

MUNA

On the afternoon of Friday the 27th May, Rotarians from Albert Park drove six enthusiastic Year 11 students to the Best Western Motel in Essendon, where we met up with other students from schools across Melbourne to board a bus to Axedale near Bendigo. We had previously applied to the debating captains for selection to participate in this MUNA. We prepared to take on roles as delegates from China, Syria and Singapore to debate resolutions in a mock United Nations assembly (MUNA). After two hours on the bus we reached our destination in the dark and were immediately told to change into our country's national dress. Many students came in beautiful attire that was suited to their country - North Korea came in a Hanbok (traditional dress), Chinese delegates came in a qipao and a German delegate dressed as Angela Merkel. Although no formal debating began that night, the whole assembly was well and truly engaged as we were briefed on the proceedings of MUNA, and had a meeting with our blocs to decide on the resolutions we wanted to debate during our first few sessions on Saturday. It was time to get serious!

Saturday and Sunday were filled with heated debates, with every delegate in the Assembly passionately conveying their country's stance on a diverse range of issues regarding human rights, the environment and the workings of the UN Security Council.

After a productive day, all participants of MUNA were able to rest and relax with karaoke. We sang our lungs out and danced freely with friends, both old and new. During this time, we departed from our UN diplomatic personas and returned to our teenage selves. It was the perfect end to the day.

From the weekend away we learnt many new things - we developed our public speaking and debating skills, as well as being given insights into the workings of diplomacy and learning about how to deal with different situations. The most important thing we learnt was to put ourselves in another person's shoes and to debate the issue from their point of view, irrespective of our own personal opinion.

All six of us we would like to thank Albert Park and Port Melbourne Rotary Clubs for sponsoring us. We had an amazing weekend and a great experience we will never forget. It would not have been possible without them and also the help of our debating captains, Ms Purcell and Ms Dean.

MUNA participants

