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WESTWORD

WEB EXCLUSIVES

Model U.N. delegates garner awards at N.U. event

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NUMUN

Three members of the Niles West Model United Nations (MUN) Club won delegate awards at the Northwestern University Model UN Conference (NUMUN) April 2 –April 5.

The awards were given to juniors Suhail Ansari, who won the Best Delegate (highest award given) for his role as the Minister of Culture in the Balance of Power: India committee; Fatima Elahi, who won an Honorable Mention for her role as Colombia in the General Assembly: Disarmament

and International Security committee; and Zoe Ljubic, who won an Honorable Mention for her role as the Minister of Youth Affairs in the Balance of Power: Pakistan committee.

Sponsor Matt Wiemer said that MUN is designed for students to actively participate in current and foreign affairs as delegates in a mock United Nations. The students act as delegates to make sure their country's position is represented. Also, the students are required to write a one-page position paper before the conference that describes their country's position on the topic. At the conference, the delegates debate about the issues at hand and try to come up with a resolution, in sessions that last about four hours.

This year, students from West represented Austria, Colombia, India and Pakistan.

Wiemer expressed enthusiasm about the three awards received this year.

"It all stems from the fact that we have hardworking, committed students in the club this year," Wiemer said. "We had students who decided that it would be more fun to do a lot more research and play an active role during committee."

According to Wiemer, there had not been an award given to any West student in four years. "The last award, an Honorable Mention, was given to Waseema Ali in 2005," Wiemer said

Elahi said that she enjoyed her first experience and looks forward to next year.

"[MUN] is a phenomenal experience that not only does it give students the opportunity to focus on worldwide issues, but it also allows them to come together in search for a solution that pleases all nations," Elahi said. "I was able to bond with my friends and still learn about different viewpoints about issues such as loose nuclear material, piracy and missile defense. These are issues that are constantly debated in the 'real world' and learning how to form diplomatic relations along with alliances can be described as powerful."

Junior Allie Guiang concurs.

"[NUMUN] gave me the opportunity to learn about how different countries feel about issues that affect the entire world. It was a great experience, and I am looking forward to next year," Guiang said.

Wiemer hopes to begin fundraising for next year soon.

"My goal for next year is to attend three conferences instead of two," Wiemer said.