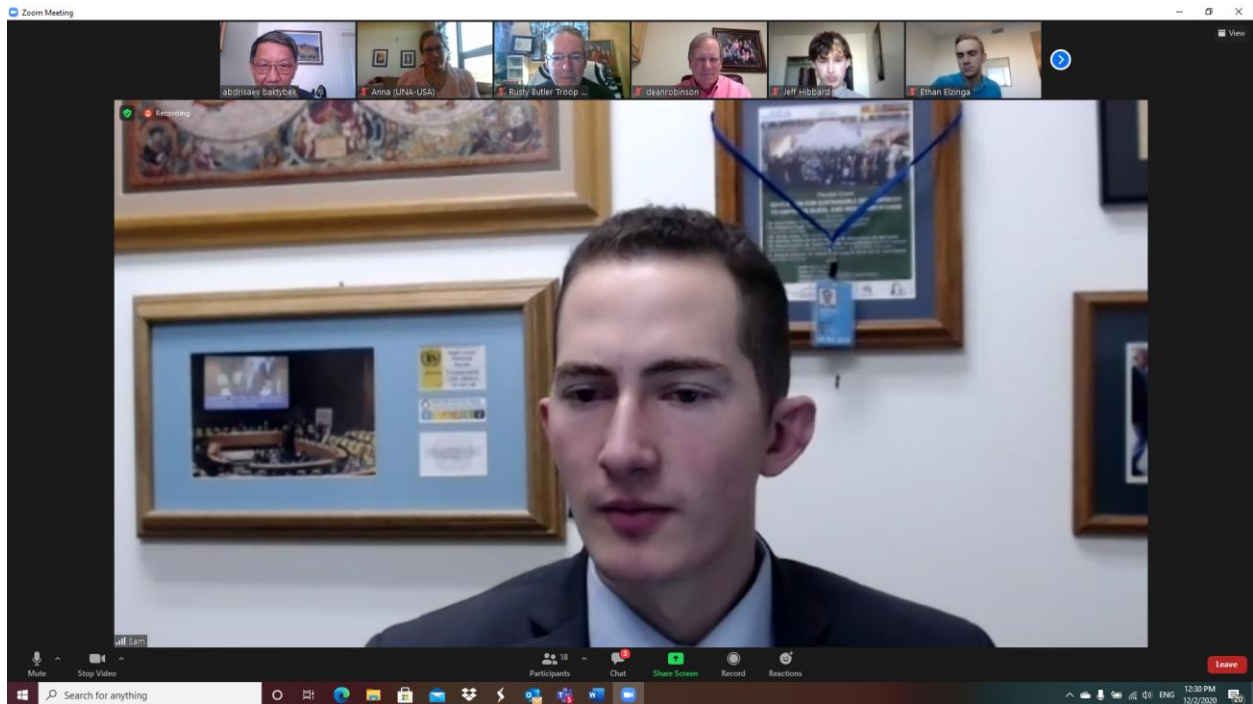


Resilience through Celebration: IMD 2020

On December 2nd, 2020, members of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU), hosted the 11th annual International Mountain Day observation at UVU. This observation was unlike any other in my three and a half years of involvement with UIMF, and I was grateful I could be a part of it. Not only was the event held virtually due to the situation with COVID-19, but this was the first time I did not directly plan the event.



