

**The Colorado Springs School**  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
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# NEWS

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## **THE COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL HOSTS STATEWIDE MODEL UNITED NATIONS COMPETITION WITH AFRICAN FOCUS**

**Colorado Springs, Colo.** – The Colorado Springs School (CSS) is proudly hosting a statewide Model United Nations meet on **Saturday, April 25, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.** The competition will draw 180 students from 14 schools including: The Colorado Springs School, Boulder, George Washington, Regis, Pine Creek, Ft. Collins, Colorado Academy, St. Mary's, Smoky Hill, Peak to Peak, Highlands Ranch, Denver Center for International Studies, Chapparral, and Cherry Creek. For seven hours, the students will conduct simulations of the United Nations and African Union.

For several months students have been preparing for the rigorous competition and researching assignments which include the following simulations:

- A Beginner/Intermediate Security Council will assess two topics: the Resurgence of the Lord's Resistance Army of Uganda, and Peace and Conflict in the DR Congo. This group was large enough to separate into 2 separate Security Councils, each with 17 delegations (2 students each) - from the following list: Austria, Costa Rica, Croatia, Burkina Faso, Japan, Vietnam, Mexico, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Uganda, Turkey, China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, France, United States, as well as several non-voting observers: DR Congo, Rwanda, UNICEF and MSF (Doctors Without Borders)
- The Intermediate Council is a simulation of the African Union - and they will be debating a recent proposal to create a "United States of Africa". This council will divide into 2 teams in order to address issues of military/defense and economics/trade. We currently have 48 delegations (2 students each, representing 48 different nations of Africa!

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## **NEWS**

- Finally, an Advanced Historical Council will ask students to recreate the outcomes of the crises in the Congo in 1960, when Patrice Lumumba became Prime Minister and a region known as Katanga threatened to secede. They will open their council by debating the actual Security Council resolution that was presented on July 14, 1960 at the United Nations - from there, they will be free to creatively re-interpret history.

“It’s inspiring to witness high school students seeking alternative solutions to real world problems,” said David Benson, Upper School History Teacher and Model United Nations Advisor. “Model UN topics are real and they are engaging a new generation of thinkers to explore the practices of a well-constructed debate, diplomacy, and even compromise. These kids are looking for viable outcomes to complex world matters.”

The Colorado Springs School Model UN team has been working very hard in preparation of the meet. Gabe Yaakob, the Model UN team’s Secretary-General is organizing the tournament and is also in charge of the Historical Council. Harry Gilbert and Maya Quijada have organized the African Union, which will be the biggest council in a Colorado State meet in recent history. Janae Boschert and Kathy Endicott are organizing the Beginner/Intermediate Security Council. Other organizers in the CSS Model UN club include Britt Ford and Tahanni Khan. Club members Kelsey Aldrich, Tanzeela Khan, and Elizabeth Reinhardt will be competing in the meet. The students in charge of each council authored background guides that were circulated to all competitors.

For more information about Model United Nations at The Colorado Springs School, contact David Benson, Upper School History Teacher and Model UN advisor at [dbenson@css.org](mailto:dbenson@css.org) or 719.434.3506.

### **About David Benson**

David Benson has taught Upper School History at The Colorado Springs School since 2005. He teaches AP US History, AP Comparative Politics and African History and is the faculty sponsor of the school’s Model United Nations team. Benson graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in French and History. He earned his Master’s degree in African History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he also attained competency in Hausa and Swahili, two sub-Saharan African languages. Before moving to Colorado, Benson was the academic director of the School for International Training’s college study abroad program in Cameroon, Central Africa for 10 years. He has done research and traveled extensively in Central and West Africa, including the Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, and

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Equatorial Guinea. Benson led a CSS seminar of seventeen CSS students to Cameroon, Africa in March 2009. In the summer, Benson is a camp director for the Concordia Language Villages, where he runs the French Voyageur program, a French language wilderness and historical immersion program that takes place in the north woods of Minnesota. He is also the director of a study abroad program for high school students that takes place in Cameroon, Central Africa. Fluent in French, Hausa and Swahili, Benson has also studied, Fulfulde, Yemba, Malgassy and Pidgin. An avid lover of paddling and wilderness experiences, Benson has participated in and/or led canoeing and kayaking expeditions in New Zealand, Samoa, South Africa, Namibia, Cameroon, Madagascar, Canada, and the United States.

### **About The Colorado Springs School (CSS)**

CSS offers an experiential educational curriculum for Pre-Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Through superior academics and mentoring, The Colorado Springs School prepares students to think independently and to meet the needs of a dynamic world with leadership, ingenuity, problem-solving skills, and personal integrity.

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