

Orem Rotary Club Lunch with Mr. Richard Jordan

On Wednesday, April 10, 2019, Joel Frost, President of the Foreign Affairs club as part of Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University and two of us, UIMF and UVU Rotaract Club members attended a lunch hosted by the Orem Rotary Club with Mr. Richard Jordan as a keynote speaker. Mr. Richard Jordan was invited to UVU and hosted by the Foreign Affairs club and Rotaract provided assistance in that goal. Mr. Jordan is long time active contributor to the United Nations (UN) activities and a Chairman of the 60th UN Conference of the Department of Public Information. He gave a presentation about his experience with the UN, many Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO's), including his efforts in sustainable development, as well as his personal experience with Rotary International, in addition to his encounters with countless UN diplomats from around the world.

Shortly after arriving, Orem Rotary Club member Dr. D.J. Smith, welcomed both Hailee and myself to the lunch and invited me to say a few words about my recent presentation at the 63rd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. I began by introducing Hailee Hodgson, as one of my colleagues from UIMF and newest member to the UVU Rotaract Club, also by thanking the Orem Rotary Club President Elect Clark Merkley and the club entirely for their generous donation, which made the trip possible. I spoke briefly on the impact the experience had on me as I spend most of my time participating in local and state government affairs, so participating on the international level was interesting, as it required applying the same principles I was accustomed to but on the international stage. In addition to the impression working with people from all corners of the world deriving from incredibly different cultures but us all working together for the same goal, had on me as well as my peers from UVU and in UIMF.

Shortly thereafter, Joel Frost, as a major host of Mr. Richard Jordan introduced the guest to the audience, and then the presentation ensued.

One of the key segments of Mr. Richard Jordan's presentation was regarding the upcoming UN NGO conference that will take place in Salt Lake City, Utah, August 2019. This will be the first time the United Nations has held a conference like this outside of

New York while still inside the United States. The theme of the NGO conference is “Creating resilient communities through diversity”. The conference will be comprised from many workshops, round tables, as well as sessions to listen to, and the UN is expecting a large number of youth in attendance and youth influence.



Mr. Richard Jordan giving presentation at Orem Rotary Club Lunch

Mr. Richard Jordan then explained what “resilience” means and how Rotary plays a role as influencers and creators of “resilient” communities through the meaning of: preparedness, empowerment of women in mountain communities, the empowerment of people through giving tools people need to empower themselves, creating a stronger community, different regions and cultures coming together as one community, and how NGOs have the power to address these issues and make these goals a reality. NGOs have the power including but not limited to: grassroots engagement of even the most rural communities, the ability to focus or expand efforts where needed most as NGOs are not focused on winning elections nor are they bound by governmental program budgets, and NGOs have the freedom to say their message loud and proud.

By Hannah Bieker, Rotaractor and UIMF member



Group photo of Mr. Richard Jordan with members of the Orem Rotary and Rotaractors

As a new member to the UVU Rotaract Club, this was my first experience and exposure to Rotary. I am very excited to be a part of an organization that is so involved with communities I am a part of, and communities around the world that I can become a part. One of the most important messages I took away from the luncheon with the Orem Rotary and Mr. Jordan, was the push for a “resilient community”. As Hannah explained in the above paragraph, the core of a resilient community comes from the preparedness of the people, the empowerment of their women, and children, and a strong and well-rounded community. The family-centered focus that is prominent throughout Utah communities is one reason Utah is such a great model for the upcoming summit that will be held in Salt Lake City this August, “Building Inclusive and Sustainable Communities.”

Through my inclusion with UIMF and the influence of my peers and advisors, I have been very lucky to get involved more with my own community and our interaction

with the international community. I am excited to continue to learn from Rotary and the UVU Rotaract Club, as well as participate with my fellow UIMF members in the UN civil society conference in Salt Lake City in August.

By Hailee Hodgson, Rotaractor and UIMF member