

## **Our trip to New York by Sean Filipin (6-15 March 2012)**

Here we are, back from our extraordinary trip to **New York**. I am one of the eight students from ISIS Malignani who started their journey on Monday 6th March 2012. We flew from Venice airport with Delta Airlines and landed after 9 hours at JF Kennedy Airport in New York. Expectations were high, luggage heavy, international security scrupulous.

A bus was waiting for us at the terminal: destination **Skyline Hotel** in **Manhattan**. The other passengers were students from Athens and Sardinia, our partners in the FriSaLi MUN Project. The first impact with the Big Apple was stunning: breathtaking skyscrapers, millions of cars, amazing adverts on huge screens, non-stop lights and entertainment. New York is a city that never sleeps, a colourful melting pot of races and languages.

After 45 minutes on the bus, we took possession of our rooms in the comfortable and central Skyline Hotel: a 3-star hotel which is worth a 5-star hotel in Europe! We were exhausted for the long flight and we slept like angels the first night for 10 consecutive hours!

The following day we woke up around 10am, had a full breakfast and strolled around New York city before joining the Opening Ceremony of NHSMUN (National High School Model United Nations) at the **Hilton hotel** in the late afternoon. Over 3,000 young people were present!

The next day we were divided in different committees, mainly disarmament and science and technology. The topics under discussions were terrorism, nuclear weapons and biotechnologies. We represented the states of Jamaica and Equatorial Guinea. In the beginning we were shocked because the other delegates were fluent speakers of English as they all attended international schools of English in their countries.

We, Malignani people, reacted positively to the great challenge and we spoke our mind at the conference. After all, the percentage of Italians at NHSMUN was significant. The best day was the closing ceremony at the Palace of the United Nations in New York. How memorable! We felt so important and so meaningful: we were about to change the world even if almost invisibly! We perceived the official, formal and honorable spirit of the initiative.

Now the NHSMUN is over but I want to repeat the experience! It is a moment of positive insight, an occasion to change your filter and look at things differently. I recommend this experience to everybody because it causes an accelerated development of your identity.

Yet New York was also a sightseeing tour. We climbed the Empire State Building admiring the view during the day and at night with all lights on. A special sight, indeed. The popular Statue of Liberty on Liberty island was also a "must" together with Ellis Island and the interesting immigration museum. This trip was planned for Sunday, March 11th.

Monday, March 12th, was devoted to museum visits: the National Museum of Natural Science History (the one used in the movie "One night at the museum"); the Guggenheim Museum of Modern Art with the mushroom building as top one for its architecture! Besides, the Metropolitan Museum deserves a visit! It is so huge that more days are necessary to appreciate its treasures.

Tuesday, March 13th was a day of free shopping or free sightseeing. It was a time of relaxation and fun. I took a walk in Central park and felt happy and satisfied. Travelling is learning, meeting new people, tasting different food, smelling different perfumes, feeling different and freer. Life is worth discovering! Join in new year, be part of the big MUN family