

## Learning UN advocacy from Marcia Barlow



*(R to L): Caitlin Tomly, Emmanuel Omaria, Marcia Barlow and Kyler Pigot after lunch*

I was given the opportunity to represent the Utah Valley University (UVU) Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) Club at a luncheon hosted by Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF), a coalition of student clubs at UVU in honor of Marcia Barlow on March 2, 2018. Ms. Barlow has more than 20 years of experience of working at the United Nations as a vice president of the United Families International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic

and Social Council (ECOSOC). Many lucky students are going to the UN next week to discuss UMIF efforts to promote the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

During this luncheon we were able to ask questions and receive advice from Marcia Barlow in a laid-back setting and learn about the operations and functioning of the UN. In addition to this she stressed to us how vital young people are to the United Nations and global agendas. The United Nations can be an intimidating organization, but in fact they are often more accessible and receptive than our own state or federal governments. Being able to ask her questions and listen to her discuss her own experiences with the U.N. over the past twenty years truly inspires students, enabling us to actively participate in otherwise intimidating and globally expansive organizations. During our discussions she stressed that the youth of today will be the policy makers of the future.

As a student here at UVU I have been lucky enough to be exposed to an amazing faculty that has our best interests and future achievements at heart. As a senior in the Integrated Studies program I have created my own curriculum comprising of the emphasis of Anthropology and Social Science. These, in tandem with a minor in Russian studies I have begun working toward a final research project revolving around sustainable development to counteract climate change. Utilizing anthropology and social science, as another tool to aid in combatting climate change, is vital to the successful implementation of sustainable practices. In tandem with the work of the Sustainable Mountain Development Club, there have been countless opportunities to see how my thesis and research work can be used to implement social good to countless regions and demographics.

Having been given the opportunity to speak to Marcia Barlow and be on the receiving end of her encouragement has greatly assisted all the students who will be participating in UN Commission on the Status of Women activities next week. For myself, it has given a realization that once done with my research here at UVU there is potential to continue this same work on a larger scale, enabling us to work together as a global community to prevent further climate change and seek the implementation of culturally pragmatic and lasting sustainability practices. We are all so very grateful to have been able to meet with her and receive her mentorship.

*Caitlin B. Tomly, member, Sustainable Mountain Development Club, Utah Valley University*