



**For Immediate Release**

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**FROM SINGAPORE TO DALLAS NORTH HILLS PREP MODEL UN CLUB SHINES THROUGH**

*13 students travel to Singapore Model UN conference and return to host first Dallas Area Model UN conference*

**DALLAS, Texas (January 27, 2010)**—For the students at Irving-based North Hills Preparatory, international diplomacy isn't just something they're hearing about on the evening news. Stay after school on any Thursday evening, and you'll find nearly 100 middle and high school students from the charter school gathered for one of the school's most popular clubs – Model UN – and the opportunity to debate hot topics such as nuclear proliferation, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, naval build up in Southeast Asia, global sustainability, and the issue of Tibet in China. The students don't just get to voice their own opinions though. Part of their role as acting as a diplomat means researching the country they represent and voting in its best interest. The growing club has competed in multiple regional conferences and recently took their first ever international trip to participate in The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) Singapore conference.

North Hills was one of only two high schools from the United States to take part in the THIMUN Singapore conference. THIMUN conferences are widely regarded as the premier Model UN conferences, with Singapore being the sister-conference of the original Netherlands conference. Thirteen of North Hills' most experienced high school students were selected to travel to the five-day conference in November, along with Model UN advisor Charles Ryder and the school's Senior Director Cheryl Huisman.

"We have gone to conferences in Denton and Oklahoma several years and were looking to broaden our experience," said Model UN president and senior Jingshen Zhao. "We looked at college conferences at Georgetown, Penn, Harvard, Stanford and UT, as well as the Hague and Singapore THIMUN conferences. One of the things we liked about THIMUN Singapore is that if your work is good and other nations accept your work, it is reported in a book that goes to the actual UN."

At THIMUN Singapore, North Hills students were assigned to represent the small Southeast Asian island nation of Brunei Darussalam in five committees of the General Assembly and also participated in a special Youth Assembly and attempted to create youth-doable solutions to current global problems. Senior Meyappan Subbaiah had the

opportunity to act as the Ambassador of Brunei and present a speech about the country to the full 600-person General Assembly.

“Model UN has been an excellent opportunity build public speaking skills and has also influence my college goals,” said Subbaiah. “I’m looking at studying nuclear engineering, and Model UN has influenced my decision to incorporate that with an international relations aspect. I’ve applied to Berkley, Purdue, MIT, Penn State, and Texas A&M because they would allow me to pursue this as a double major.”

With the Singapore conference now behind them, the group has set their sights on their own upcoming conference, the Dallas Area Model UN (DAMUN) conference, which they are hosting at North Hills on January 30. The high school students from North Hills will be acting as conference hosts and moderators and completely in charge of making sure things run smoothly, being familiar with the conference topics and maintaining parliamentary procedure. Close to a dozen schools have signed up to participate, including North Hills Middle School, Hockaday, St. Marks, Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science, Lovejoy, RL Turner and Berkner. The conference will help raise money for merit-based scholarships for future trips by the North Hills Model UN club.

DAMUN is one of five registered conferences of United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Non-Governmental Organizations Branch. North Hills students’ goal is to make direct connections with the UN secretariat to make direct diplomatic lobbying from the youth, like the THIMUN conferences – a powerful step that makes every participant a winner. They’re also hoping to get invited to the original THIMUN conference in The Hague next year.

“Since North Hills is part of the Uplift Education family of schools, we’re really hoping that the success of Model UN here will spread to the other campuses,” said Zhao. “It’s an amazing opportunity for any student to learn how to make policy work and influence the world on a macro scale.”

For more information on the Dallas Area Model UN Conference, contact North Hills Preparatory at 972-501-0645.

### **About Uplift Education**

Uplift Education is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. We are dedicated to operating schools that provide a quality education by raising and continually maintaining high expectations for students and staff. Uplift schools provide a rigorous, multi-disciplinary curriculum, with an emphasis on college preparation. Uplift currently operates five campuses across the metroplex: Hampton Preparatory, North Hills Preparatory, Peak Preparatory, Summit International Preparatory and Williams Preparatory. It is Uplift's goal to dramatically increase the number of students from all backgrounds who are provided a high quality public education. For more information, visit <http://www.uplifteducation.org>.