

I became involved with Model United Nations in grade 9, due to my interest in world affairs and my desire to become a better public speaker. I attended a few Model UN conferences, however, I really became interested when I was a page in a committee at Southern Ontario Model UN Assembly(SOMA), the conference that my school organizes every year. I loved helping others experience and enjoy an extracurricular that I cherished so much.

When I was helping out, the Chair(moderator) of my committee was one of the people who helped organize the event. After observing the intense debate from a multitude of different perspectives, I became very keen on becoming a member of the SOMA Secretariat, the group of students who run the event.

In grade 10 I was a delegate and participated in the conference, in order to gain a better understanding of the experience provided to the attendees. I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and was constantly thinking about how the experience could be improved. I went to other conferences, including Harvard MUN, Kings MUN, and others, and made sure to take note of things those conferences did that we could also offer to delegates at SOMA. Towards the end of grade 10, I applied for and received the position of Undersecretary-General of Operations.

One of the things I noticed was that a large portion of our budget was spent booking a large hall for opening ceremonies, when not that many delegates were actually able to come. To fix this, I decided to use our school auditorium, which saved us thousands of dollars and worked just as well. With the money we saved, we were able to reduce some of the deficit we were in from past years, which was the result of mismanagement and overspending of funds.

I ran into some speed bumps along the way, including being unable to book rooms at UofT until the rooms needed for exams were finalized in March. Many of the rooms needed were under construction. To resolve these issues, I searched for replacements for the rooms under construction and met with a representative from UofT to ensure all rooms chosen were fit substitutes. I also booked additional spare rooms, in case the exams took over a few of our reservations.

The conference went very smoothly. I chaired the UN Human Rights Council and realized how much energy it takes to control the flow of debate among 60 students, but I always made sure we stayed on topic. Something that was important for me was ensuring that everyone had time to speak, as well as encouraging the quiet delegates to participate. I made sure that everyone felt comfortable speaking because having been in that position I appreciated the chair pushing me to do my best. At the end of grade 11, I was promoted to the Commissioner-General for SOMA 2020, and I hope to make just as large an impact this year.