Virginia’s Model League of Arab States @ ODU

By Andrew Vincent

At Old Dominion University the Model League of Arabs (MLAS) has two components on-campus: an academic class, and student volunteers running a High School Conference and attending regional and national conferences.

On March 6 of this year, in the Webb University Student Center, the 11th Annual Model League of Arab States High School Conference. The conference is a part of a program sponsored by the National Council on U.S.-Arab States (NCUSAR), the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce and the League of Arab States Information Center and Old Dominion University.

Dr. Fran Hassencahl, director of the ODU MLAS, along with student volunteers organized and put together a great League of Arab States simulation for the following high schools who were in attendance for the event: Grafton, Heritage, Kecoughtan, Kellam, Salem, Tabb, Warwick, and Woodside High Schools.

This conference simulates the five committees of the League: the Economic Affairs, Palestinian Affairs, Political Affairs, Socio-cultural Affairs, and Security Affairs. In this simulation students assume the role of Arab diplomats, debating and discussing issues in an effort to trying to address the day-to-day problems before the League and its citizens.

It is hoped that through role-playing League diplomats; students would gain a better understanding of the Arab world and its role in regional and international affairs.

Most students don’t know about the Model United Nations Society, even fewer know of the Model League of Arabs States.

The Model United Nations Society (MUN) has been a part of the Old Dominion campus for 27 years, and hosts one of the largest High School Model United Nations conferences on the East Coast. The MUN supports at least three other model programs and competes in College competitions around the country and the world.

One of the largest model programs outside the Model United Nations is the Model League of Arab States (MAL), a student organization sponsored by the Department of Communication and Theater Arts.

The MAL competition team attended their regional competition, held at Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina, from March 19-21. The team received several top delegate awards and an honorable mention for its overall performance.

The award winning team included: Jon Hays,