

# Castleberry Peace Institute University of North Texas Spring 2018 Newsletter



There was a great deal of wonderful activity at the Castleberry Peace Institute in 2017 we are very excited to tell you about. A team from the CPI including myself, Professor Regina Branton, Professor Diego Garcia and graduate student Amalia Pulido visited Medellin, Colombia in late October. We co-hosted a conference, *Peace and Justice in Colombia*, with faculty from EAFIT University (School of Finance, Administration and Technology) and the Pontifical Bolivarian University (PBU). The conference was very well attended and received and we are currently hard at work in developing a book based on the research presented at this conference and from other Colombian and international scholars.

Two of the conference presenters are graduates of our Phd Program, Jason Quinn and Madhav Joshi from Notre Dame University. Jason and Madhav are in charge of collecting the data that will verify whether the government and the FARC guerillas, which recently ended a decades-long war, are complying with their peace agreement. In fact, the Kroc Peace Institute at Notre Dame where they both work was written into the peace agreement to be in charge of verifying compliance.

We are so proud of all the great work Madhav and Jason are doing in the world that helps promote peace!

We continue to raise funds for a scholarship to be named in honor of our namesake, Vivian Castleberry. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 to endow this scholarship so it can support our best, brightest and most deserving students. We recently received a gift of \$25,000 for the scholarship that will go a long way toward helping us reach this goal. If you would like more information, please contact me at the email address below. Or you can contribute on-line at [Vivian Castleberry Trailblazer Scholarship](#)

We look forward to many new and exciting initiatives this year as we work to better understand the causes and consequences of peace and violence. If you would like to get in touch with us or pass along a story, please do so!

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Just recently our Model Internationalization Organization team traveled to Munich, Germany to compete in an international competition. The Model United Nations conference they attended assigned teams from universities throughout the world to represent various national delegations to the United Nations. During this simulation of United Nations activity, teams developed papers, policy proposals and engaged in negotiations with other teams on the key issues of the day. Below is the team's story of their experiences in Munich.



Members of UNT's MIO Team from left to right: Carlos Andino, David Oostenbrug, Amanda Black, Tesa Hargis, Matt Reyes, Pamela Ashwood, Zehra Hussain.

We had to take three different flights to get to Munich, Germany, which even made the border patrol agents slightly confused. Although the multiple flights and layovers were exhausting, we were able to get through it because all eight of us were traveling together. We bonded over travel stories, books that we brought with us to read, and even how nervous we were to compete at an international Model United Nations conference, IsarMUN. While our President, Zehra Hussain, (aka the 'mom' of our trip) ensured we all were together and equipped with snacks, we all sat at our gate passing time by playing games. For a majority of us it was our first international conference and for two of our members, Carlos Andino and Pamela Ashwood, it was their first time ever leaving the United States. As a result, the layovers in three different cities was more of a journey for them and we were happy to see them make the most out of it. From Dallas to London to Dublin and then to Munich, we all sighed in relief that finally we made it to our destination.

In front of the Theatine Church St. Cajetan

David Oostenbrug and other delegates in the fun Lord of the Ring Crisis Committee.



After a good night's rest at the Four Points by Sheraton Munich Central all of us were ready to explore Munich. Through the help of our treasurer, David Oostenbrug, who speaks fluent German, we were able to make full use of Munich's public transportation system. Our first stop was Odeonsplatz, a large square surrounded by beautiful buildings and rich architecture. After taking many pictures we wandered off into the Hogfarten. It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining bright and it was warmer than expected, so we took our time exploring and enjoying the great weather. We even got a chance to see the Kriegerden war memorial, where we learned this memorial was built to commemorate those killed in action in World War I.

The next day we were able to visit the Dachau concentration camp in the morning. This was one of the concentration camps that the rest were modeled after. It was very interesting to learn such a vital part of our history while walking on the same grounds where it occurred. It was also quite sad and many of us shed tears but on our way back it was nice to reflect on what we saw and discuss an important part of our history together.

