

IPEI Grant Helps IHS Students Develop Leadership Skills and Global Awareness



As the last bell rings, dozens of Ithaca High School students, coats and book bags in hand, pack themselves into English teacher Jeffrey Miller’s classroom and settle into desks. A student officer leads the group in a discussion about recent news of Hopi Indian masks being auctioned despite opposition from tribe members. Over the next hour, students voice a range of moral and legal arguments, citing historical cases dealing with cultural identity, imperialist powers, gender and racial minorities, affirmative action, and poverty.

This is just one example of the types of topics IHS students research and discuss during weekly meetings of the Model United Nations club. The group of nearly 60 students simulates the work of UN ambassadors, debating issues on the UN agenda involving peace and security, human rights and global health. This year, students have studied gun control, obesity and the Ukraine crisis.

Model UN prepares students to compete at conferences across the state, funded in part by an Ithaca Public Education Initiative Red and Gold Grant. IPEI Red and Gold Grants are awards to teachers, administrators, students and community members for projects that strengthen and enrich Ithaca schools. April 21 is the next deadline for Red and Gold Grant application submissions; the awards of up to \$500 are announced within two weeks.

“The IPEI grants have been instrumental in allowing IHS students with limited resources to attend and participate in Model United Nations conferences across the state,” said Miller, the club’s advisor. “Our club is dedicated to ensuring that a member’s access to activities is never jeopardized. As a result, our club is distinctively diverse and inclusive, but also close-knit.”