

## **UIMF Recognizes 10<sup>th</sup> International Mountain Day**

On Monday December 2, 2019 the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) dedicated to the advocacy of Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD), held a special event at UVU recognizing for the 10<sup>th</sup> time International Mountain Day (IMD). Established by the United Nations in 2002, IMD celebrates the important role mountains play in SMD. Due to UIMF's commitment to SMD, IMD stands as a focal point at the end of a year of successful advocacy of SMD. It also provides an excellent opportunity for members to reflect on the myriad of UIMF activities and look forward to the opportunities afforded by an approaching new year.



*Samuel Elzinga, President, UIMF speaks during IMD at UVU*

This year, UIMF's IMD event featured distinguished presenters, who spoke on various aspects of SMD. These SMD topics ranged from local economic development in Utah to an

overview of SMD. This provided attendees the opportunity to see how broad SMD is and hopefully identify an avenue of SMD that most interests them.



*Right to Left, Samuel Elzinga presents certificate to Mark Driggs for contribution to SMD*

In addition, UIMF recognized a wide range of individuals who have offered exceptional service in pursuit of SMD. This illustrated that effective SMD is much more likely to be attained when utilizing a whole of society approach that encompasses a diverse set of individuals, backgrounds, experiences, and capabilities. This year I had the opportunity to assist in preparing for this event. I was fortunate to help gather the PowerPoint presentations of the aforementioned speakers. Additionally I was able to help prepare the room where the event was held. This involved setting up chairs, posters, and PowerPoint presentations. Upon conclusion I assisted in the teardown of everything that was utilized. Such work proved to be a fantastic opportunity to

remember that there are a myriad of ways to assist both UIMF and SMD in general. As one who has held leadership positions within UIMF, I am accustomed to directing the efforts of those within my purview. However, equally important are those who execute a leader's directions. Without leaders, UIMF would be rudderless. Yet without a cohort of individuals available to provide support, UIMF would be rendered ineffective and incapable.

For this year's IMD, I was fortunate to be part of the latter group. As 2019 concludes, I am grateful to have been heavily involved in UIMF. As a longtime member I am consistently amazed at the persistence UIMF has cultivated. While it may be easy to coast or simply stop, UIMF has opted for the far more difficult and important task of sustained SMD advocacy. It is a group that is perpetually increasing in dedication. With members that are second to none in work ethic, humility, and a thirst for knowledge. Looking ahead to 2020, I can only imagine the opportunities it will bring for SMD. To those who are considering joining or supporting UIMF, know that no effort is too small and all backgrounds are needed. All are needed, from the leadership that provides direction and vision, to the individual that sets up chairs for an event, if UIMF is to continue growing and advocating for SMD. There is a place in UIMF for you.

*Mark Driggs, UIMF Member*