

Student Engaged Learning through Interaction and Discussion with Mr. Dmitry Alekseevich Polyanskiy, the First Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia to the U.N., during his visit to UVU Campus



UVU Student Delegation with Mr. Dmitry Alekseevich Polyanskiy, Russian D.P.R.

On Friday, April 5th, Utah Valley University's Office for Global Engagement hosted Mr. Dmitry Alekseevich Polyanskiy, the First Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia to the U.N., on UVU's campus for the first time. The First Deputy Permanent Representative first had a presentation open to the public. In his presentation, he first took time to speak on Russia and what he does in the Security Council at the United Nations'. He took the time to explain Russian diplomacy in the modern world and then opened up the rest of the time for answering questions from the audience. It was very interesting to hear the Ambassador touch on topics and answer questions about what is happening with Russia right now. There has been a lot of misinformation and rumors

spread around about what the Russian military and government is involved in currently, especially in regards to Venezuela. The Russian Ambassador answered questions about it and shut those rumors down. He put heavy emphasis to read different sources of information and not to believe everything the mainstream media puts out there. He encouraged the entire audience to get their news from several different sources.

After the close of Mr. Dmitry Alekseevich Polyanskiy's presentation, Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF) members and students attending the study abroad group in Russia/Kyrgyzstan this summer were able to have a personal round table student discussion with the Russian Ambassador. During this discussion, students, including myself, were able to present some of UIMF and UVU's own ideas and achievements with Polyanskiy. We first presented to him a folder that included copies of official statements co-sponsored by The Russian Academy of Natural Sciences from CSW62, 2018 HLPF, and CSW63, as well as a copy of Utah Congressional Record highlighting UIMF achievements. I then spoke on UVU's Student Engaged Learning (SEL) Model and how UIMF had implemented that model into our own work and achievements through advocating for Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD). My other colleagues including Viktoriia Bahrii, Michael Hinatsu, Samuel Elzinga, Hannah Bieker, and William Gum were all given the opportunity to mention topics such as their experiences at the 2018 High Level Political Forum on sustainable development, the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63), Rotary and Roteractor's implementation of some of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and advocating for SMD and mountain women and girls. We also asked the Russian dignitary if their permanent mission would be willing to help out UIMF's

goals of SMD and help advocate for mountain women language to be put in the final outcome document at CSW64 next year in 2020. Mr. Dmitry Alekseevich Polyanskiy said he couldn't see why they wouldn't be willing to help. Through UIMF and UVU's SEL, I continue to interact with high-level dignitaries, establish and grow my own professional career, and advocate for SMD.

Megan Davis, UNA-USA Liaison and UIMF Member, UVU