

My Contribution to the 68th UN Civil Society Conference



Entrance to the Salt Lake Convention Center

On Monday, August 26 the 68th United Nations Conference (68UNCSC) began in Salt Lake City. I was very much looking forward to participating with my colleagues from the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) through a student engaged learning in another United Nations conference. This year's theme for 68UNCSC was "Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities. On August 25, I was charged with picking up Dr. Takeshi Utsumi from the Salt Lake airport and bring him to the the Alta club in Salt Lake as he was a distinguished guest visiting for for the UN conference. I had the opportunity to speak with Dr. Utsumi one on one during this time, he spoke to me about current initiatives regarding global cooperation with collectible and shared responsibilities when it comes to Sustainable Development Goals. As specific initiative he gave me a project summary on was to form an Electronic Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to link together individual countries' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) simulations together, with the goal of eventually also creating an Electronics United Nations (e-UN). It was fascinating to hear the work going on about different initiative being taken to further SDGs and it was a great

opportunity for me to speak with someone with so much prior background in global technology coordination.

The next few days of the conference were busy ones. I along with other UIMF members handled the UIMF exhibit where I had the chance to continually advocate for our activities and the Youth and the Mountains Journal as its Editor-in-Chief. As I was able to distribute quite a few copies of the journal, the 68th UNCSC provide me an incredible platform to distribute the journal and spread awareness on Sustainable Mountain Development Topics. I was interviewed by local journalists and managed to get into the school newspaper as well advocating for SMDs. I also had the chance to network with other organizations who were participating in the exhibitions and took away a lot from the exhibition experience.



Rebecca Bindraban speaks at the UN Civil Society Conference

During the conference the UIMF members, myself included, held a workshop on promoting Sustainable Mountains Development and each presenter shared own research, findings, and thoughts on the subject. As the Editor-in-Chief of the Youth and the Mountains Journal, I presented to the audience the contents of the 2018 and 2019 issues and how the journal advocated for SMDs locally and internationally. (<http://utahimf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/MS->

[Rebecca-Bindraban.pdf](#)). I talked also about the importance of empowering mountain communities and women and provided examples from Youth and the Mountains publications.

By the end of the convention I was able to advocate for SDGs and SMDs in several capacities. I also had the opportunity to learn what other advocates did to further the agenda of “Building Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Communities”. I really took away a great deal of knowledge from the conference and feel honored that I had the chance to present again at a UN conference. It was a pleasure for me to be part of the only youth led workshop and activities during the conference. I feel the conference was a success for myself and the UIMF.

Rebecca Bindraban – UIMF member