PRAC funding outcomes

**Project:** College of Marin participation in the UC Berkeley Model UN conference
Thursday February 28th to Sunday March 3rd, 2013

**How were the resources used?**

The money provided for participation costs for the conference.
Each student participant $84 x 11 = $924
Faculty Advisor $75
Total: $999

Students paid for their own food and hotel rooms, although they were not required to stay in a hotel as part of the conference.

**How did the resources improve student performance (or improve your program)?**

The Pols 210 course which I teach each spring, called War, Peace and the United Nations, includes the component of student participation in the Model UN conference. Students from the College of Marin have been attending this conference, or others like it, over the last twenty years. Anecdotal evidence suggests students find the MUN conference participation to be a rich experience, giving them a deeper understanding of diplomacy, both international and interpersonal.

For the conference students are given a conference identity representing a particular country on a particular UN or other international committee. Students are required to “act in character” to negotiate towards outcomes on an issue that would be one their country would in the real world support. For instance, this year we had students representing Algeria on the Arab League and the UN Human Rights Council, Belgium on an historical committee debating international action on the influenza pandemic of 1919 as well as a Belgian judge at the International Court of Justice, and Australia on the UN Security Council and at the G20.

Students who attended the conference this year gave presentations or wrote reports about their participation at the conference. They were required, as part of the conference, to be fully prepared to know all they could about their country’s background and about the issues they were to discuss. The research and conference debate boosted their knowledge of subjects relating to the class, and gave them greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the UN and the international system.
Provide evidence to support the impact on student performance due to the resources.

The best evidence to show the impact on student performance of their participating in the Model UN conference is to see what they do with their experience afterwards. They get enthusiasm for research, public speaking, and organizing, as well as learning about international politics. They continue this experience in the Model UN student club where students who first went to an MUN conference in my class have gone on to conferences at Diablo Valley Community College, UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, UCLA, and (for the first time this year) the University of Chicago. Students have regularly thanked me for the MUN experience that they first got in my class, and this year (thanks to PRAC funding) has been no different. This year has, perhaps, been the most successful year for witnessing positive consequences of this funding for as well as attending numerous other conferences the students, through their MUN club, created a College of Marin NorCal MUN Conference (with the help of students from Diablo Valley College).

What I want to stress here is that the funding for students to go to the MUN conference while participating in my class has been vital. In years past funding was provided through the good office of the College of Marin Foundation, but since that has not been possible PRAC funding has been crucial.