

## Whittier finishes third at state UN Competition

HAVERTHILL -- The Model United Nations team at Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School finished third in a statewide competition in which they were the only vocational-technical school present.

"I'm really proud of my students," said Advisor Jana Brown who teaches the UN Class at Whittier. "They all worked really hard and it paid off." Thirty-two Whittier students participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Model United Nations Conference at UMass, Lowell April 7-9. They competed against students from six other schools. Four Whittier seniors also received individual awards for their performances.

Teams are judged on several criteria including how well they know the position of their assigned country, participation, diplomacy, knowledge of parliamentary procedure, and the quality of their written position papers.

As a member of the Security Council, Senior Mark Mailhot spent three days discussing the situation in Iran. "I would really recommend taking the class," he said. "The experience made me more comfortable speaking in front of people I don't know and learn how to present an opinion without causing conflict."

Topics also included security concerns in Afghanistan, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the Israeli occupation of Palestine, trade relations with the People's Republic of China, the global food crisis, and the search for sustainable energy.

Students learn negotiation skills, public speaking and knowledge of international issues, Ms. Brown said. "It was really great to hear them on the bus talking about the different countries and their positions on the issues."

Individual awards went to Zachary McVicker, People's Choice; Mark Mailhot, second place, Security Council; Patrick Hrubes, second place, European Union; and William Gould, second place, United National Human Rights Council.

CAD Drafting Teacher Scott Robertson is also an advisor. He was on the first UN team at Whittier when he was a student there 15 years ago and thought so much of it he decided to sign on as advisor.

