

10th Annual International Mountain Day Observed at UVU



On December 2nd, 2019, The Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU) celebrated International Mountain Day with the message of Mountains Matter to Youth, which I full heartedly agree. This concept is based on the fact that the youth of today have the responsibility to make the world a better, more beautiful place tomorrow.



Lacey Meyer speaks about challenges of development in rural Utah

I grew up in Uganda which has areas with mountains, but once I moved to Utah, I fully felt the beauty and necessity of being engulfed in a valley surrounded by mountains. I feel like I could relate to the conversations and topics. My village in Uganda, is placed in a very rural part of the country. Even though Uganda is a developing country and has many differences from the developed world, when I have visited small towns, such as Tabiona Utah, I have felt and seen many similarities to Uganda. For instance, they are hours away from popular shops so they have to effectively plan on what they will be preparing for meals, so they stay fed. They also are farmers and live more so off the land compared to people from the city. There is only one school for children preschool-aged to the end of high school. How can we promote children who grow up in these communities to have experiences and same level of education as others who grow up in cities?

The first speaker was Ms. Lacey Meyer who is the Vice President of the UIMF. She spoke about growing up in Price, Utah, a rural town, and that it is in an economic downturn. She addressed four primary ways to help which included to build the economy by encouraging job growth in the area of STEM. These jobs can be accessed and completed in any town/are via technology. Second, the education system needs to give the students in rural areas the same opportunities as in the cities. Third, multi-disciplinary teams need to understand the complex issues which need to be solved. And lastly, empower the rural communities and educate others that they are strong and capable. We need to encourage youth from all places that they are amazing and can achieve/accomplish anything if they put their minds to it. What are some ways that we can help right now? First, participate and attend events at UVU, such as this one. No matter how small the action, it can help make tremendous growth and change.

The second speaker, Mr. Michael Hinatsu, the Vice President of UIMF, who talked about the goal of UIMF is to raise awareness of mountain communities and targets looking forward. He talked about how a team will be traveling to New York in March which will allow them to represent women and children from the mountain areas. This team of speakers today truly care about people in these communities. The presenters were clear in their purpose of their talks and were concise and effective communicators in speaking. I think that many great things are going to happen in the future in supporting people in rural and mountainous areas.

Titus Elanyu, UVU student