

Robichaud High School Students Present Research to United Nations

What began as a year-long research project ended on an international stage for six students from Robichaud High School who recently presented their findings to a United Nations diplomat.

The students—Kase Patton, Makayla Horton, Sara Alrad, Emmanuel Okugbeni, Majd Alrad and Raheem Bell—spent the academic year studying water quality as part of their [University of Michigan- Dearborn GEAR UP](#)/Trio Upward Bound program in collaboration with Ecotek Lab. Together, they collaborated with other Michigan students to study the water quality in Japan, Germany, Italy, Angola and India to help determine ways to deliver safer drinking water around the world.

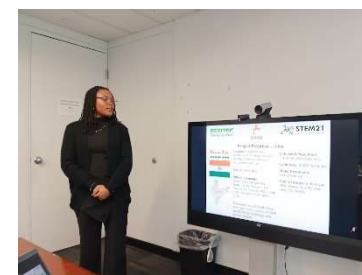
As a part of the project, students worked in a lab after school and used advanced lab tools to measure the probable hydrogen concentration (ph meter), dissolved oxygen levels (DO meter), the amount of total dissolved solids (TDS meter) and the nitrate levels (chemical reagents) in the water samples for each country. Students also had to do statistics related work after collecting data, such as determining the mean, median, mode, range and standard deviation of the data and produce visual models of the data relationships using macros written in Visual Basic.

Before their trip to the United Nations, students prepared several technical papers and read scientific material on hydrology and the progress being made on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Their work culminated in a 40-slide presentation delivered to a United Nations diplomat from Angola. The diplomat, impressed by the students' insights and professionalism, plans to take the presentation to the committee responsible for addressing water quality within the United Nations.

The project offered hands-on experience in academic research, but students walked away with more than just data and citations.

"This wasn't just about research," said Dr. Stiles Simmons, superintendent of Westwood Community School District. "These students learned how to present complex ideas, how to collaborate, and, most importantly, how to believe in their own voices. We are deeply proud of their achievement."

Over the course of the year, the students learned valuable skills working alongside Ecotek Lab, developing both subject-matter expertise and skills in communication, critical thinking and public speaking. This was the first year Robichaud students were invited to the United Nations to present their findings and it was an unforgettable experience for all.



"This work with Robichaud students is a part of a five year program between Ecotek Lab and the United Nations," said Keith Young, CEO of Ecotek Lab. "Our goal is to reach 5,000 student scientists worldwide and will result in over one million liters of water testing from across the globe. We look for students to ask important questions, stay curious and push through the tough parts of research. I'm proud of what we accomplished."

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