The same evening was the opening ceremony of our Model United Nations conference. We were the only delegation coming from the United States where the rest of the universities attending were from neighboring European countries. It was quite funny to see everyone's reactions when they heard we came all the way from Texas. However, we all quickly made friends and happily answered all the many, political questions they had for us. Everyone was very welcoming and friendly, which made the next three days of debate more comfortable.

Many of us were in multiple committees, ranging from the UN Security Council to the World Trade Organization. We all represented different countries such as the United Kingdom, China, Venezuela, UAE, and France, while debating heated topics such as the territorial claims in the Chinese Sea to women-specific threats in migration. All of us held our ground and were confident in our abilities to communicate our points across, while staying true to the country we represented. After debating in the morning for about four hours, each committee would go to lunch where delegates would wind down and chat while enjoying traditional Bavarian food. It was nice to experience another culture while also realizing all of us are really just college students sharing similar interests.



Zehra Hussain and Carlos Andino are presenting the resolution with the delegates of Egypt that they all created to the rest of the UN Security Council on the topic of finding middle and long-term solutions to the conflict in Yemen.

In the Security Council, two of our delegates, Carlos and Zehra, were able to get a resolution they pioneered to pass while another one of our delegates in the same committee, Amanda Black, convinced other member states to join the same resolution. In the UN Women committee, Pamela was able to showcase her knowledge by actively participating in debate. In the NATO committee, Tesa Hargis, contributed to a resolution. In the World Trade Organization committee, Matt Reyes, was able to stand his ground while representing Venezuela. In The Lord of the Rings Crisis Committee, David used his knowledge of Lord of the Rings in real-time and was able to strategize effectively.

Through the whole conference, we made many friends and were able to explore a lot of the city. Although we missed the Thanksgiving holiday, we made memories that we will cherish forever. We would like to thank the University of North Texas Political Science department, Office of Student Affairs, and Student Government Association for providing us with sufficient funds to attend this conference. Also, we would like to thank the IsarMUN Secretariat for their kindness and hospitality. We were glad to be able to take UNT Model International Organization's name all the way to Europe and this certainly will not be the last time. Through this trip we not only were able to strengthen our Model UN skills but we saw that amidst cultural differences, all of us from various backgrounds and ethnicities, want to help impact the world.

## Faculty and Student News

We are pleased to report on the excellent progress of our three Castleberry Peace Institute Undergraduate Research Fellows. Hannah Frosch is working with her faculty mentor, Dr. Regina Branton to present a paper at the Western Political Science Conference in March. Hannah, Dr. Branton and Professor Kimi King are analyzing the treatment of Native Americans in tribal courts. Hannah also hopes to present her research at the Collin County Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Student Research Conference in April.

Ian Layden is working with Dr. Bethany Blackstone on conflict between Congress and the Supreme Court and how and when Congress decides to react to Supreme Court decisions by passing new legislation. With Dr. Blackstone and another student, Alaina McGuffee, they are looking in particular at debates over cruel & unusual punishment, establishment of religion, obscenity, and conflict mediation. Ian is also working with Dr. Tony Carey on a project to investigate whether recent reapportionment court cases are having an affect on minority voting behavior.

Josue Barron has been working on a project with Dr. Meernik on the verdicts and sentences reached by the Bosnian War Crimes Chamber in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There have been many accusations that the court is biased against defendants who are charged with war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide because of their ethnicity. Josue is looking to see whether the presence of international judges on these trials has made them more fair. Josue will present part of his research with Dr. Meernik at the Law and Social Sciences Workshop at the Texas A&M Law School on April 20th, 2018.

If you or your organization has any news to pass along, please email me at [meernik@unt.edu](mailto:meernik@unt.edu) and we will be happy to include it in our next newsletter and on our web site.

Thank you for all of your support!