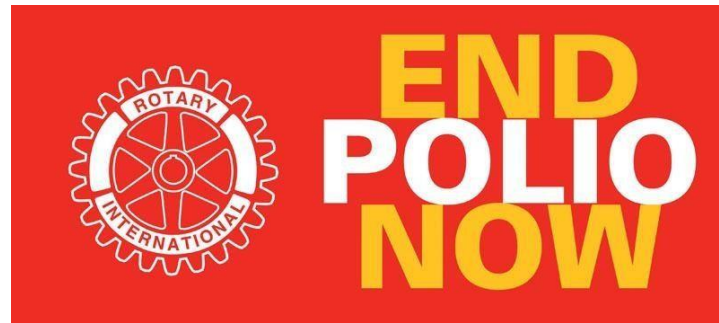


The Role of Rotary in the Eradication of Polio and its Place in the Sustainable Development Goals



On October 23rd, members of Utah Valley University's (UVU's) Rotaract, the collegiate subdivision of Rotary International and constituent club of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), hosted UVU's celebration of World Polio Day alongside Orem's Rotary Club. Rotary International was founded in 1905 and has since worked toward the eradicating polio, raising hundreds of millions of dollars in the process and helping eradicate polio almost worldwide.



Dr. John Hanrahan, the Rotary District Governor, speaks at the World Polio Day at UVU

Dr. John Hanrahan, the Rotary District Governor, provided the keynote address for the event. In his presentation, he spoke in the need to continue Rotary's efforts to eradicate polio worldwide and specifically how polio has affected humans since the dawn of time, but also how polio nowadays is particularly rare. Nowadays, polio is only prevalent in three countries: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nigeria. Rotary is still working in these countries to completely eradicate polio. One fact I found particularly interesting from Dr. Hanrahan's presentation was the use of bus stop vaccination centers for polio, which are used in hard to reach areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan to ensure more migrant and economically disadvantaged people in these countries still have the same access to the vaccine.



Group photo after the World Polio Day event at UVU

I enjoyed this presentation a lot, especially when analyzing it through the lens of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs were established to create a better world for future generations, and I believe the work Rotary International has done to eradicate polio fall beautifully into SDGs 3 and 17. SDG 3 specifically focuses on health and wellbeing, and SDG 17 focuses on partnerships for the SDGs. The connection SDG 3 has to the mission of

eradicating polio is very clear and falls within the subcategories of *Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health*, and *Infectious diseases*. SDG 17 may seem a little broader, but the UN partnering with civil society like Rotary International helps reach areas of the world and accomplish tasks more efficiently than the UN can. Rotary International played an integral role in the 2019 Civil Society Conference held in Salt Lake City from August 26-28, further reaffirming the role civil society can play in accomplishing UN initiatives.

Overall, the event was a fabulous success, and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn more about the role Rotary International plays in the eradication of polio. UIMF has a lot they can learn from partnering with Rotaract and the Orem Rotary Club, and I am looking forward to building even stronger partnerships with these organizations as the president of UIMF.

Samuel Elzinga, President, Utah International Mountain Forum