

## **International Mountain Day 2017**

I was able to participate and attend the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual International Mountain Day this past Monday December 4, 2017 at Utah Valley University. The event was hosted by students, members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU as student engaged learning model, when student do everything by themselves and ask teachers to help them only in case of urgency. UIMF hosts the United Nations International Mountain Day every year since 2010.



*Diane Acevedo, VP, UIMF presents certificate of recognition from FAO-UN to Mayor Richard Brunst*

It was very interesting to hear about the many ways we can help our world. It was the honor for us to have as a participant the mayor of Orem City, Richard Brunst.

Speakers such as Dr. Baldomero Lagos, explained the importance of the engagement of students in groups like this one are opportunities for future internships or jobs in the United Nations. We were able to have a conference call via Skype to the United Nations.

Ms. Chelsey Butchereit is a refugee advocate and currently teaches at BYU and gave us a wonderful speech regarding how we can help refugees and not only by helping them relocate to their new homes but let them feel welcomed as well.

Ms. Gina Cornia, a head of NGO from Salt Lake City spoke about fighting hunger. This topic is especially important in my opinion, because it's sad that we have this issue even here in the state of Utah. She emphasized the importance of speaking to our elected officials and making sure that they take action to reduce hunger among local children.

Ms. Colleen Bye, representative of the Climate Change Coalition, talked to us about the importance of climate change and how year by year this is an issue that has gotten worse. We can see it in our wildfires in California, how droughts because of climate change have affected many lives in just this year.

Mr. Derek Garfield, UVU student gave a talk about the importance of helping each other. He spoke about indigenous Sami people in Sweden because of his ties to that country: his wife is from Sweden and he was able to live there for 4 years. This has let him see the differences between cultures however, still see the similarities between us.

Ms. Megan Raines, another UVU student made the most touching speech. She talked about how she puts her little input to help the neediest people across the globe in Africa. She helps an individual that has 20 orphan children under his care. She sends \$20 dollars a month to help him out with clothes, school, food and other needs that the children may have. Her presentation had me in tears after watching a video of a child name Joseph who was telling a story. It was very touching to see the need in other countries and to value and appreciate what we have and sometimes we just take for granted.

We were able to see how UIMF members successfully hosted the event. And their faculty advisors, including Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev did an outstanding job as well in helping students engage in forums such as this one. Our faculty are very driven and dedicated to student successes and we, students should all take advantage of the fact that they are so willing to help and are also so knowledgeable how to connect our engagement with the United Nations agenda.

*Pamela Miller, UVU Student*