

## Mountain regions and sustainable development



Watching this zoom International Mountain Day (IMD) observation event on 2 December 2020 put on by UIMF with so many individuals dedicated and motivated to understanding and helping the development of mountain regions was very uplifting and inspiring. The first message that stood out to me was the variety of people that were involved with this issue. There were students from a range of majors including political science, earth studies, English, biology and others. To see that many people with a wide range of interests and skills come together to positively impact the world gave me motivation to deepen my knowledge of this topic and how I can more successfully work towards achieving the UN sustainability goals.

An important thing I had not realized was the plight of the millions of people in mountain areas and the impact that global warming is having on them and their environment. Mountain regions in the world are the most neglected of any region, and many are struggling to maintain their biodiversity. This was also a topic I had little knowledge of but learned a lot from the UN youth observer that was involved in the conference. Biodiversity is critical to the survival and success of every species in the ecosystem, including humans. However, we are the only species that can make calculated changes for the benefit of others. It is important for these youth voices to

remain loud and consistent. We must be on the forefront in the battle against climate change. Youth voices bring innovation and energy to causes and can increase the support from others.



***Dustin Liu, Youth Observer of the UNA-USA speaks during IMD 2020***

Learning about the impact of several organizations in fighting for these causes was inspiring. This was the first time I heard about the UNA-USA and what they do to advance important causes across the world. They help engage Americans with the work of the UN, especially in fighting climate change. As mentioned in the conference, the UN had a state of the planet address in which the leadership of Americans was identified as crucial to the fight against climate change. Groups like UNA-USA, whose founding members include Eleanor Roosevelt, are a staple in addressing these issues and are an easy entry point for those who seek to help but don't know how to get involved.

Another group that is involved in the sustainability of mountain regions is the Rotary International, including the Orem Rotary. This organization as a whole is involved in many causes and like the UN they have set specific goals to work towards. Very similarly to the UN, the Rotary goals include promoting peace, fighting disease, ensuring clean water and proper sanitation, protecting mothers and children, ensuring a proper education for everyone who seeks it, and growing and managing local economies. By focusing on these set goals, the Rotary is better able to help other organizations like the UN to accomplish their international goals. The Rotary is

planning to add another goal, which revolves around fighting climate change, the most pressing issue facing mountain regions.

This International Mountain Day celebration really opened my eye to the many avenues that I can take in successfully working for an NGO that is focused on helping the earth.

***Mitchell Hansen, UVU student***