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### **UM Students Represent Eritrea During National Model United Nations Conference**

**MISSOULA** – Eleven University of Montana students and members of the Montana Model United Nations team attended the National Model U.N. Conference in New York City in March, representing Eritrea and chairing the United Nations Environment Assembly.

The students represented the Africa country of Eritrea with the following committee appointments:

- Michael Toppin of Great Falls, MT, junior, political science: General Assembly First Committee (Security and Disarmament)
- Colin Milton of Sandy, UT, sophomore, political science: General Assembly Second Committee (Economic and Financial)
- Taylor Rost of Polson, MT, junior, political science and Spanish: General Assembly Third Committee (Social and Humanitarian)
- Connor Fitzpatrick of Helena, MT, graduate student, political science: General Assembly Third Committee (Social and Humanitarian)
- Anisa Ricci of La Crescenta, CA, senior, political science and women, gender and sexuality studies: General Assembly Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgeting)
- Carly Chapdelaine of Great Falls, MT, senior, political science and women, gender and sexuality studies: International Organization (IOM)
- Cara Grewell of Silesia, MT, sophomore, political science: United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)
- George “Kelley” Krum of Anaconda, MT, senior, History: Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
- Vincent “Sonny” Capece of Tallahassee, FL, junior, political science: Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- Bailey Durnell of Great Falls, junior, political science and women, gender and sexuality studies: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- Taylor Gregory of Lolo, MT, freshman, political science: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Taylor served the team as Team President

One student, Anisa Ricci, was chosen to be a chair for the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), a coveted position. Because MMUN team members serve as chairs and other staff members at

UM's Montana Model U.N. High School Conference, they often are selected to serve as NMUN committee and conference staff.

After the first day, she chaired all UNEA sessions for the rest of the conference. The team as a whole won an Honorable Mention Award, top 25% of all countries represented.

Shortly after the conference began, the students visited the Eritrean mission to the UN and were briefed by Stephannie Afewerki, Eritrea's United Nations Strategist for Peace, Security and the Security Council.

Senior, Carly Chapdelaine, said of her experience that "No book or lecture can give you a true feel for how the United Nations functions, but the conference showed me how it all comes together. The conference taught me how to be professional, diplomatic, and an effective communicator."

Veteran NMUN team member, George "Kelley" Krum has stated that "This experience should be mandatory for students seeking the international relations field. You could read 100 books about the art of negotiation and dealing with people, but until you are actually with someone in person trying to negotiate a deal, you won't understand."

"It was a very special experience to represent Ethiopia and Eritrea in consecutive years and witness how each of the nation's relationships with one another impacts their foreign affairs" said Bailey Durnell, the team's veteran Vice President.

For more information, contact MMUN Faculty Advisor Eva Maggi through her email [eva.maggi@mso.umt.edu](mailto:eva.maggi@mso.umt.edu), or contact MMUN Team President Taylor Gregory at [taylor1.gregory@umontana.edu](mailto:taylor1.gregory@umontana.edu).