

# Monash Students Simulate the UN General Assembly

Castan Centre Associate Dr Stephen Gray got the chance to act as UN Secretary-General in June when he chaired an all-day conference run at Monash by the United Nations Association of Australia (Victorian Division), designed to simulate the protocols and procedures of the UN General Assembly.

The conference was attended by 60 Victorian high school students from schools from the southern Metropolitan and Gippsland regions identified as under-represented at university. It required delegates to research and formulate a position on the future of indigenous peoples from the perspective of various UN member states.

Role-playing as their country's delegate, students put their nation's position on various resolutions, formulated and debated amendments, and finally voted on a redrafted resolution. They quickly took on these roles, entering enthusiastically into the process of dialogue, diplomacy, and negotiation, learning about international law, about the UN and about Monash University in the process.



Students role-play as country delegates at the UN Association of Australian conference at Monash

# Global Interns Take Off

*The Castan Centre has again awarded exciting internship opportunities to six Monash law students with a strong and longstanding interest in human rights. Meet the exceptional students who will bring their skills to a diverse group of human rights organisations on three different continents this summer.*

**Ruvini Leitan**, who will be interning at Human Rights First in New York, has always been interested in the interplay between notions of social justice and human rights and the realities of public policy and decision-making. As Programs Director of the Melbourne-based charity Embrace Education, Ruvini has worked directly with vulnerable students from refugee backgrounds. She has also volunteered as National and Victorian President of UN Youth Australia and worked as a Research Assistant at Leiden University's Institute of Immigration, researching the child rights implications of migration and child abduction cases.

**Sally Harris** is very excited to be travelling to Kuala Lumpur and Geneva to intern with International Women's Rights Action Watch-Asia Pacific.

In 2011 she worked with the Department of Human Services, where she researched the financial disadvantage faced by refugees and migrants. Last summer, Sally also volunteered with a human rights NGO in Cambodia, where she was able to secure funding for a grassroots anti-corruption newspaper. She has also completed an in-house internship with the Castan Centre and is currently interning with the Victoria Law Foundation.

**Claerwen O'Hara** will be interning with the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York.

In 2010, Claerwen taught English to disadvantaged children in Varanasi, India, and she returned to India in 2012 to intern with the Madras Council of Social Service in Chennai, where she gave legal advice to victims of human trafficking and domestic abuse.

Claerwen has also completed internships with the International Humanitarian Law Department of the Red Cross in 2011, and with the Castan Centre earlier this year. She is particularly interested in rights pertaining to gender and sexuality, and as an intern for the Victorian Parliament, produced a research paper on the role of state legislatures in the same sex marriage debate in Australia. She is also currently writing her honours thesis on issues experienced by asylum seekers belonging to sexual minorities.

**Isabella Royce** is delighted to be interning with the International Commission of Jurists

in Geneva. Through her work with non-profit human rights media organisation Right Now, Isabella has been able to explore the dialogue on human rights issues in Australia and its wider-reaching effects.

Her studies at Sciences-Po University in Paris have provided a foundation of knowledge on EU Law, upon which she looks forward to building at the ICJ.

**Chandni Dhingra** is looking forward to interning at Equitable Cambodia in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

She has a longstanding interest in human rights and international development, having worked with disadvantaged children as a leader at Licola Camp for Disadvantaged Children in 2009, and a leader in literacy at the Mae Kok Foundation for Children in Thailand, 2010.

Since 2011, Chandni has worked as a member of the World Vision team and, through the Centre of Multicultural Youth and the Migrant Resource Centre, has also dedicated her time to helping integrate and teach English to refugees and newly arrived migrants from around the world. Her experiences in dealing with often-traumatised people were extended through her client-based work at the Family Law Assistance Program.

Finally, **Kelsey Paske** will be interning in India with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health.

Kelsey took on the role of VGen Monash President at the end of her first year of university in 2010, juggling the role with VGen Victoria's University Team Leader position, where she oversaw the development of student movements at Victorian universities. In 2010 Kelsey was also responsible for establishing the Child Health Now Community at Monash University's Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

She was promoted to National University Advisor for VGen in 2012, and also represented World Vision Australia at the Australian Medical Students Association Global Health Conference, speaking on how young people can help tackle child and maternal mortality.

*You can follow the interns on their journeys overseas and their work with these unique organisations on the 2014 Global Intern blog at [castanglobalinterns.wordpress.com](http://castanglobalinterns.wordpress.com). Interns will be updating the blog periodically with their stories and photos.*