

Salam Lazkani

I would like to share one of my recent experiences at Park University with you. In mid-March, I traveled with several other Park University students to New York City for the annual Model United Nations conference. We represented a joint team between three Park campuses: Parkville, Washington D.C, and El Paso. There were more than 4,000 students at this conference, half of them were from outside the USA, and the other half came from the top universities around the nation. We felt so proud and special to be among all of these universities. We knew very well how much Park is supporting its students and how much our administration wants us to excel in life.

Our team was the most diversified team in the entire conference, even though there were so many international students there. Our team consisted of students from Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Moldova, Georgia, Magnolia, Syria, three American students from the Midwest, four American students from the El Paso campus with Hispanic origins, and two American students from Washington D.C., one of them African American and both of them served in Iraq as Marine soldiers for two terms.

When I was talking to the Secretary General at the conference, I told her about our team. She was amazed and said, “What a university that can bring all of these countries together in one team!”

We did a great job at the conference and we were really close to winning an award, but we lost by one vote. I think our strength was in our diversification and the support that Park University so generously gave us. After the conference, we all became close friends and I feel so fortunate that I met all of these wonderful students.

I have always been fascinated by big university names, but honestly, now I feel there is no difference between Park students and students of the top ranked universities in the country. I had the opportunity to sit with these students in the same conference and I am getting the same support and chances that these students are getting, but the difference is, in Park, we are more diversified and we represent over 109 countries.

Park University is great because of the people who dedicate their lives to give us a better chance. I am having the experience of a lifetime at Park. I would challenge anyone to find another university with faculty and staff that truly want their students to make a difference in this life by offering them every opportunity to excel and develop a solid career the way that Park does. I know very well that most universities teach from the same textbooks that we have and they have good faculty too, but I am sure that they do not have the passion about globalization with human face and international education that Park University does. In many universities, students are just an ID number, but at Park, we are more than that. We have all been encouraged to speak up and stand for what we believe. At Park, we learn, interact and share one another's cultures.

I still remember the first class I took in globalization, and in the text, they said the goal is that "whole world will be one village." Honestly, I thought that seemed a bit extreme, but after being a Park student, I can say that the whole world is one University. This University is in the heart of America and this University is a melting pot that will bring everybody together to promote better understanding between different nations and civilization. This University is Park and I am proud to Park student and Pirate.

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart, and in the name of the entire Model United Nations team for giving us the chance to make a difference in this life.