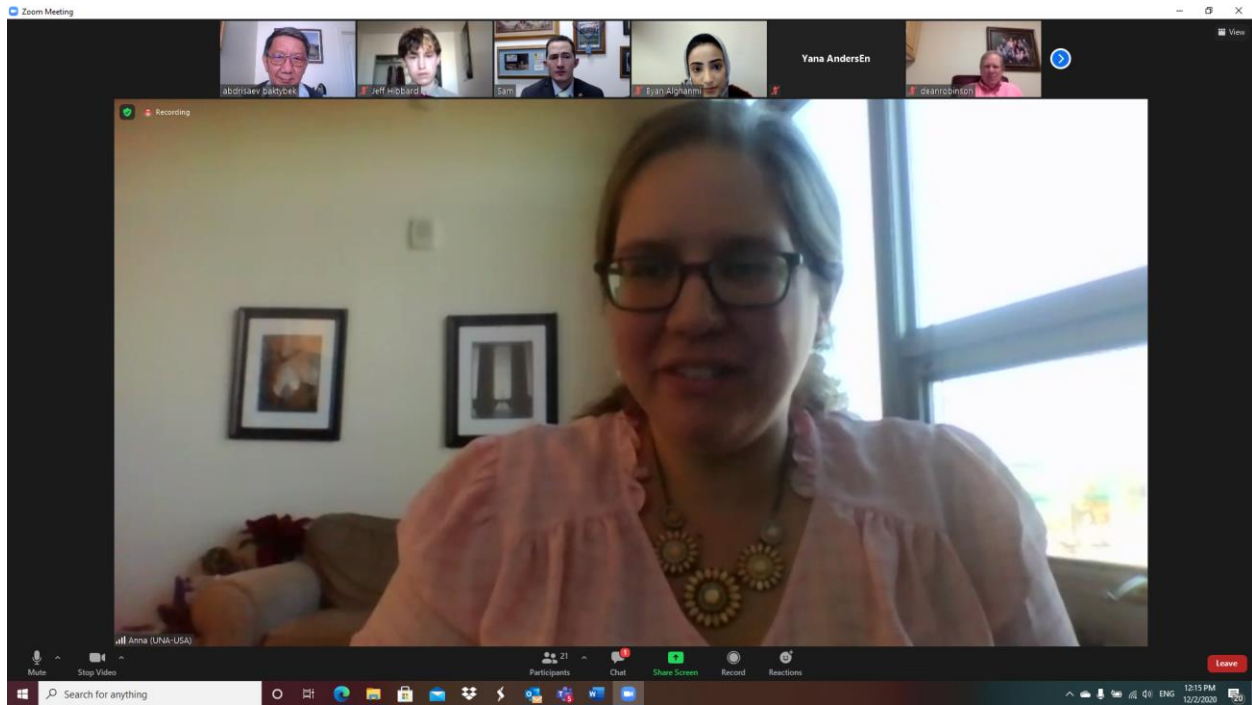
Dallas Karren, Vice President of UIMF moderates the International Mountain Day Observation at UVU

This was an opportunity for UIMF Vice President Dallas Karren to develop his leadership skills, and in my opinion was the full culmination of the student engaged learning (SEL) model. Dallas worked with both faculty advisors and other students to ensure IMD was a success, and I was grateful I could play the role of an advisor and participant in this capacity.

The project itself involved members from UVU, UIMF, the Foreign Affairs Club, the UVU Chapter of UNA-USA, Rotaract, the Orem Rotary Club, the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, and the National Office of UNA-USA.

The introduction to IMD was delivered by Dallas Karren, and was then followed by my remarks about IMD and UIMF. Following my remarks, Dr. Abdrisaev stepped in for Dr. Rusty

Butler, who was not able to speak due to technical issues with zoom call. Dr. Abdrisaev explained the important role played by the absent presenter to the advocacy of sustainable mountain development (SMD) and UVU students involvement in it both as former administrator at UVU and now the main representative at the United Nations for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, an NGO accredited at the UN. .



Anna Mahalak Addressing the Zoom Call

Following his remarks, Anna Mahalak, the Youth Engagement Manager for UNA-USA spoke about youth involvement at the United Nations and the importance of continued engagement internationally with UN bodies. UIMF is now a UVU chapter of UNA-USA and it was important for us to get senior representatives from that famous and respected in the United States and globally NGO to address UIMF members

Following her remarks, Mr. Dean Robinson of Orem Rotary discussed the important role Rotary International plays both globally and in Utah. Orem Rotary works closely with UVU Rotaract, which is a student club and branch of the Orem Rotary. Dean Robinson invited students to join Rotaract and contribute to the Rotary International activities, with the polio eradication initiative as the most important among them.



Mr. Robinson Delivering His Remarks

Following Mr. Robinson, Ms. Sarah Michaelis, UIMF member announced the names of those who would be earning certificates for their contribution to the SMD agenda during 2020. After this, Dallas gave the Closing Remarks.

Overall, I believe the event was a great success and highlighted the strengths of our students well. I am so glad it went according to plan, albeit in an online format, and am hopeful this can set a precedent for future events as well.

Samuel Elzinga, President, Utah International Mountain Forum