ETSU students serving as delegates to World Model United Nations

JOHNSON CITY – Seven students from East Tennessee State University are spending a week in Vancouver, British Columbia, at the Harvard World Model United Nations (UN), the first time the university has sent a full delegation to the conference.

The students come from different backgrounds but share a common goal: to gain a better understanding of world issues and how to work to solve them. Manuel Gonzalez, one of the ETSU delegates, said their attendance could pay long-term benefits at ETSU. The conference concludes this week.

"I think the most important thing to be gained is to broaden ETSU's horizons and bridge any gaps for international students," Gonzalez said. "We hope to heighten awareness and help expand the core of international students on our campus."

The delegates represent a wide sample of interests and academic majors at ETSU. Gonzalez is a senior majoring in health care administration; Iqra Ahmad is a junior Honors-in-Discipline scholar majoring in biology and international affairs; Mwamba Bowa is a sophomore Honors-in-Discipline scholar in engineering technology; Shae Keane, a junior University Honors scholar is studying languages and social justice; Morgan McFetters is a sophomore in international affairs with a political science minor; Megan Quinn is enrolled in the doctor of public health program; and Carter Sandlin, a sophomore University Honors scholar is majoring in business management.

Students from approximately 65 countries travel to the conference each year and are assigned to research and represent member-states that are not their own, in order to promote deeper understanding of other cultures. The ETSU group is representing Peru and Uganda, with each delegate assigned to serve on committees that model the structure of the UN.

Gonzalez said the Vancouver trip is only the start. When the students return, they will organize activities for the newly formed ETSU Chapter of the World Model UN. Planned activities include a public presentation of their experience at the conference, as well as a recruitment event and potluck meal where interested students bring a dish that represents their culture.

Dr. Dilshod Achilov, an assistant professor in the ETSU Department of Political Science, International Affairs and Public Administration, serves as faculty advisor for the delegation. The group has also worked closely with Dr. Rebecca Pyles, Dean of the Honors College, and Jeff Anderson of University Advancement.

The ETSU delegation is being supported by the ETSU Honors College, the Office of Student Affairs, the Office of Academic Affairs, and donors outside the university, including the Johnson City Monday Evening Rotary.