

My participation in the United Nations General Assembly activities during the CSW67

On March 7, 2023, our delegation of the Rotaractors from the Utah Valley University participated at a side event about the advancement of education for women organized by Italy, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning, in collaboration with UN Women. It was titled: “Rewiring the Network: Digital Education and Skills for Girls’ and Women’s Empowerment” at 8:15 am at the Conference Room 4 in the General Assembly Building. Justine Sass, Chief of Section of Education for Inclusion and Gender Equality, UNESCO was the moderator of the event.



UVU delegation with Ambassador Dame Barbara Woodward (center)

There were other representatives who spoke on the importance of the family for the advancement of education for women and children. Those who didn’t speak about the family’s role, spoke on other institutions or policies that have been implemented to help equalize educational opportunities for women and children in countries where there is abundant inequality. Here, I learned how representatives of countries use the UN to share their resolutions to issues in order to potentially help other countries and to establish their support or lack of support for particular resolutions.

Following the event we were able to meet and very briefly speak with the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the UN, Ambassador Dame Barbara Woodward.

We then were able to attend the session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), where I learned the representatives only had 3 minutes to make their statements on the advancement of education for women. The representative of Slovenia's remarks were the most poignant to me, he shared how they have the infrastructure and technology for education for all within the country, but the unbelief of the people, their hardened hearts and set minds make the actions of the government void. That the issue is the hearts and minds of the people who are set on unintentionally or intentionally fighting against equality. People need to change in order to establish equality.



Me in the general assembly of the United Nations.

Following the UNGA session I was able to achieve one of my goals which was to meet and speak with one of the representatives of the Czech or Slovak Republics to the UN. Stephan Atkinson, Chandler Davis, Priyanka Kumar, and I were able to attend a parallel event held by the Czech Republic on integrating women refugees: NGOs as key partners and a force for change. As various representatives from Ukrainian and the Czech Republic spoke, I remembered the beginning weeks

of the war when I was living in the Czech Republic and saw how Czech citizens went to the aid of refugees and how refugees would be standing in large lines waiting for the opportunity to receive housing or employment aid from the Czech government.



Left to Right: Stephan Atkinson, Deputy Minister Martina Štěpánková, Priyanka Kumar, and Handen Torsak.

I understood what the subject was being discussed and the influence NGOs have on refugees because I am a witness to it.. After the event was over I was able to speak in a Czech/Slovak mix with Martina Štěpánková, Deputy Minister for Human Rights and Equal Opportunities of the Czech Republic.

Handen Torsak, Utah Valley University Rotaractor