

# “Unintended Outcomes”

By Madeline Coulter, President 2010

As ridiculous as it sounds when I am on a Model Congress (MC) trip it is as if the rest of the world doesn't exist. On that bus to D.C., New York, or Boston I not am thinking of the Unit Five APUSH History essays that I have yet to write or the two chemistry labs that I'll be missing. We all are entirely in the moment and yet completely removed from the rest of the world. We depart from our homes and school to attack and debate real issues in our “Pretend Congress,” dubbed facetiously by a naïve faculty member!

Honestly I can say that I am proud of our “normal” crew of BHS MCers. I attribute part of our success to the fact that we never faltered or denied our humble beginnings. Yes, we are all from public school looking to achieve success in a private dominated conference. But we're not crazy. We're serious in the courtroom, giggly outside and we bicker like a family, a family that happens to be comprised of democrats, republicans, K-pop fans, and food trays.

For me BHS MC has been a long line of unintended outcomes. I joined MC because my sisters did it! I saw both of them going on these insanely awesome trips and dressing up; it was the “cool older thing” to do. Admittedly I not only wanted to be a key member of the club like my sister, Char, but I also wanted to be better. I was such a little twerp aiming to one up my sister. Along with my friend Keah Lonergan, now fellow MC President, we shared our goals to supersede our siblings. Then throughout these past four years my outlook has undoubtedly changed. And here we come to the **unintended outcomes** of MC. I have become part of a tightly knit senior group including some I had never really known prior to MC. I have gained so much confidence when speaking to, meeting, or dancing in front of anyone. ☺ I have learned the best ways to confront, cooperate, and persuade. As I gained more responsibility in the club, I witnessed my focus switch from my own development to the progress of younger members. I have attended almost every mock session and bill writing practice for underclassmen for the past year, and yet although I was the one teaching I think I learned the most from leading. I could continue on for a page or so of the unintended outcomes of BHS MC, but that would include a long line of inside jokes and gushy sentences, but I best leave those to Petela.

Simply, BHS MC is the best; it has been the most rewarding and remarkable high school experience to date. To end, I would like to state that BHS MC is not as fragile as my sister had stated in her final thoughts. Although there are enormous amounts of work and dedication that go into making all of our trips possible, I truly believe that the club is in good hands. With our trusty Mentor/Photographer/Supervisor Petela, honorary Guitar Master and chaperone Cintron, and a solid group of promising underclassmen I think the seniors can leave the club reluctantly, but with the confidence that BHS MC will still be going strong for many years to come. Thanks to everyone that put up with or perhaps encouraged our demanding nature, loud cackling, “uncleanable” hotel rooms, and passion for the Model Congress experience -- I wouldn't have had it any other way.

**Madeline attended 7 conferences, winning 2 awards, 1 Gavel at PMC '09 and was in the Presidential Cabinet at Yale MC.** Her sister Charlotte was an award winning esteemed MC President in 2005. Madeline will be attending Wesleyan University majoring in Physics or Bio-Chemistry and playing lacrosse. Hopefully she'll start a Model Congress club there so that we can win more gavels in CT. Her cheerful smile ☺ & friendly positive personality will be missed, a lot ☺