



MMUN Historical Facts: 2006 to current

2006

Inception

The idea of MMUN was born in 2006 in the minds of two individuals – Judith Cunningham, Montessori Educator, Head of Oak Farm Montessori School, and Executive Director of MMUN and His Excellency Francis Lorenzo, United Nations Ambassador from Dominican Republic.

First Teachers Workshop

The first Teachers Workshop on Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) for approximately 25 Montessori educators from USA and Canada was held in Manhattan, NYC and UN Headquarters in October 2006.

2007

First MMUN Conference

The first MMUN Conference was held at the Grand Hyatt, Manhattan, NYC and UN Headquarters in February-March 2007. About 400 student delegates from USA and Canada Montessori schools participated, ages 9-15 years (Upper Elementary to Middle School). This conference was launched in honor of Dr. Maria Montessori's 100th year anniversary of Montessori education.

First MMUN Retreat

The first MMUN retreat for interested Montessori educators who had participated in the first MMUN conference in late winter, met in summer of 2007 in Upstate New York to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the conference.

Second Teachers Workshop

The second MMUN Teachers Workshops were held for both returning and new teachers at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters in October 2007 and at the WAFUNIF Offices in December 2007.

2008

Second MMUN Conference

The second MMUN Conference was held at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters in April 2008. To eventually build leadership from bottom up and make MMUN a truly Montessori centered organization, a group of five Montessori teachers stepped up in leadership roles as Rapporteurs and Vice Presidents in training. The student delegation rose to 500 with four different countries represented.

Third Teachers Workshop

Three MMUN Teachers Workshops were held in summer (1) and fall (2) of 2008, two at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters; and one at the La Quinta, Houston, Texas.

2009

Third MMUN Conference

The third MMUN Conference was held at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters in February-March, 2009. About 600 student delegates participated. It also witnessed Montessori educators assuming leadership roles on the Dais as Rapporteurs, Vice Presidents, and Presidents.

Fourth Teachers Workshop

Two MMUN Teachers Workshops were held in summer and fall of 2009 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters. Leadership training for the Dais was added to the summer workshop.

2010

First High School Intern Training Workshop

The first training workshop for MMUN Alumni (current high school students who had participated in MMUN as middle school students) was held in January-February of 2010 at School of the Woods, Houston, Texas.

Fourth MMUN Conference

The fourth MMUN Conference was held at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters in February-March, 2010. About 850 student delegates participated from nine different countries. For the first time fourteen MMUN alumni (current high school students) took to the Dais along with other Montessori educators as Rapporteurs, Vice Presidents, and Presidents.

First MMUN Leadership Institute

The first Leadership Institute was held in June 2010 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC for experienced MMUN educators and alumni. Seven students from USA and Puerto Rico and five teachers participated.

Fifth Teachers Workshop

Two MMUN Teachers Workshops were held in summer and fall of 2010 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters.

First MMUN Teachers Workshop for Middle School Chinese Teachers

Fifteen Chinese teachers from the Henan Province of China attended a five day specially designed MMUN Teachers Workshop in July-August, 2010 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters. The Education Bureau of the Henan Province has collaborated with the MMUN organization to introduce the MMUN Global Citizenship curriculum and Montessori philosophy into their public schools.

Second MMUN Teachers Workshop for Middle School Chinese Teachers

A second group of ten Middle School Chinese Teachers from China attended a five day specially designed MMUN Teachers Workshop during the American Thanksgiving week, 2010 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters.

For the first time, a student delegation from China was being prepared to attend the 2011 MMUN conference in NYC.

2011

Fifth MMUN Conference

The fifth MMUN Conference was held at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters in April, 2011. Nearly 900 student delegates participated from nine different countries. For the first time, there were student delegations from China and Japan. Also for the first time, MMUN General Assembly Session was held at the UN General Assembly Hall, UN Headquarters, NYC. Also for the first time, an in-house Rapporteurs Training Workshop was held for MMUN Middle School alumni as High School students interested to serve on the Dais during the conference, prior to the Opening Ceremony. This was also a historic year when the entire MMUN conference from the logistics to the leadership was completely spearheaded by the Montessori community. All schools who have participated five years in a row were recognized at the Opening Ceremony ,26 out of the very first 30 schools were recognized.

Sixth Teachers Workshop

Two MMUN Teachers Workshops were held in summer and fall of 2011 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and UN Headquarters. Educators from Canada, USA, Sweden, Nigeria, and Chile attended the workshops.

Second MMUN Leadership Institute

The second Leadership Institute was held in June 2011 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC for experienced MMUN educators and alumni. Eight students and five teachers attended.

Third MMUN Teachers Workshop for Elementary and Middle School Chinese Teachers

Seven Elementary and Middle School Chinese teachers from Beijing, China attended a specially designed five- day MMUN Teachers workshop during the American Thanksgiving week, 2011 at the Marriott, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, NYC and the UN Headquarters.

Professional Guidance and Leadership

Judith Cunningham

Judith Cunningham is the Executive Director for the MMUN. A Montessori teacher and administrator, Judith along with Ambassador Francis Lorenzo conceived of the MMUN six years ago. She founded MMUN to help students find their voices, take action and build peace as a way of honoring Maria Montessori's legacy and implementing her dream of world peace. In addition to her responsibilities with MMUN, Judith is also Head of Oak Farm Montessori School.

Michael Jacobson

Michael serves as Chair of the MMUN Board of Directors and Business Manager. He worked in collaboration with Judith Cunningham to help craft the operational structure supporting the founding of the MMUN program in her vision. In addition to serving as Board Chair, Michael acts as the liaison with the Ambassadors and UN leadership that support MMUN during the course of the year between conference dates.

Dr. Lalit Ecka

Lalit is the Training Director of MMUN and a Montessori Secondary Educator at the School of the Woods, Houston, TX. He has national and international leadership experiences in India and the USA, is certified in Secondary and Primary Montessori Education and has a multi-disciplinary educational and professional background in the Behavioural, Health, and Social Sciences. Lalit is passionate about empowering individuals to find peace within, recognizing that with peace from within one's mind and heart creates a peaceful surrounding and world.

Heidi Walters

Heidi, a Montessori parent, has been the Accounts Manager and Registrar for Montessori Model UN since its inception. Her role includes acting as liaison to the schools, bookkeeping, managing the online conference registration process and providing customer service to the teacher coordinators. In short, she helps make sure participants arrive, have a place to stay, participate efficiently and get back home safely.

Giacomo Forte

As MMUN's Asia Manager, Giacomo, who lives in China, supervises and coordinates the activities of MMUN participating schools throughout Asia. He collaborates with the Asia schools in their development of MMUN Summer and After School Programs designed to prepare their students for MMUN conferences. As Montessori Education at the Elementary and Middle School levels is new to China, Giacomo also acts as liaison with the various Ministries of Education to assist them in their support of MMUN and MMUN's Global Peace Curriculum.