

## Ecotek Lab Students Meet With World Leaders at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City



During Spring Break week it is common for students to spend time playing video games, watching television, and hanging out with their friends. The students in Ecotek Lab did something different. They spent part of their Spring Break, April 1-3, 2013, in New York City meeting with world leaders at the United Nations Headquarters. The group included 15 students (see list below) and 7 adult chaperones. The purpose of the trip was to help students better understand the link between science and society as well as encourage them to develop ideas that may help countries meet the mandates of the UN Millennium Goals.

The students met with diplomats from Argentina, Bolivia and Peru. The topics discussed during the meetings were varied. The students were separated into teams. The topic of environmental conservation was covered by Miles Frierson, Nydea Terrell and Kayla Young. Lakia Torbert and Briana Young discussed ways to combat hunger and extreme poverty. Malik Bassett, Amber Young, and Raynisha Pannell inquired about issues related to improving maternal health. Joshua May and Daniel Hudson focused on infrastructure and development. Elainah Bayless and Colin Wilson addressed concerns regarding the illegal trafficking of exotic animals. David Whiteside and Demarius Clemons covered alternative energy (e.g. wind energy, biomass, biofuels), while Jenna Snapp discussed the peaceful use of outer space.

To prepare for their visit to the UN, the students spent hours reviewing country reports and scientific data. They also went through several weeks of Spanish language instruction at Ecotek Lab with staff from Prembel LLC. After the diplomat meetings, the students toured the UN facilities; visited the 9/11 Memorial and experienced the hustle and bustle of Time Square.

Having a high scientific IQ is one thing, but to apply it on a global level in the presence of world leaders in *their* native language is something quite different. The Ecotek Lab students did not only meet with ambassadors, they were ambassadors for their families, school and community. If words could be used to describe their performance at the United Nations they would be: *amazing, awesome and inspiring!*

### **About the Ecotek Science Program**

Ecotek is a science research lab program for young inventors and researchers in grades 5 thru 12. Student scientists work on projects aligned with the issues being addressed by world leaders at the United Nations. To learn more about Ecotek Lab go to <http://www.ecotek-us.com>

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