal Nwaogbe of Elmont Memorial made inspiring speeches at the committee that earned them awards. “It's not only the competitive aspect of Model UN, but it's very eye opening when you get to learn about places that don't have the great our fortunes our

country is blessed to have. Personally, Model UN has made a big impact on my life. I'm meeting young people from around the country, leaders like Senator Martins, and it teaches me about the decisions that we make truly have an impact in our global economy," said Ellison.

In the evening, students were awarded honors based on their Model UN debate, position paper and persuasion performances.