

## **Rotaract and the 2018 UN NGO Conference**



*Kyle Warren (L) at the UN NGO conference at UVU*

On October 27, 2018, Utah Valley University (UVU) had the privilege of hosting a United Nations (UN) NGO conference for NGOs in Utah. The Conference was focused on strengthening local NGOs and helping those involved to better understand their individual role and how they can help to implement and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As a member of Utah Valley University's (UVU) Rotaract, I was very fortunate to attend this event and learn and discuss the abundance of programs underway and actions being taken throughout the world in regards to the 2030 UN SDGs. As a branch of Rotary International, Rotaract seek to benefit people throughout the world including those who are local and international. To do this, colaboration with the UN is critical. More importantly, Rotaract can play a large role in the achievment to the UN SDGs.

While attending the event, I had the privilege to hear from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Utah such as Engage Now Africa, Choice Humanitarian, and Big Ocean. These organizations, along with Rotary International, seek to achieve the UN SDGs. Specifically the goals

of ending poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, and clean water and sanitation, and economic growth. These are only some of the 17 SDGs that fit perfectly with the mission of Rotary.



*(L to R): Orem Rotary representatives Dr. D.J. Smith and Clark Merkley with UVU Alumni Tyler L. Jaynes during the UN NGO conference at UVU*

During a brief intermission of speakers, I had the chance to talk with members of Orem Rotary and other NGOs that were attending the conference. One of these individuals was Mr. Clark Merkley, President-designate of Orem Rotary, who recently attended our World Polio Day event a few weeks before. It was great to see so many members attending such an event. Everyone was eager to see how they could promote NGOs and to aid in the efforts of the SDGs.



Overall, I felt, that the conference was a roaring success and those who were able to attend left feeling that they had a better understanding of how to be involved. With the SDGs inplace and the world full of NGOs excited to move forward, UVU Rotaract is excited to see what the future holds for the world with so many amazing people seeking to make it a better place. UVU Rotaract commits to doing its part in seeing that the 2030 SDGs are accomplished and extend the same invitation to all other NGOs as we enter this new decade with high hopes and even higher motivation.

*Kyle Warren, member, UVU Rotaract*